



Trial by Media

For Prelims: Kangaroo Courts, CJI, Article 21 and 19, Fundamental Rights

For Mains: Trial by Media and its implications

Why in News?

Recently, the [Chief Justice of India \(CJI\)](#) said that the Media is Running agenda-driven debates and **Kangaroo Courts**, which is not **healthy for democracy**.

What is a Kangaroo Court?

- The phrase "Kangaroo Court" is used against a **judicial system where the judgement against the accused is usually predetermined**.
- It is a **self-appointed or mock court set up without much premeditation** for the purpose of delivering judgement arrived at in advance, usually in which the **fate of a disloyal person is decided**.
 - This expression may have originated in Australia but it was first recorded in the US during the California Gold Rush of 1849.
- The Kangaroo Courts **were common during the Stalin era in the Soviet Union**, famous as the "Moscow Trails" of the Soviet Great Purge.

What is Trial by Media?

- **About:**
 - Trial by media is a phrase popular in the **late 20th century** and early 21st century to describe **the impact of television and newspaper coverage on a person's reputation by creating a widespread perception** of guilt or innocence before, or after, a verdict in a court of law.
 - In recent times there have been **numerous instances in which the media has conducted the trial of an accused and has passed the verdict** even before the court passes its judgement.
- **Constitutionality:**
 - Though the word media trial is not directly defined anywhere. But indirectly, **this power is being given to the media under [Article 19](#)** of the Constitution of India.
 - **Article 19 of the Constitution of India provides freedom of speech to each and every person.**

What are the Implications of Trial by Media?

- **Affects Judicial Functioning:**
 - Concerted campaigns against judges, particularly on social media, and media trials affect

judicial functioning.

- Ill-informed, biased and agenda-driven debates in the media on issues pending in courts are affecting justice delivery.

▪ **Unable to Distinguish Fake and Real:**

- New media tools have **enormous amplifying ability but appear to be incapable of distinguishing between the right and the wrong**, the good and the bad and the real and the fake.
- Media trials cannot be a guiding factor in deciding cases.

▪ **Wrongful Portrayal:**

- **Media has been successful in portraying events** that have to be kept a secret.
- Media trials have caused **wrongful portrayal of alleged accused and have acted as a helping hand in destroying their careers** merely by the fact that they were accused, even though they have not yet been portrayed guilty by the court of law.

▪ **Not Good for Democracy:**

- Media has **breached its responsibility, taking democracy two steps backwards**, affecting people and harming the system.
- Print media still has a certain degree of accountability whereas electronic media has zero accountability as to what it shows vanishes in thin air.

▪ **Instigate Hatred and Violence:**

- Paid news and fake news **can manipulate public perception and can instigate hatred, violence, and disharmony** among the various communities within society.
- The absence of objective journalism leads to the false presentation of truth in a society which affects the perception and opinions of people.

▪ **Right to privacy:**

- They invade their privacy which causes a breach of the **Right to Privacy guaranteed under [Article 21](#)**.

How is the Media Regulated in India?

- The body that regulates and governs the media and entertainment sector in India is **enshrined in the Cable Networks Act, 1995 and the Prasar Bharti Act, 1990**. These are regulated by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Prasar Bharti.
- There are **four bodies in India for media regulation**.
 - **Press Council of India:** Its mandate is to preserve the freedom of the press and to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India.
 - **News Broadcasting Standards Authority:** It is an Industry Body created by the News Broadcasters Association (NBA).
 - **Broadcasting Content Complaints Council:** This is to deal with complaints against entertainment and general segment television programmes.
 - **News Broadcasters Federation:** It was created by those who left the NBA, called the News Broadcasters Federation.

Way Forward

- Media should **only engage in acts of journalism and not act as a special agency** for the court.
- Though the media acts as a watchdog and brings us a platform where the people can know about the things happening in a society, it is important to know that this has only led to the whole of the world being biased against one community or a single person.
- Media should understand that **its role is to raise issues which the public is facing**. Media can be a voice for those who can't speak for themselves. Media **should not deliver judgment because in India we have a judiciary for this purpose**.
- Media should maintain **its code of laws and ethics, social responsibility and credibility by not interfering in the matters of court** so early. Instead, they should do the research, keep a check on high profile cases, find the evidence and keep it to them until and unless they find the truth suppressing.

Ramsar Sites

For Prelims: Climate Change, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Wetlands and Ramsar Sites in India, Sustainable Development, World Wetlands Day 2022, Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017

For Mains: Wetlands - Significance, Threats, Impact of Degradation, Measures that can be taken to protect Wetlands

Why in News?

India has added five more [Ramsar sites](#), or wetlands of international importance, bringing the number of such sites to 54.

What are these New Ramsar Sites?

- **Karikili Bird Sanctuary (Tamil Nadu):**
 - The sanctuary is spread over a five-kilometre-wide belt and is home to cormorants, egrets, grey heron, open-billed stork, darter, spoonbill, white Ibis, night herons, grebes, grey pelican among others.
- **Pallikaranai Marsh Reserve Forest (Tamil Nadu):**
 - One of the **last remaining natural wetlands**, the marsh drains in an area of 250 square kilometres encompassing 65 wetlands.
 - The Pallikaranai Marsh is **one of the few natural coastal aquatic habitats that qualify as a wetland in India.**
- **Pichavaram Mangrove (Tamil Nadu):**
 - One of the last [mangrove forests](#) in the country.
 - It has an island of a vast expanse of water covered with mangrove forests.
- **Sakhya Sagar (Madhya Pradesh):**
 - Created from the Manier river in 1918, Sakhya Sagar is located near [Madhav National Park](#).
- **Pala Wetland in Mizoram (Mizoram):**
 - It is home to a wide **range of animals, birds, and reptiles.**
 - Its geographical location **falls under the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot** and is therefore rich in animal and plant species.
 - The lake is a **major component of the Palak Wildlife Sanctuary** and it supports the major biodiversity of the sanctuary.

What is Ramsar Recognition?

- **About:**
 - A Ramsar site is a **wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention**, which is also known as the **'Convention on Wetlands'** — an intergovernmental environmental treaty established by UNESCO in 1971, and named after the **city of Ramsar in Iran**, where the convention was signed that year.
 - Ramsar recognition is **the identification of wetlands around the world**, which are of international importance, especially **if they provide habitat to waterfowl (about 180 species of birds).**

- There is international interest and cooperation in the conservation of such wetlands and a judicious use of their resources.
 - [Sundarbans in West Bengal](#) is the **largest** Ramsar site in India.
- India's Ramsar wetlands are spread over 11,000 sq km — around 10% of the total wetland area in the country — across 18 States.
 - No other South Asian country has as many sites though this has much to do with India's geographical breadth and tropical diversity.
- There are nine
- **Criteria: One of the nine criteria must be fulfilled to be the Ramsar Site.**
 - **Criterion 1:** If it contains a **representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland** type found within the appropriate biogeographic region.
 - **Criterion 2:** If it supports **vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species** or threatened ecological communities.
 - **Criterion 3:** If it supports **populations of plant and/or animal species** important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region.
 - **Criterion 4:** If it supports **plant and/or animal species at a critical stage** in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.
 - **Criterion 5:** If it regularly **supports 20,000 or more waterbirds**.
 - **Criterion 6:** If it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.
 - **Criterion 7:** If it supports a **significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies, species or families, life-history stages, species interactions and/or populations** that are representative of wetland benefits and/or values and thereby contributes to global biological diversity.
 - **Criterion 8:** If it is an **important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path** on which fish stocks, either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend.
 - **Criterion 9:** If it regularly **supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species** or subspecies of wetland-dependent non avian animal species.
- **Significance:**
 - Ramsar Tag helps **develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation** of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.
 - Sites are protected **under strict guidelines of the convention**.

What are the Wetlands?

- **About:**
 - Wetlands are ecosystems saturated with water, either seasonally or permanently.
 - They include [mangroves](#), [marshes](#), [rivers](#), [lakes](#), [deltas](#), [floodplains](#) and flooded forests, rice-fields, [coral reefs](#), marine areas no deeper than 6 metres at low tide, as well as human-made wetlands such as waste-water treatment ponds and reservoirs.
 - Though they cover only around **6% of the Earth's land surface, 40% of all plant and animal species live or breed in wetlands**.
- **Significance:**
 - **Assist in Fighting Against Climate Change:**
 - Wetlands assist in **stabilising [CO₂](#) (Carbon dioxide), [CH₄](#) (Methane), [N₂O](#) (Nitrous oxide) and [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\)](#)** concentrations by minimising climate and land-use-mediated GHG releases and by boosting the potential to actively collect CO₂ from the atmosphere and sequester carbon.
 - Wetlands also **help reduce the risk of disasters such as floods**, by protecting coastlines.
 - **Sequester Carbon:**
 - Wetlands' microbes, plants and wildlife are part of **global cycles for water, nitrogen and sulphur**.
 - Wetlands store carbon within their plant communities and soil instead of releasing it to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide.
 - **Significance of Peatlands:**

- The term ‘peatland’ refers to the peat soil and the wetland habitats growing on the surface.
- They **account for just 3% of the world’s land surface but store twice as much carbon as forests**, thus playing a crucial role in delivering global commitments on the climate crisis, sustainable development, and biodiversity.
- Peatlands - one of the world’s largest carbon reserves, are sparse in India and require immediate attention.
- **Paradise for Migratory Birds:**
 - Millions of [migratory birds](#) flock to India, and wetlands are critical to this annual phenomenon.
 - Ecologically dependent on wetlands, **migratory waterbirds connect continents, hemispheres, cultures, and societies** through their seasonal movements.
 - A diversity of wetland communities offers essential stopovers for birds.
- **Cultural and Tourism Importance:**
 - Wetlands also have a deep connection with Indian culture and traditions.
 - [Loktak Lake in Manipur](#) is revered as “Ima” (Mother) by locals, whereas Sikkim’s Khecheopalri Lake is popular as the “wish fulfilling lake”.
 - The north Indian festival of Chhath is one of the most unique expressions of the association of people, culture, water and wetlands.
 - The Dal Lake in Kashmir, Khajjiar Lake in Himachal Pradesh, Nainital Lake in Uttarakhand and Kodaikanal in Tamil Nadu are popular tourism destinations.
- **Threat:**
 - **Human Activities:**
 - As per the [IPBES \(Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services\)](#)’s global assessment, wetlands are the most threatened ecosystem due to human activities and global warming.
 - **Urbanisation:**
 - Wetlands near urban centres are under increasing developmental pressure for residential, industrial and commercial facilities.
 - Areas surrounded by urbanised wetlands are expected to lead to a coastal squeeze in the face of sea-level rise ultimately leading to wetland loss.
 - **Climate Changes:**
 - [Climate change](#) and linked drivers and pressures are highly likely to increase vulnerability of wetlands.
 - Increased air temperature, shifts in precipitation, increased frequency of [storms](#), [droughts](#), and [floods](#), increased atmospheric CO₂ concentration, and [sea level rise](#) could also affect wetlands.
 - **Maladaptation:**
 - Wetlands are also **exposed to the risk of maladaptation** — the likelihood of adverse impacts on these ecosystems in response to adaptation actions in other sectors.
 - For example, the construction of hydraulic structures to increase freshwater storage in upstream stretches, may further accentuate the risks of salinisation in downstream coastal wetlands.

Way Forward

- The ecosystem services of wetlands need to be highlighted in development policies, urban planning and climate change mitigation.
 - In this context, mega urban schemes like [Smart Cities Mission](#) and [Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation](#) need to add the aspects of sustainable management of wetlands.
 - The multiple benefits and services provided by wetlands are essential to achieve the ambitious agenda for building resilient cities to achieve [sustainable development goals](#), while accommodating further development and eradicating poverty.

[Source: TH](#)

Draft Medical Devices Bill

For Prelims: Drugs Medical Devices and Cosmetics Bill 2022, Medical Devices Technical Advisory Board, E-pharmacy

For Mains: Drugs Medical Devices and Cosmetics Bill 2022, E-pharmacy

Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Health Ministry** released a draft of the proposed [Drugs Medical Devices and Cosmetics Bill, 2022](#) which would replace the existing Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and other several rules.

- It focuses on creating a **separate regulation for medical devices**, which makes provision for fines and imprisonment for injury and death related to **clinical trials or investigations and seeks to regulate e-pharmacies**.

What are Medical Devices?

- The medical device industry is a **unique blend of engineering and medicine**. It involves the creation of machines that are used to support life within the human body.
- Medical devices include Surgical Equipment, Diagnostic equipment like Cardiac imaging, CT scans, X-ray, Molecular Imaging, MRI and Ultrasound-imaging including hand-held devices, Life Support equipment like ventilator, etc. as well as Implants and Disposables.

What are the key Highlights of the Draft Bill?

- **Provisions for the Clinical Trials and Investigations:**
 - **Compensation to Heir:** It makes provisions for **compensation to participants or their legal heirs for injury or death suffered in clinical trials and investigations** for drugs and medical devices.
 - The draft also lays the onus on providing medical management for any injury arising due to the trial of the investigators.
 - **Penalty & Fines:** Provision for **imprisonment, and fines** amounting to double the compensation amount **if the compensation is not paid**.
 - **Prohibition of Clinical Trials:** It **prohibits clinical trials or clinical investigations** of drugs and medical devices **without permission from the central licensing authority**.
 - It provides for debarring the investigators and sponsors of a trial or investigation if the laid-down provisions are not followed.
- **Medical Devices Technical Advisory Board:** The draft bill provides for the creation of a **Medical Devices Technical Advisory Board on the lines of the existing drugs technical advisory board**, with people who have technical knowledge of the engineering of these devices, and members of the industry.
 - Other than officials of the Health Ministry, the board will have officials from the Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Defense Research and Development Organization, and experts from the fields of Biomedical Technology, Biomaterials, and Polymer Technology.

What are the Issues Related to it?

- The draft mainly confronted the issues of **E-pharmacy** and how they violate the existing regulations as follows:
- There is hardly any provision for the regulation of online pharmacies exist in the 1940 law.
 - At present all these **online pharmacies are working outside the law, most of them have licenses for physical shops or storage units.**
 - They deliver medicines without any prescription.
 - In case of violation regulatory authorities don't know under which provision of law to file suit against these companies.
 - Sometimes these **companies held licenses from another state and operate in other states.**

What is the Present Status of Medical Devices Industry of India?

- **About:**
 - The current market size of the medical devices industry in India is estimated at USD 11 bn, represents a sunrise sector of the Indian economy.
 - The medical devices industry in India consists of large multinationals as well as **Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)** growing at an unprecedented scale.
 - The medical device sector has been growing steadily at a **CAGR of 15% over the last 3 years.**
 - The medical devices industry in India is poised for significant growth with the market size expected to reach USD 50 bn by 2025.
 - **100% FDI is allowed under the automatic route** for both brownfield and greenfield setups. Strong FDI inflows reflect the confidence of global players in the Indian market.
- **Initiatives:**
 - **Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Promoting Domestic Manufacturing of Medical Devices:**
 - **The Production Linked Incentives Scheme (PLI)** Scheme for Medical Devices manufacturing proposes a **financial incentive to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investment** in medical devices segments such as cancer care devices, radiology and imaging devices, anesthetics devices, implants, etc.
 - **Promotion of Medical Device Parks:**
 - Promotion of **Medical Device Parks** aims to **strengthen the infrastructure base and develop a robust manufacturing ecosystem** for medical devices in the domestic market.
 - Grants under the Scheme for development of **world-class standard testing and infrastructure facilities** will build momentum for domestic production and deepen the value chain of Medical Devices in India.
 - Additionally, these are expected to **reduce the cost of manufacturing significantly**, leading to better accessibility and affordability of medical devices in the country.
 - Medical devices have been recognised as a **sunrise sector** under the **'Make in India' campaign** in 2014.

What was the Need to Bring this Bill?

- Almost **80% of the medical devices currently sold in the country are imported**, particularly high-end devices.
- Indian players in the space have so far typically focussed on low-cost and low-tech products, like consumables and disposables, leading to a higher value share going to foreign companies.
- It aims to **reduce India's import dependence from 80% to nearly 30% in the next 10 years** and become one of the top five global manufacturing hubs for medical devices by 2047.
- It is also aimed at **increasing India's per capita spend on medical devices.**
 - India has **one of the lowest per capita spend on medical devices at USD 3**, compared to the global average of per capita consumption of USD 47, and significantly lower than the per capita consumption of developed nations like the USA at USD 415 and Germany at USD 313.

Way Forward

- There is a need for either law or, more simply, a change in the current Rules to regulate e-pharmacies.
- There is a need for creating a deterrent against big Pharma companies as there are rules for clinical trials but it's not enough.
- There should also be provisions for recalling medicines or devices if any issues are detected.
- Increase access and improve the rational use of essential medicines.

[Source: IE](#)

Flag Code of India

For Prelims: Flag Code of India, Fundamental Duties, History of National Flag

For Mains: Significance of National Symbols, Evolution of National Flag, Rules and Regulations for National Flag

Why in News?

Recently, the Government of India has announced that the [national flag](#) can now remain hoisted **through the night**, if it is in the open and hoisted by a member of the public.

- Earlier, the tricolour could be hoisted **only between sunrise and sunset**.
- The government had earlier amended the flag code to allow for machine-made and polyester flags to be used.
- As government launched a **Har Ghar Tiranga campaign**, the Ministry of Home Affairs amended the **Flag Code of India 2002** to allow for the **national flag to be flown even at night**.

What do we know about the Flag Code of India?

- It allowed the **unrestricted display of the Tricolour** as long as the **honour and dignity** of the flag were being respected.
- The flag code **did not replace the pre-existing rules** governing the correct display of the flag.
 - It was, however, an **effort to bring together all the previous laws**, conventions and practices.
- It is divided into three parts -
 - **General description** of the tricolour.
 - Rules on display of the flag by **public and private bodies and educational institutions**.
 - Rules for display of the flag by **governments and government bodies**.
- It mentions that the tricolour **cannot be used for commercial purposes** and cannot be **dipped in salute to any person or thing**.
- Moreover, the flag should **not be used as a festoon**, or for any kind of **decoration purposes**.
- For official display, only flags that conform to the specifications as laid down by the [Bureau of Indian Standards](#) and bearing their mark can be used.

What is the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign?

- **'Har Ghar Tiranga'** is a campaign under the aegis of **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav** to encourage

people to **bring the Tiranga home and to hoist it to mark the 75th year of India's independence.**

- Our relationship with the flag has always been more formal and institutional than personal.
 - Bringing the flag home collectively as a nation in the 75th year of independence thus becomes **symbolic of not only an act of personal connection to the Tiranga but also an embodiment of our commitment to nation-building.**
- The idea behind the initiative is to **invoke the feeling of patriotism** in the hearts of the people and to promote awareness about the Indian National Flag.

What do we know about India's National Flag?

- **History:**
 - **1906:**
 - **The first national flag**, which consisted of **three horizontal stripes of red, yellow and green**, is said to have been hoisted on 7th August, 1906, at the **Parsee Bagan Square, near Lower Circular Road, in Calcutta (now Kolkata).**
 - **1921:**
 - Later, in 1921, freedom fighter **Pingali Venkayya met Mahatma Gandhi** and proposed a **basic design of the flag**, consisting of **two red and green bands.**
 - **1931:**
 - After undergoing several changes, the Tricolour was **adopted as our national flag at a Congress Committee meeting in Karachi in 1931.**
 - **1947:**
 - The Indian flag was adopted in its present form during a meeting of the **Constituent Assembly held on 22nd July 1947.**
- **Rules Governing the Tricolour:**
 - **The Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950:**
 - It **restricts the use of the national flag, the coat-of-arms** used by a government department, the official seal of the President or Governor, the pictorial representation of Mahatma Gandhi and the Prime Minister, and the Ashoka Chakra.
 - **The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971:**
 - It prohibits the **desecration of or insult to the country's national symbols**, including the **national flag, the [Constitution](#), the national anthem and the Indian map.**
 - A person who is convicted for the following offences under the Act is **disqualified to contest in the [elections to the Parliament](#) and state legislature** for 6 years.
 - Offence of insulting the National Flag,
 - Offence of insulting the Constitution of India,
 - Offence of preventing the singing of the National Anthem.
 - **Part IV-A of the Constitution:**
 - **[The Part IV-A of the Constitution](#)** (which consists of only one Article 51-A) specifies the eleven Fundamental Duties.
 - According to Article 51A (a), it shall be the **duty of every citizen of India to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem.**

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

Q. With reference to Madanapalle of Andhra Pradesh, which one of the following statements is correct?

- (a) Pingali Venkayya designed the tricolour Indian National Flag here.
- (b) Pattabhi Sitaramaiah led the Quit India Movement of Andhra region from here.
- (c) Rabindranath Tagore translated the National Anthem from Bengali to English here.
- (d) Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott set up headquarters of Theosophical Society first here.

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

- The original song 'Jana Gana Mana' (National Anthem) was written in Bengali, but in a Sanskritized dialect known as Sadhu Bhasha.
- The idea of translating the song from Bengali to English came to Rabindranath Tagore while he was visiting the Besant Theosophical College on the invitation of Irish poet James H. Cousins. He penned down the English translation during his stay at Madanapalle, a small town in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.
- Jana Gana Mana was officially proclaimed as India's National Anthem by the Constituent Assembly of India on 24th January 24, 1950.
- Therefore, option (c) is the correct answer

[Source: IE](#)

Swadesh Darshan Scheme

For Prelims: Swadesh Darshan scheme, PRASAD, Atmanirbhar Bharat

For Mains: Atmanirbhar Bharat, Tourism Sector

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Tourism has revamped its [Swadesh Darshan scheme](#) as **Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0)** with an aim to develop sustainable and responsible infrastructure at destinations.

What is Swadesh Darshan Scheme?

- **About:**
 - It was launched in 2014-15 for integrated development of **theme-based tourist circuits** — Buddhist Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Desert Circuit, Eco Circuit, Heritage Circuit, Northeast Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Sufi Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Ramayana Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Tirthankar Circuit, Wildlife Circuit and Tribal Circuit.
 - It is **100% centrally funded** and efforts are made to achieve convergence with other schemes of Central and State Governments and also to **leverage the voluntary funding available for [Corporate Social Responsibility \(CSR\)](#) initiatives** of Central Public Sector Undertakings and Corporate Sector.
- **Significance:**
 - Under the schemes of Swadesh Darshan and [PRASAD \(Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive\)](#), the Ministry of Tourism provides **financial assistance to states and Union Territories for the development of tourism infrastructure**.
 - The projects under this scheme are sanctioned subject to availability of funds, submission of detailed project reports, adherence to scheme guidelines and utilisation of funds released previously.
- **Objectives:**
 - To position tourism as a major engine of economic growth and job creation;

- Develop circuits having tourist potential in a planned and prioritized manner;
- Promote cultural and heritage value of the country to generate livelihoods in the identified regions;
- **Enhancing the tourist attractiveness in a sustainable manner** by developing world class infrastructure in the circuit/destinations;
- Follow community-based development and pro-poor tourism approach;
- **Creating awareness among the local communities about the importance of tourism for them in terms of increased sources of income**, improved living standards and overall development of the area.
- To make full use of the potential and advantages in terms of available infrastructure, national culture and characteristic strong points of each and every region throughout the country by development of theme-based circuits.
- Development of tourist facilitation services to enhance visitor experience/satisfaction.

What is Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0?

- With **the mantra of ‘vocal for local’**, the revamped scheme namely **Swadesh Darshan 2.0** seeks to attain **“Aatmanirbhar Bharat”** by realizing India’s full potential as a tourism destination.
- Swadesh Darshan 2.0 is not an incremental change but a generational shift to evolve Swadesh Darshan Scheme as a holistic mission to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations.
- It will encourage the development of benchmarks and standards for **generic and theme-specific development of tourism destinations** and the States will follow the benchmarks and standards while planning and developing the projects.
- Following **major themes** have been identified for tourism under the Scheme.
 - Culture and Heritage
 - Adventure Tourism
 - Eco-Tourism
 - Wellness Tourism
 - [MICE Tourism](#)
 - [Rural Tourism](#)
 - Beach Tourism
 - Cruises – Ocean & Inland.

[Source: IE](#)

Undisclosed Foreign Income

For Prelims: Bank of International Settlements, Government’s Initiatives

For Mains: Effects of Black Money on Economy, India’s status of Undisclosed Income, Related Government’s initiatives

Why in News?

Recently, the **Finance Minister of India** has reported that [undisclosed income](#) in unreported foreign accounts of more than Rs 8,468 crore has been brought to tax and penalty of over Rs 1,294 crore has been levied.

What do we know about the Undisclosed Income?

- **About:**
 - It is the income which the assessee has not shown in his Income Tax Return and **thereby not paid [income tax](#)** on it.
 - **It may include:**
 - any **money, bullion, jewellery** or other **valuable article** or thing or any **income based on any entry in the books of account** or other **documents or transactions**, which has not been or would not have been disclosed for the purposes of Income Tax.
- **Finance Minister's Report:**
 - Assessments have been completed for 368 cases, raising tax demand of Rs 14,820 crore under the **Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015**.
 - 648 disclosures involving **undisclosed foreign assets** worth Rs 4,164 crore were made in the **one-time three months compliance window**, which closed on 30th September 2015, under the **Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015**.
 - Amount collected by way of tax and penalty in such cases was about Rs 2,476 crore.
 - '**Locational banking statistics**' of the **[Bank for International Settlements \(BIS\)](#)** showed a fall of 8.3% during 2021 in deposits by Indian individuals in Swiss banks.

What is Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015?

- It penalises the **concealment of foreign income** and provides for **criminal liability for attempting to evade [tax](#)** in relation to foreign income.
- The Act gave a **one-time opportunity to Indian residents** to declare undisclosed foreign income and assets.
- The concerned person had to pay **tax at the rate of 30% and an equal amount by way of penalty** if found having undisclosed overseas wealth.
- However, **in case of non-declaration**, the provisions included slapping of tax at the rate of **30% along with a penalty equal to three times the amount of tax evaded or 90%** of the undisclosed income or the value of the asset.
- The Act provides for **punishment of jail for 3-10 years for the willful evasion**.

What are the Government's steps for Undisclosed Income?

- **[Demonetisation](#)**
- **[The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018](#)**
- **[Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002](#)**
- **[The Benami Transactions \(Prohibition\) Amendment Act, 2016](#)**

Way Forward

- **Incentivising Bank Transactions:**
 - To curb the menace of black money, industry body **[Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry](#)** has suggested **incentivisation of transactions through banking channels** and a suitable framework for taxation of agricultural income.
- **Electoral Reforms:**
 - **Appropriate reforms** are needed to **reduce money power in [elections](#)**, since elections are one of the biggest channels to utilize the black money.
- **Training Personnel:**
 - **Both domestic and international training** to personnel for effective action pertaining to the concerned area can also help.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. Discuss how emerging technologies and globalisation contribute to money laundering. Elaborate

measures to tackle the problem of money laundering both at national and international levels. **(2021)**

Q. India's proximity to the two of the world's biggest illicit opium-growing states has enhanced her internal security concerns. Explain the linkages between drug trafficking and other illicit activities such as gunrunning, money laundering and human trafficking. What counter-measures should be taken to prevent the same? **(2018)**

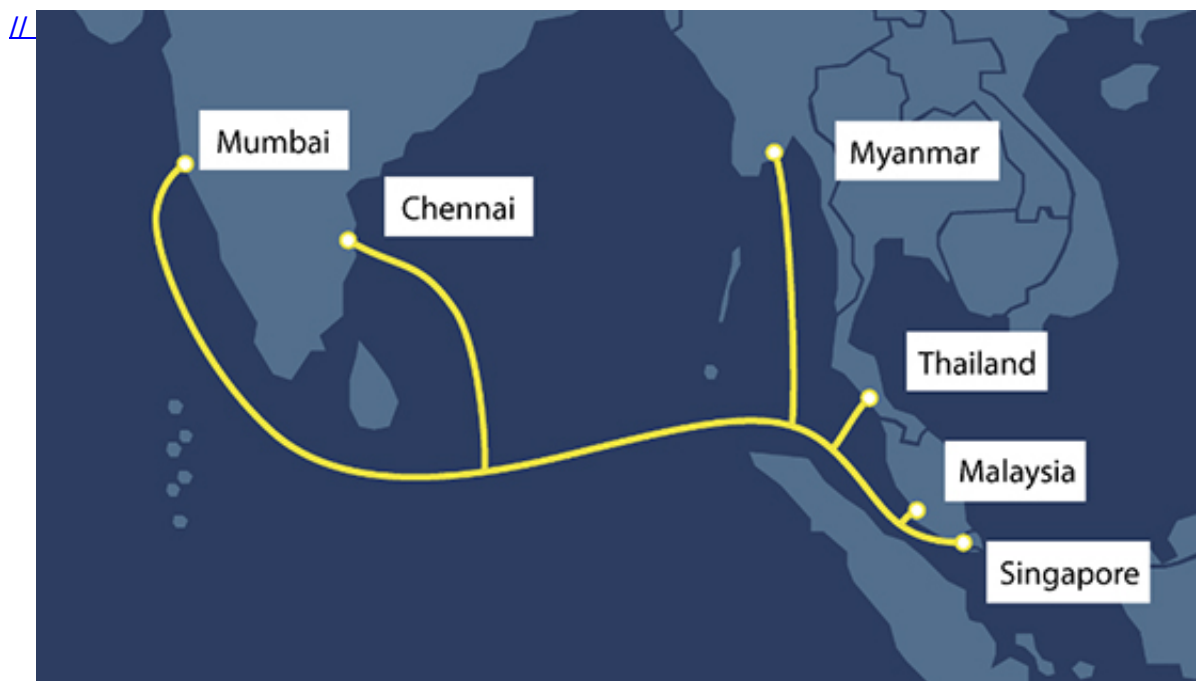
[Source: IE](#)

MIST Submarine Cable System

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change recommended **MIST (Myanmar/Malaysia-India-Singapore Transit) Submarine Cable System** for [Coastal Regulation Zone \(CRZ\)](#) clearance.

- This will be the **17th** such [Optical Fibre Cable System](#) to land in Mumbai and is expected to be ready for service in 2023.



What is the MIST?

- MIST is **an international submarine cable communication network**, traversing the undersea to connect India with other Asian countries such as **Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore**.
- It is an **8,100km-long undersea transnational fibre optic cable system** connecting Mumbai to Singapore, via Chennai.
 - The cable system **will terminate in Mumbai at Versova beach**.

- Of the total length of the international undersea cable system, **523.50 km will be laid along the Tamil Nadu coastal waters** about 12 nautical miles offshore. and about 202.06 km in the CRZ boundary of Maharashtra.

What is the Significance of the Project?

- MIST cable system will provide **secure, reliable, robust and affordable telecom facilities in Asia.**
- It will **boost telecom connectivity between India and other Asian countries**, namely Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.
- This is a project of immense importance to global communications and will have a **minimal footprint on Mumbai's coastal environment.**
- It would also **help avoid conflict with various stakeholders** considering the increasing number of international cable landing on the Chennai coast.

What are the Similar Upcoming Projects?

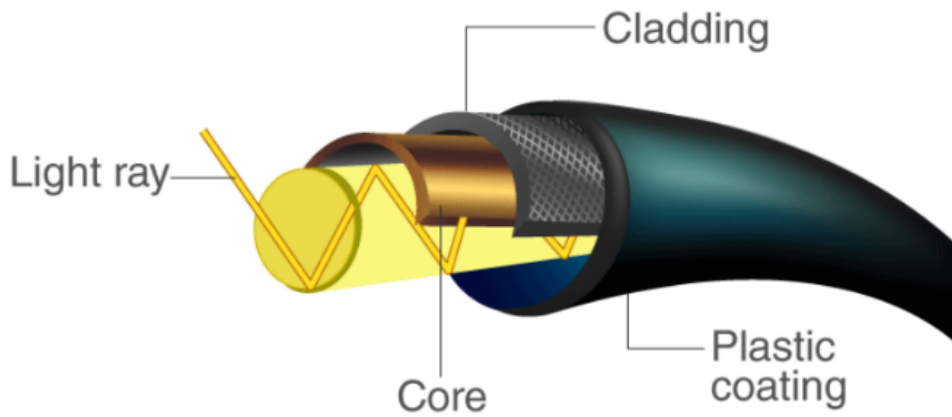
- **Reliance Jio Infocomm's India Asia Xpress (IAX)**, connecting India to the Maldives, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- **India Europe Xpress (IEX)**, connecting India to Italy via Saudi Arabia and Greece.
- **SeaMeWe-6 project**, owned by a consortium of telecom providers, will connect Singapore to France via India, Bangladesh, Maldives.
- **Africa2 cable**, which will connect India with the United Kingdom via several African countries.

What is a Submarine Communications Cable?

- It is a cable laid on the **seabed between land-based stations to transmit telecommunication signals** across stretches of ocean and sea.
- Modern submarine cables **use fiber-optic technology.**
- The optical fibre elements are typically coated with plastic layers and contained in a protective tube suitable for the environment where the cable will be deployed.
- Compared to satellites, using internet connection through submarine cables is **more reliable, cost efficient and of larger capacity.**

What is an Optical Fibre?

- Optical fibre is **the backbone of the digital infrastructure** — the data is transmitted by light pulses travelling through long strands of thin fibre.
- Metal wires are preferred for transmission in optical fibre communication as signals travel with fewer damages.
 - The optical fibre works on the principle of **total internal reflection (TIR).**
- Light rays can be used to transmit a huge amount of data (In case of long straight wire without any bend).
 - In case of a bend, **the optical cables are designed such that they bend all the light rays inwards (using TIR).**



[Source: TH](#)

Light-Mantled Albatross

Why in News?

Recently Light-mantled Albatross, a species native to the [Antarctic seas](#), was recorded in Tamil Nadu.

What are the Findings?

- The location where the Albatross was spotted **is part of the Palk Bay and near the [Gulf of Mannar](#)**, an 'Important Bird Area' on India's southeast coast.
- This record from the [Palk Bay](#) side of Rameswaram island is significant, and it throws up **new challenges to researchers once these Antarctic birds migrate to Asia**.
- This finding also **directs researchers to look for bird migration away from the well-known and established routes and sites**.
- As the nearest recorded site of the bird is around 5,000 km away from Rameswaram, **a change in atmospheric pressure may be among the reasons** for the Albatross to land on an Indian shore.

What is a Light-mantled Albatross?

- **Scientific Name:** *Phoebastria palpebrata*
- **About:**
 - Also, known as the **grey-mantled albatross** or the light-mantled sooty albatross.
 - Light-mantled albatrosses spend most of their lives in flight. A juvenile may **spend many years at sea before returning to breed**.
 - The Light-mantled Albatross, with broad pelagic habits, maintains a **circumpolar distribution in the Southern Ocean**.



- **Appearance:**
 - Ash coloured with darker areas around the head and lighter areas across the back and wingtips.
 - Distinctive white stripe immediately above the eye.
- **Population:**
 - A worldwide population of 21,600 breeding pairs, according to an estimate in 1998.
- **Protection:**
 - [IUCN Red List](#): Near Threatened

[Source: TH](#)

Cholera

Why in News?

Researchers identified the decline of **antimicrobial resistance in Cholera-Causing Bacteria**.

What are the Findings?

- More than two hundred serogroups of **Cholera bacterium** are known, of which **only O1 and O139 Genomes are known to cause such infection that leads to [epidemics and pandemics](#)**.
 - Researchers studied the **genome of O139 and traced the reason for its dying down** after taking over from O1.
- Two key genomic evolutionary changes took place in **O139, the first related to the type of cholera toxin** it produced and the second **related to a loss of [Antimicrobial Resistance \(AMR\)](#)**.
- Two main modifications were in the **cholera toxin genes and in the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) portfolio**.
- With the reduction in AMR capacity of O139, **it potentially lost its competitive advantage against the O1**.

What is Cholera?

- **About:**

- It is a **life-threatening infectious disease** and a public health hazard.
- Cholera is an **acute, diarrheal illness caused by infection of the intestine with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae***.
- The infection is often mild or without symptoms, but sometimes can be severe.
- **Symptoms:**
 - Profuse watery diarrhoea
 - Vomiting
 - Leg cramps
- **Transmission:**
 - A person may get **cholera by drinking water or eating food contaminated with the cholera bacterium**.
 - The disease can spread **rapidly in areas with inadequate treatment of sewage and drinking water**.
- **Vaccine:**
 - Currently there are **three WHO pre-qualified oral cholera vaccines (OCV), Dukoral, Shanchol, and Euvichol-Plus**.
 - All three vaccines require two doses for full protection.

What are the Recommendations?

- Continuous surveillance is necessary **to monitor if any of the serotypes and serogroups are gaining antibiotic resistance over time** and may become major outbreak lineages at any time.
- To stay ahead of the curve and ensure best public health outcome, it is important **that vaccines and treatments are regularly re-evaluated** for efficiency to any newly evolving variants.

[Source: TH](#)
