



15 September, 2023

National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)

Context: The Prime Minister commends the integration of the Supreme Court of India into the National Judicial Data Grid platform.

- The Chief Justice of India (CJI) has declared that the Supreme Court of India will be integrated into the National Judicial Data Grid platform.
- This platform enables the tracking of case pendency.
- CJI emphasizes that this move will enhance transparency and accountability in the judicial system.
- The platform, developed by the NIC and the Supreme Court's in-house team, allows real-time access to case information, including year-wise pendency, total registered and unregistered cases, and cases decided by quorum.

What is NJDG?

- NJDG is part of the e-Courts Integrated Mission Mode Project, launched in 2015.
- It comprises orders, judgments, and case details from 18,735 District & Subordinate Courts and High Courts.
- Data is updated in near real-time by connected courts, providing information on judicial proceedings nationwide.
- High Courts have also joined NJDG, offering accessibility to the public.
- NJDG aligns with the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, providing an Open API for government access.
- Initially designed for institutional litigants, it plans to extend access to non-institutional litigants.
- NJDG effectively monitors and reduces case pendency, aiding policy decisions and resource management.
- It's linked with Land Records data from 26 States for tracking land dispute cases.
- World Bank recognized NJDG in its 2018 Ease of Doing Business report for facilitating contract enforcement.

Other initiatives under E-Courts Initiative

- **e-Courts Integrated Mission Mode Project (ICMMP):** A Supreme Court initiative aimed at computerizing district and subordinate courts to enhance judicial efficiency and accessibility.
- **Supreme Court e-Committee:** Comprised of appointed judges overseeing the implementation of the e-Courts Project, offering guidance and support to lower courts in adopting technology.
- **Mobile App:** Developed by the Supreme Court, this app provides access to case status, judgments, and advocate information, making legal information easily accessible to the public.
- **Videoconferencing:** Adopted by the Supreme Court for remote hearings, especially valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring continued court operations.
- **Digitization of Records:** A Supreme Court project digitizing all records, including judgments and orders, to improve accessibility, searchability, transparency, and accountability in the judiciary.

National Logistics Policy, 2022

Context: India commemorates the one year of the introduction of the National Logistics Policy on September 17, 2023.

Vision

The NLP aims to boost India's economic growth and business competitiveness by establishing an efficient, green, and cost-effective logistics network through technology and skilled manpower, reducing costs and enhancing performance.

Targets

The NLP intends to (i) decrease logistics costs in India, (ii) improve the Logistics Performance Index ranking to be among the top 25 countries by 2030, and (iii) create data-driven decision support for an efficient logistics ecosystem.

Comprehensive Logistics Action Plan (CLAP)

To achieve these goals, the NLP includes action areas like:

- Integrated Digital Logistics Systems
- Standardization of Physical Assets and Service Quality Benchmarking
- Logistics Human Resource Development and Capacity Building
- State Engagement
- Enhancing EXIM Logistics
- Services Improvement Framework
- Sectoral Plans for Efficient Logistics (SPEL)
- Facilitation of Development of Logistics Parks

Progress of Implementation

- **Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP):**
 - Introduced for digital integration in logistics, offering a single sign-on for users.
 - Integrates 34 logistics-related digital systems/portals across Ministries/Departments.
 - GST data integration with ULIP.

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- Allows private sector use case development, with over 614 industry players registered.
 - 106 private companies have signed NDAs, and 142 submitted 382 use cases.
- **EXIM Logistics:**
- Measures taken to promote trade facilitation and streamline EXIM logistics.
 - Infrastructure gaps being addressed.
 - Comprehensive port connectivity plan developed.
 - Efforts to improve port productivity and reduce logistics costs.
 - Logistics Data Bank (LDB) for tracking EXIM cargo.
- **Human Resource Development:**
- Qualification packs for different job roles in the logistics sector.
 - Webinar held for capacity building.
 - Syllabus and training modules being developed.
- **Sectoral Plan for Efficient Logistics (SPEL):**
- Developing plans to address sector-specific needs.
 - Focusing on bulk and break-bulk cargo movement.
 - Comprehensive Port Connectivity Plan (CPCP) developed.
 - Plans for efficient coal evacuation and steel sector in progress.
- **State Engagement:**
- States/UTs developing State Logistics Plans (SLPs) aligned with NLP.
 - Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) index for logistics performance monitoring.
 - 22 States have notified State Logistics policies.
 - Efforts to estimate logistics cost as a percentage of GDP.

OIML (International Organization of Legal Metrology) Certificates

Context: India has now joined the list of the world's 13 countries authorized to issue Internationally Accepted Certificates by OIML (International Organization of Legal Metrology).

- Domestic manufacturers can have their weighing and measuring instruments tested in India, allowing them to sell these products in the international market.
- This move opens the opportunity for international manufacturers to have their equipment tested in India, leading to revenue generation and employment opportunities within the country.
- The initiative aims to facilitate trade in weighing and measuring instruments while benefiting India's economy.

OIML Membership and Authority

- OIML, established in 1955, is an intergovernmental organization.
- India became a member in 1956.
- OIML consists of 63 Member States and 64 Corresponding Members.
- India has become an authority for issuing internationally accepted OIML certificates for selling weights and measures globally.
- The Department of Consumer Affairs can now issue OIML Pattern Approval certificates, a requirement for international market sales of weights and measures.

Adherence to OIML Standards

- India follows OIML recommendations and testing/calibration procedures for weights and measures.
- Reports from Legal Metrology's Regional Reference Standards Laboratories are now accepted by OIML issuing authorities.
- India can issue OIML pattern approval certificates, supporting domestic manufacturers in exporting their instruments worldwide without additional testing costs.
- India can also support foreign manufacturers by issuing OIML pattern approval certificates, generating foreign exchange through fees.

Influence on OIML Policies

- India now has the potential to influence OIML's policies and contribute to the OIML Strategy.
- The system allows OIML certificates issued by OIML Issuing Authorities in Member States to serve as the basis for national/regional type approvals for measuring instruments.
- This reduces the need for expensive test facilities for other OIML Members.

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Exclusive Group of Nations

- India joins a select group of 13 countries worldwide, including Australia, Switzerland, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, France, UK, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, and Slovakia, as an OIML approval certificates issuing authority.
- This achievement reflects India's commitment to international quality standards and trade facilitation.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

Context: A US court has ruled that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, which permitted young undocumented immigrants to reside and work in the United States, is unlawful.

What is DACA?

- On June 15, 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security announced DACA, allowing certain undocumented immigrants who came to the US as children to request deferment from legal action for two years, subject to renewal.
- DACA aimed to improve immigration policy for young people known as 'Dreamers,' derived from the DREAM bill, which sought to provide legal residency to undocumented immigrants.
- The DREAM bill had faced legislative failure, leading to the introduction of DACA by the Obama administration in 2012.
- USCIS sets criteria for DACA eligibility, including age, arrival before the age of 16, educational qualifications, no felony convictions, and no threat to national security or public safety.
- DACA allows eligible individuals to request work authorization and hold a job, but it does not grant lawful status. It is an exercise of prosecutorial discretion, deferring removal actions for a specified period.

Need of DACA?

- In 2012, Obama highlighted the situation of "Dreamers," undocumented immigrants brought to the US as children.
- DACA has granted permits to many Central and South American immigrants.
- India was the seventh-highest country of origin for undocumented individuals in 2011, with only a few thousand Indians utilizing DACA permits.
- US immigration is a divisive issue, with Democrats generally more lenient and Republicans advocating stricter policies.
- Pew Research shows bipartisan support for strict border control (73%) and aiding refugees (72%).
- DACA, allowing undocumented immigrant children to stay and apply for legal status, garners significant support.
- The White House expressed disappointment in the court ruling but vows to defend DACA and process renewals.

Types of Migration

- **By Political Boundaries:**
 - **Internal Migration:** Occurs within a country, crossing political boundaries between states, districts, or urban-rural areas.
 - **International Migration:** Happens across country borders, involving immigrants (entering a foreign country) and emigrants (leaving one's own country).
- **By Movement Patterns:**
 - **Step Migration:** Involves gradual moves from smaller settlements to larger ones in an urban hierarchy.
 - **Circular Migration:** Entails cyclical movement between an origin and a destination, often involving seasonal or temporary stays.
 - **Seasonal Migration:** Common in response to labour or climate conditions, such as farmworkers following crop cycles.
 - **Return Migration:** Refers to emigrating once and then returning after an extended stay away from the host territory.
 - **Chain Migration:** Involves the migration of families or groups of people, often supported by those who migrated before them.
- **By Decision-Making Approach:**
 - **Voluntary Migration:** Driven by a person's free will and desire for a better life or improved financial status.
 - **Involuntary Migration:** Occurs when individuals are forced out of their homes due to unfavourable environmental or political circumstances.
 - **Reluctant/Impelled/Imposed Migration:** Encouraged by external factors but not necessarily forced.
 - **Forced Migration:** Involves individuals unable to return home (refugees), those seeking asylum, or those displaced internally due to conflict or development without crossing boundaries.

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NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Bagmati River



The Bagmati River serves as a transboundary river, forming the border between Nepal and India.

Origin: Kathmandu, Nepal.

Total Length: 586.3 km.

Course: The Bagmati River passes through the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal and flows southward.

Confluence: It merges with the Koshi River near Bornesthan in Bihar, India.

Sacred River: The Bagmati River is considered sacred by both Hindus and Buddhists.

Pollution Concerns: Despite its religious significance, the river is heavily polluted and dirty due to the high population residing along its banks.

Religious Sites: It hosts important religious sites like the Pashupatinath Temple, a significant Hindu pilgrimage site.

Tributaries: Its major tributaries are Bishnumati River and Manohara River.

Red Fire Ants



What are the Red Fire Ants?

Red imported fire ants, also known as fire ants, are highly invasive stinging ants originally from South America.

Origin: They have recently been identified in Europe for the first time, raising concerns about their spread.

Scientific Name: *Solenopsis invicta*

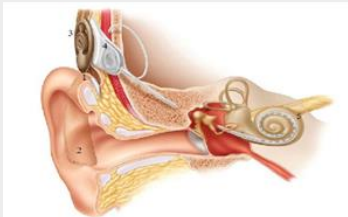
Physical Characteristics:

- **Color:** They are reddish-brown to reddish-black with a coppery head.
- **Size:** Typically 1/8 to 1/4 inch (3-6 mm) in length.
- **Body:** Segmented with a distinct two-part thorax.

Aggressiveness and Stings: Known for aggressive behavior and a venomous sting causing intense burning and itching in humans.

Impact on Ecosystem: Fire ants can harm local ecosystems, damage crops and disrupt native species, posing ecological challenges.

Cochlear Implants (CI)



About Cochlear Implants:

- Cochlear implants are medical devices designed to restore hearing in individuals with severe to profound hearing loss.
- Cochlear implants have been revolutionary in restoring hearing for individuals who do not benefit from conventional hearing aids.
- They represent a remarkable achievement in biomedical engineering and surgical techniques, allowing the bypassing of damaged hair cells in the inner ear.
- Cochlear implants work by electronically stimulating the cochlear nerve, which is the nerve responsible for hearing, thus replicating the function of damaged hair cells.
- These implants consist of both external and internal components, including a microphone, speech processor, and electrode array implanted surgically in the cochlea (inner ear).
- Tamil Nadu's cochlear implant program, offering free implants to children under six from low-income backgrounds, has been highly successful.

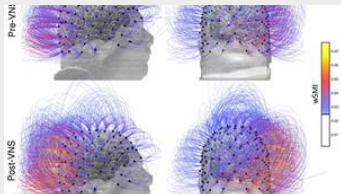
Epizootic Haemorrhagic Disease



About:

- Epizootic Haemorrhagic Disease (EHD) is an insect-borne disease caused by a virus that primarily affects wild and domestic ruminant species.
- It emerged as a significant cattle disease and was added to the OIE's list of notifiable diseases in 2008.
- EHD exclusively affects animals; it poses no risk to human health.
- The disease is caused by epizootic hemorrhagic disease virus (EHDV), part of the Orbivirus genus.
- EHDV spreads through *Culicoides* midges, tiny biting flies.
- Affected animals exhibit various symptoms, including fever, weakness, skin rashes, bleeding and difficulty breathing, particularly in deer.
- There's no specific treatment or available vaccine against EHD.
- Recent cases in Spain, Portugal, and Southern Italy have prompted monitoring efforts in the UK.

Vagus Nerve



What is Vagus Nerve?

- The vagus nerve or cranial nerve X (CN X) is a pair of long nerves originating in the brainstem and extending through the neck, chest and stomach.
- Part of the parasympathetic nervous system, it influences various functions, including heart rate, blood pressure, and digestion.

Research Interest: Vagus nerves are long and connect to key body parts, making them intriguing for researchers.

Research Objectives: Researchers are exploring ways to stimulate vagus nerves to activate the parasympathetic nervous system and its potential benefits for health conditions.

Existing Applications:

- Vagus nerve stimulation is used for treating epilepsy and depression when conventional treatments are ineffective.
- It involves either implantable devices or non-invasive, skin-held devices.

Expanding Applications: Researchers are studying vagus nerve stimulation for various conditions like migraines, polycystic ovary syndrome, alcoholism, rheumatoid arthritis, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis and gut disorders.

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Place in News

Armenia

Armenia (Capital: Yerevan)

Recently, Union Cabinet approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Armenia for cooperation in sharing successful digital solutions implemented at population scale for digital transformation.

Location: Armenia is a landlocked country in Transcaucasia, situated to the south of the Caucasus Mountains.

Political Boundaries: Armenia shares its borders with Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (a disputed territory), Turkey, Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic (an exclave of Azerbaijan), Georgia and Iran.

Geographical Features:

- Armenia is a mountainous country with no lowlands.
- Mount Aragats (also known as Alaghez) is the Highest Peak
- The major river is Aras.



POINTS TO PONDER

- ❖ What did NASA's James Webb Space Telescope recently, discover on the Exoplanet K2-18 b? - Carbon Dioxide and Methane
- ❖ How many District and Subordinate courts were computerized under Phase II of the eCourts Project? - 18,735
- ❖ What program is the Skill India Digital (SID) platform a part of? -SANKALP
- ❖ Which river surrounds Bandipur Tiger Reserve in the north? -River Kabini
- ❖ Who, as the last Governor-General of India, opposed Hindi imposition in Tamil Nadu with the slogan "English Ever, Hindi Never"? -C. Rajagopalachari

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