

International Trade in Rupee

❖ Context

- The Finance Ministry is scheduled to meet with stakeholders including banks and the Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce to discuss ways to promote **international trade in rupee** instead of the United States dollar.



❖ The Background

- On July 11 2022, the RBI issued a circular saying it had decided “to put in place an additional arrangement for invoicing, payment, and settlement of exports/ imports in INR”.

Rupee switch

The new measure will promote trade growth, with an emphasis on exports from India, and support the interest of the trading community in rupee, RBI said.

India's top trading partners



- The idea, was to “promote growth of global trade with emphasis on exports from India and to support the increasing interest of global trading community in INR”.
- While the move to allow trade settlements between India and other countries in rupees was seen to primarily benefit trading with Russia, it was also expected to help check dollar outflow and slow the depreciation of the rupee to a “very limited extent”.

❖ Way It Would Work

- To settle trade transactions with any country, banks in India would open **Vostro accounts** of correspondent bank/s of the partner country for trading. Indian importers can pay for their imports in INR into these accounts.
- These earnings from imports can then be used to pay Indian exporters in INR.
- A Vostro account is an account that a correspondent bank holds on behalf of another bank — for example, HSBC Vostro account is held by SBI in India.

❖ Current System

- Currently, exports or imports by a company are always in a foreign currency, with exceptions such as **Nepal and Bhutan**.
- So, in case of imports, the Indian company has to pay in a foreign currency, which is mainly dollars, but could also be pounds, euros, or yen, etc.
- The Indian company gets paid in foreign currency in case of exports and the company converts that foreign currency to rupee since it needs rupee for its requirements in most of the cases.

Mohenjo Daro and World Heritage Status

❖ Context

- Authorities in Sindh, Pakistan have called for urgent attention towards conservation and restoration work at the site, for fear that it might be removed from the World Heritage list.



❖ Background

- Mohenjo Daro received a record **779.5 mm of rain in 10 days**, which resulted in considerable damage to the site and partial falling of several walls, including the protection wall of the stupa dome.
- According to the news reports, **DK Area, Muneer Area, Stupa, Paris stairs, Great Bath** and other important sites of these ruins have been badly affected by the natural disaster.
- The epitome of Harappan civilization flourished on the **right (west) bank of the Indus river** in the 3rd millennium BC.
- Its prehistoric antiquity was established by **Rakhal Das Banerji** of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1922.
- It was recognised as a UNESCO **World Heritage site in 1980**.

❖ UNESCO World Heritage Status

- The Convention Concerning the **Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage** (commonly known as the ‘**World Heritage Convention**’) is an international agreement adopted by the General Conference of **UNESCO** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) in **1972**.

- The Convention is administered by the **World Heritage Committee**, which is an elected body comprising representatives of 21 nations.
- To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of **outstanding universal value** and meet at least **one out of ten selection criteria**.
- There are around **1,100 UNESCO listed sites** across its 167 member countries.
- UNESCO also maintains a **List of World Heritage in Danger**, currently 52, which are under threat from Armed conflict and war, earthquakes and other natural disasters, pollution, poaching, uncontrolled urbanisation and unchecked tourist development.
- The World Heritage Committee removes a site from the list if **irreversible loss of attributes**, conveying the outstanding universal value of the property, occurs.
- The only sites removed from World Heritage List are -
 - Arabian Oryx Sanctuary, Oman** in 2007 after poaching and habitat loss.
 - The Dresden Elbe valley, Germany** in 2009 when a four-lane motorway bridge was built over the river.
 - Liverpool — Maritime Mercantile City** in 2021 when a modernising development project was undertaken.

Face to Face Centres

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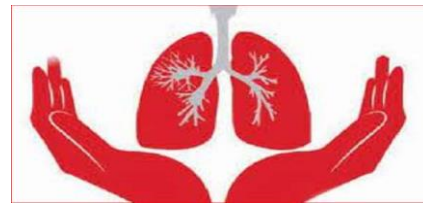
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08 September, 2022

TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan

❖ Context

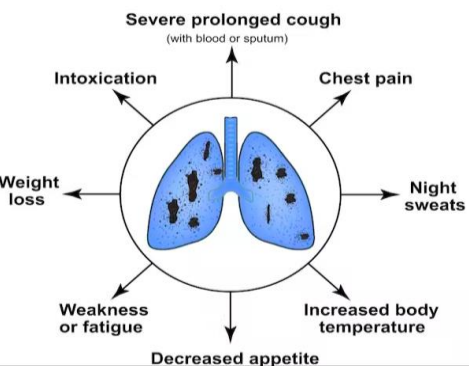
- President will virtually launch the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan on 9th September 2022 to reinvigorate the mission of TB elimination from the country by 2025.
- During the event, President will also launch the Ni-kshay Mitra initiative.



❖ About Tuberculosis

- It is a contagious infection that usually attacks your lungs.
- It can also spread to other parts of body such as brain and spine.
- It is caused by a bacteria called Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- It can spread from person to person through microscopic droplets released into the air.

SYMPTOMS OF TUBERCULOSIS



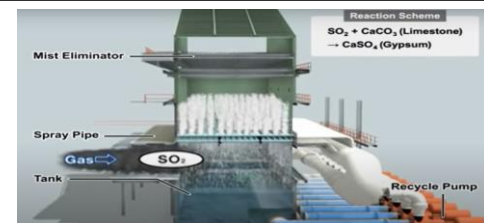
❖ Ni-kshay Mitra

- It is a government project that enables people to adopt tuberculosis patients and take care of their nutritional and medical requirements, aims to combat the stigma associated with the disease.
- Anyone in India can register on a digital portal that the government has developed through a public-private partnership.
- The goal is to reduce stigma around TB diseases, which can only be accomplished with community support, better care, and adoption of TB patients.

Flue Gas Desulphurisation

❖ Context

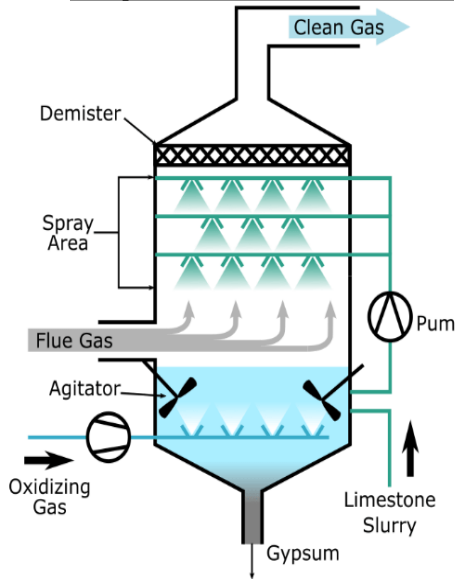
- The Ministry of Power (MoP) has extended the deadline for coal-fired power plants to install Flue Gas Desulphurisation (FGD) to cut sulphur emissions by two years.



❖ Key Highlights

- India had initially set a 2017 deadline for thermal power plants to install FGD units to cut Sulphur emissions.
- The deadline was later changed to varying deadlines for different regions, ending in 2022, and further extended last year to a period ending 2025.
- Power plants will be forcibly retired if they do not comply to norms on sulphur emissions by end-2027.
- Higher costs, lack of funds, Covid-19 related delays and geopolitical tension with China, which has restricted trade, are cited as the reasons for the extension.

❖ Importance of FGD



- Indian cities have some of the world's most polluted air. India currently emits almost twice the amount of SO2 than the next highest country, Russia.
- The high levels of damaging SO2 pollution in India are avoidable much sooner as flue-gas desulphurisation systems have proved successful in reducing emission levels in China, the country responsible for the highest level in 2005.

Kartavya Path

❖ Context

- Delhi's iconic Rajpath - stretching from Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate - is all set to be renamed Kartavya Path (Path of Duty).



❖ About Kartavya Path

- It was Called Kingsway during British rule, it was built as a ceremonial boulevard by Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker, the architects of New Delhi, in around 1920.
- Running from Rashtrapati Bhavan on Raisina Hill through Vijay Chowk and India Gate, the avenue is lined on both sides by huge lawns, canals and rows of trees.
- The road was named Kingsway in honour of the Emperor of India George V, who had visited Delhi during the Durbar of 1911, where he formally proclaimed the decision to move the capital.

FROM KINGSWAY TO KARTAVYA PATH: V

WHAT'S NEW ON CENTRAL VISTA

- **Eight organised plazas** will have various kinds of vendors, especially for that typical New Delhi experience of ice-cream at India Gate.
- Each of the eight 'amenity blocks' will have **shops to be managed by Delhi Tourism**. Cooking at site is not allowed, but officials expect food representing various regions and flavours to be present.
- Around **1,000-plus white-and-red sandstone bollards** give the redeveloped space its historical look and feel.
- **300 CCTV cameras** have been installed in the entire area for security.
- **Boating will be allowed**, as in the past, in two canals — one near Krishi Bhawan; another around Vanijya Bhawan.
- Along Kartavya Path, **an area spread across 3.90 lakh sq. m. has been developed with greenery** all around.
- New **red granite walkways criss-crossing over 15.5 km** have been created, replacing the 'bajri' sand that lined the ground earlier.
- **Parking space for 1,125 vehicles has been created** in the entire stretch and there's another one for 35 buses near India Gate.
- **The 74 historic light poles of the original Rajpath and all chain links have been restored**. More than 900 new light poles are installed.

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Lok Adalats to Dispose Pending Cases

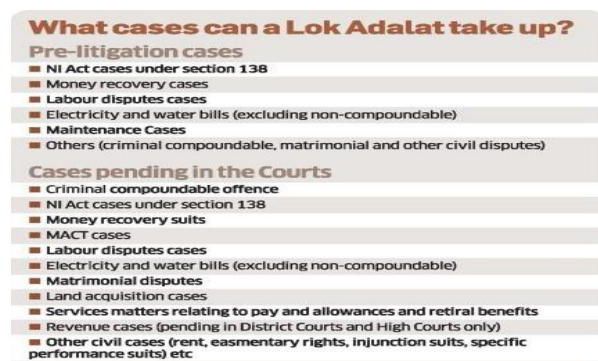
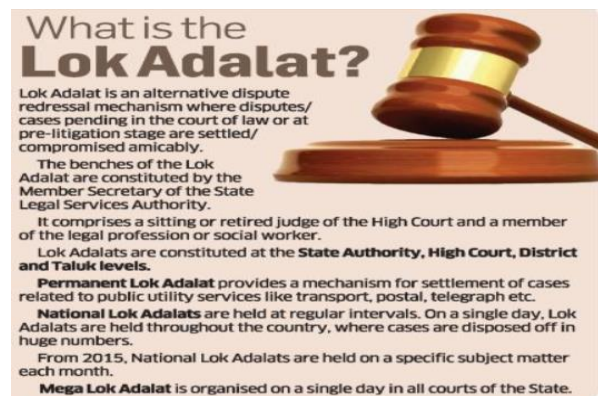


❖ Context

- The Consumer Affairs Ministry is planning to hold Lok Adalats later this year to reduce the pendency of cases in consumer dispute redressal commissions at national, State and district levels.

❖ Key Highlights

- As per government estimates, six lakh cases are pending in these commissions.



- Of the total pending cases, about 4.5 lakh cases are pending in district commissions, 1.4 lakh cases in State commissions and over 22,000 cases in National Commission.
- The ministry will hold dedicated Lok Adalats to take up these pending cases and is also in discussion with the **National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)** for the disposal of pending consumer cases.

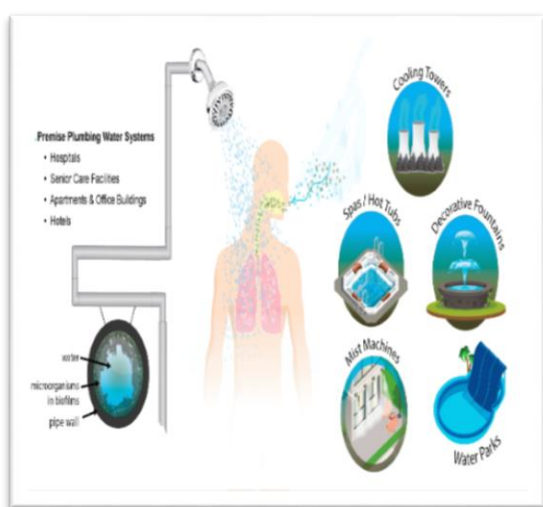
❖ e-Daakhil

- The Ministry said that the e-daakhil portal has emerged as an effective solution for aggrieved consumers who opt to digitally file their complaints.
- The e-daakhil portal is facilitating speedier disposal of cases and the Ministry is also now working on creating infrastructure for e-hearings as well.
- The e-daakhil portal was launched by the **National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC)** on September 7, 2020.
- It serves as a platform for consumers who are facing time constraints to contact the consumer commission for the resolution of their complaints.



News in Between the Lines

Legionellosis Disease



❖ Context

- **Argentina's** mystery pneumonia outbreak has finally been identified as Legionellosis by the country.

❖ Key Highlights

- According to the WHO, Legionellosis is a generic term describing the pneumonic and non-pneumonic forms of infection with **Legionella**.
- Worldwide, waterborne **bacterium Legionella pneumophila** is the most common cause of cases. It was first identified in **1977** as the cause of an outbreak of severe pneumonia in the **USA** in 1976.
- The **non-pneumonic form** (Pontiac disease) is an acute, self-limiting influenza-like illness. No death is associated with it. The severity of the **pneumonic form** ranges from a mild cough to a rapidly fatal pneumonia. Death occurs through progressive pneumonia with respiratory failure and/or shock & multi-organ failure.
- The most common form of transmission of Legionella is **inhalation of contaminated aerosols from contaminated water** like AC cooling towers, hot and cold water systems, humidifiers and whirlpool spas.
- Treatments exist, but there is **no vaccine** currently available for it.

Ram Chandra Manjhi



❖ Context

- The doyen of Bhojpuri folk theatre art "Launda Naach" and legendary artist Ram Chandra Manjhi passed away recently.

❖ Key Highlights

- Manjhi was an oldest member of a troupe of great folk artist & Bhojpuri poet with the sobriquet "Shakespeare of Bhojpuri" Bhikhari Thakur. He was a staunch supporter of good & meaningful songs & performances in Bhojpuri folk theatre.
- Felicitated with Sangeet Natak Academy Award Manjhi was also a prestigious Padma Shri awardee in the field of Arts.
- The Launda Naach is a prominent Bhojpuri folk art of Bihar comprising songs, dance, comedy, satire, parody & theatre.

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Women in Engineering, Science, and Technology (WEST)



❖ Context

- **I-STEM (Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities Map)** has launched a new initiative called **WEST**.

❖ Key Highlights

- Opportunities for women range from operating scientific equipment and maintaining them, to designing and manufacturing them.
- The **Skill Development programmes** under the initiative will provide training for women to become technicians and maintenance engineers, filling crucial gaps in the R&D infrastructure of the country. This initiative will also help bring women back into S&T domains after a career break.
- With this experience, women can become entrepreneurs to serve as consultants for the operation and maintenance of sophisticated equipment/instruments through the I-STEM platform.

❖ About I-STEM

- It is a dynamic & interactive national **web portal**, which hosts various scientific programs, initiated by the **office of the Principal Scientific Adviser, Govt. of India**. The main objective of the portal is to provide support to needy researchers in different ways and strengthen the R&D ecosystem to fulfil the necessity of people of the country.

Kushiyara Water Treaty

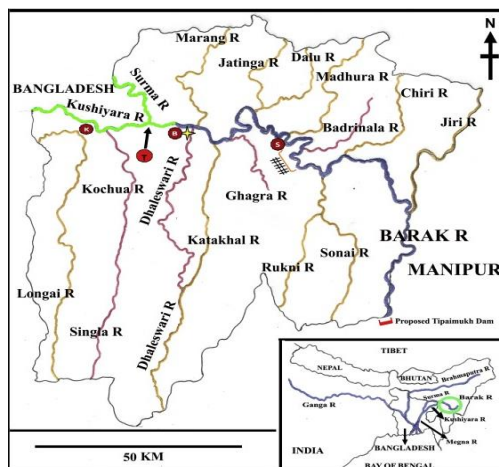


❖ Context

- **India and Bangladesh** signed an interim water sharing agreement for Kushiyara river.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is the first such pact since the signing of the **Ganga water treaty in 1996**.
- The pact will benefit people residing in **southern Assam and the Sylhet division of Bangladesh**.
- India and Bangladesh share **54 rivers**. **Barak River** bifurcates into Kushiyara and Surma rivers in Karimganj district of Assam at the Bangladesh border.
- The Kushiyara flows westward forming the boundary between Assam, India, and the Sylhet District of Bangladesh. Altogether, the Kushiyara runs for about 160 kms. It is also known as **Kalni River** in some places.
- The two rivers join again at **Bhairab Bazar** in Bangladesh to form **Meghna River**.



Section 66A of IT Act



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❖ Context

- The **Supreme Court (SC)** expressed serious concern over states continuing to register FIRs for offences under Section 66A of the Information Technology Act despite the court holding it unconstitutional in 2015.

❖ Key Highlights

- In 2015, in the case **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India**, the Supreme Court struck down Section 66A in its entirety, and ruled that it was violative of Article 19(1)(a).
- The section was regarding punishment for sending through a computer resource or a communication device an information which is :
 - Offensive or menacing.
 - False causing annoyance, inconvenience, danger, obstruction, insult, injury, criminal intimidation, enmity, hatred or ill will.
 - Deceiving or misleading the recipient about the origin of such messages.
- **Article 19 (1)(a)** says that all citizens shall have the **right to freedom of speech and expression** subject to the **reasonable restrictions** imposed by state in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

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