

1. National Company Law Tribunal

Topic: Polity and
Governance



In News: NCLT division bench will hear Reliance Capital case on January 16.

More on the Topic

- NCLT is a quasi-judicial authority incorporated for dealing with corporate disputes that are of civil nature arising under the Companies Act.
- The tribunal was established under the **Companies Act 2013** and was constituted on 1 June 2016 by the government of India.
- It is based on the recommendation of the **Balakrishna Eradi committee** on law relating to the insolvency and the winding up of companies.
- All proceedings under the Companies Act, including proceedings relating to arbitration, compromise, arrangements, reconstructions and the winding up of companies shall be disposed off by the National Company Law Tribunal.
- The NCLT bench is chaired by a Judicial member who is supposed to be a retired or a serving High Court Judge and a Technical member who must be from the Indian Corporate Law Service, ICLS Cadre.
- The National Company Law Tribunal is the adjudicating authority for the insolvency resolution process of companies and limited liability partnerships under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.



- Decisions of the tribunal may be appealed to **the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal**, the decisions of which may further be appealed to the Supreme Court of India on a point of law.
- The Supreme Court of India has upheld the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code in its entirety.

It Adjudicate Matters under:

- Initiated before the **Company Law Board under the previous act (the Companies Act 1956)**;
- Pending before **the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction**, including those pending under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985;
- Pending before the **Appellate Authority for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction**; and
- Pertaining to claims of **oppression and mismanagement of a company**, winding up of companies and all other powers prescribed under the Companies Act.

Source: Indian Express

1. India China Trade Relations



Topic: Economy

In News: India's trade deficit with China crossed \$100 billion for the first time, with Indian imports also increasing to an all-time high despite bilateral relations taking a plunge since the Galwan clash along the disputed border area in 2020.

More on the Topic:

- The top commodities that India bought were “electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers, television image and sound recorders and reproducers and parts; nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances and parts of thereof; organic chemicals; plastic and plastic articles; and fertilisers.”
- The most-valued Chinese items that India imported were personal computers, which followed by ‘monolithic integrated circuits-digital, lithium-ion used in batteries, solar cells and urea.



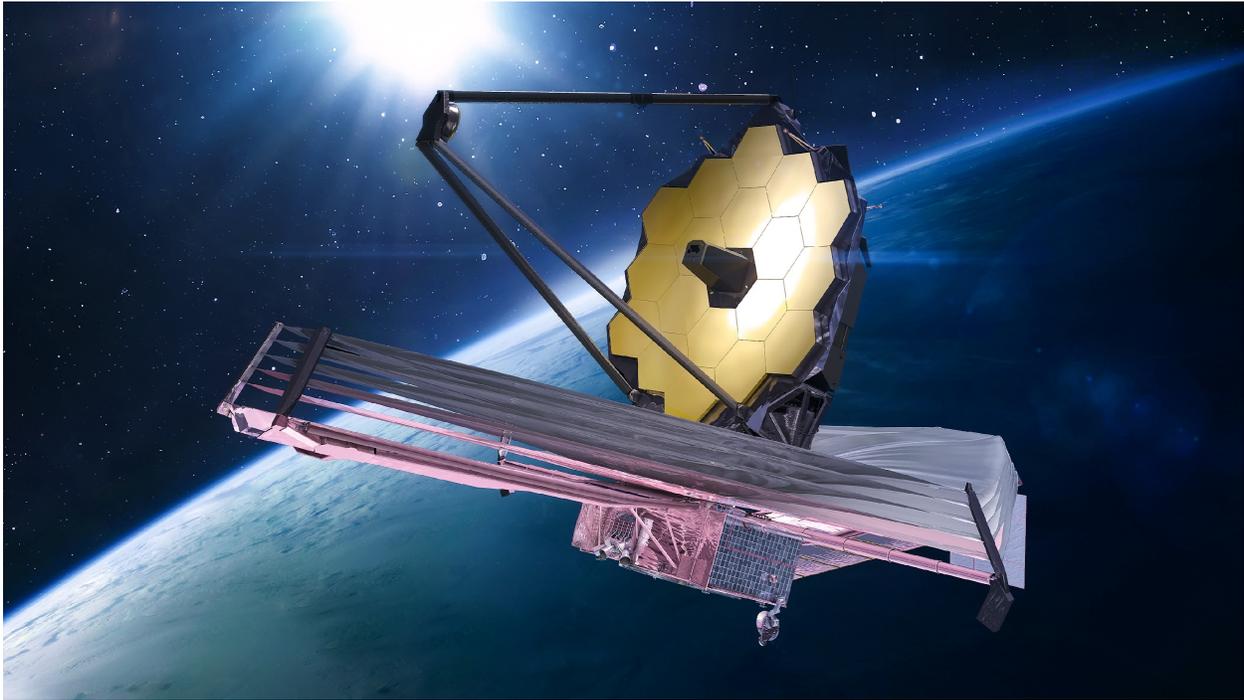
- Most of the imports from China help Indian businesses as **they are intermediate goods.** He says imports from China help India contain inflation.
- **Indian Exports to China** : The top commodities that China bought from India were ores, slag and ash; organic chemicals, mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation, bituminous substances, mineral waxes; iron and steel; aluminium and articles of thereof; and cotton.

Reasons for the Trade Deficit:

- **The growth of trade deficit with China is mainly due to two factors:**
- Narrow basket of commodities that India export to China
- Market access impediments India faces like agricultural products, sectors like pharmaceuticals, IT/IteS, etc.
- Actual size of the deficit is a concern.
- The imbalance has continuously been widening year after year to reach US \$58.04 billion in 2018.
- In 2019, India's trade deficit with China stood at US \$ 56.95 billion, a minor y-o-y decline of 1.88%, with trade deficit declining for the first time since 2005.

Source: PIB

3. James Webb Telescope



Topic: Science and Technology

In News: The James Webb Space Telescope has discovered its first new exoplanet.

More on the Topic:

- Researchers have labelled the planet as LHS 475 b, and it's roughly the same size as Earth.
- Located just 41 light-years away, the planet orbits very close to a red dwarf star and completes a full orbit in just two days.
- Discovering exoplanets is quite tough as they are small and hard to spot around their bright host stars.
- Scientists rely on indirect methods, such as **the transit method**, which is “measuring the dimming of a star that happens to have a planet pass in front of it”.

What are exoplanets?:

- Exoplanets are planets that **orbit other stars and are beyond our solar system**.
- According to NASA, to date, more than 5,000 exoplanets have been discovered. Scientists believe that there are more planets than stars as each star has at least one planet orbiting it.
- Exoplanets come in a host of different sizes. They can be gas giants bigger than Jupiter or as small and rocky as Earth. They are also known to have different kinds of temperatures boiling hot to freezing cold.



- Studying exoplanets not only broadens our understanding of other solar systems but also helps us piece together information about our own planetary system and origin.

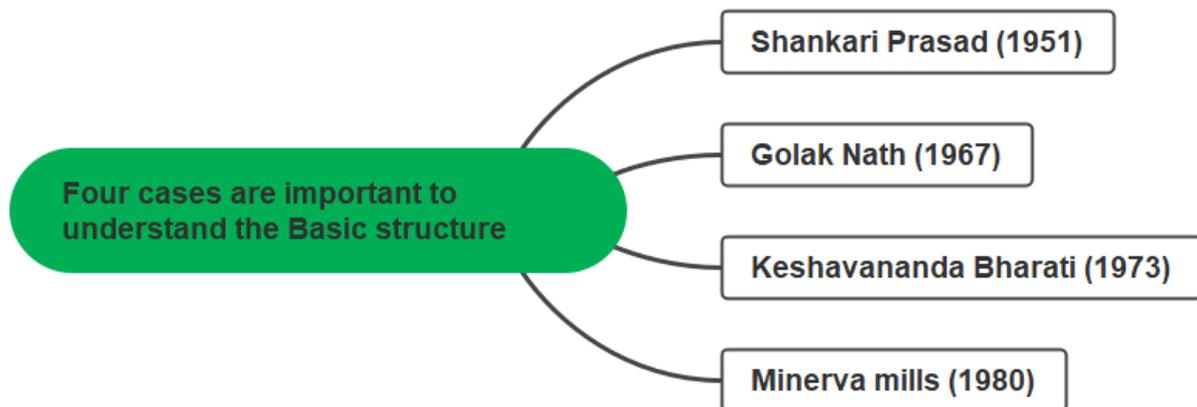
About James Webb Telescope:

- It is the most **powerful infrared telescope launched by NASA**.
- The telescope is the result of an international collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Canadian Space Agency.
- Objectives of the Webb space telescope include
- **Search for the galaxies** that formed the very beginning after the Big Bang.
- Determine the **evolution of galaxies** from their earlier formation until now.
- Observe **the stages of the formation of stars** until the formation of planetary systems.
- Measure the **physical and chemical properties of planetary systems** and investigate the potential for life in such systems.

Source: Hindu

4. Basic Structure of Constitution

Topic: Polity and Governance



In News: Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar criticised the Supreme Court for using the Basic Structure Doctrine to strike down constitutional amendments by Parliament, such as the NJAC Act.

More on the Topic:

- The Doctrine of Basic Structure is a form of judicial review that is used to test the legality of any legislation by the courts.
- The doctrine was evolved by the Supreme Court in the **1973 landmark ruling in Kesavananda Bharati v State of Kerala**.
- In a 7-6 verdict, a 13-judge Constitution Bench ruled that the 'basic structure' of the Constitution is inviolable, and could not be amended by Parliament.



- If a law is found to **“damage or destroy”** the **“basic features of the Constitution”**, the **Court declares it unconstitutional.**
- The test is applied to constitutional amendments to ensure the amendment does not dilute the fundamentals of the Constitutional itself.
- The test is widely regarded as a check on majoritarian impulses of the Parliament since it places substantive limits on the power to amend the Constitution.

What are the basic features of the Indian Constitution?

- In the Kesavananda ruling, the Supreme Court cited several aspects of the Constitution that could be identified as “basic features” of the document but added that **it was not an exhaustive list.**
- For example, judicial review, rule of law, federalism, and democratic republic structure are identified as basic features.
- In the 2015 ruling where the Supreme Court struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act and the related Constitutional Amendment, “judicial independence” was identified as a basic feature of the Constitution.

Why is the doctrine criticised?

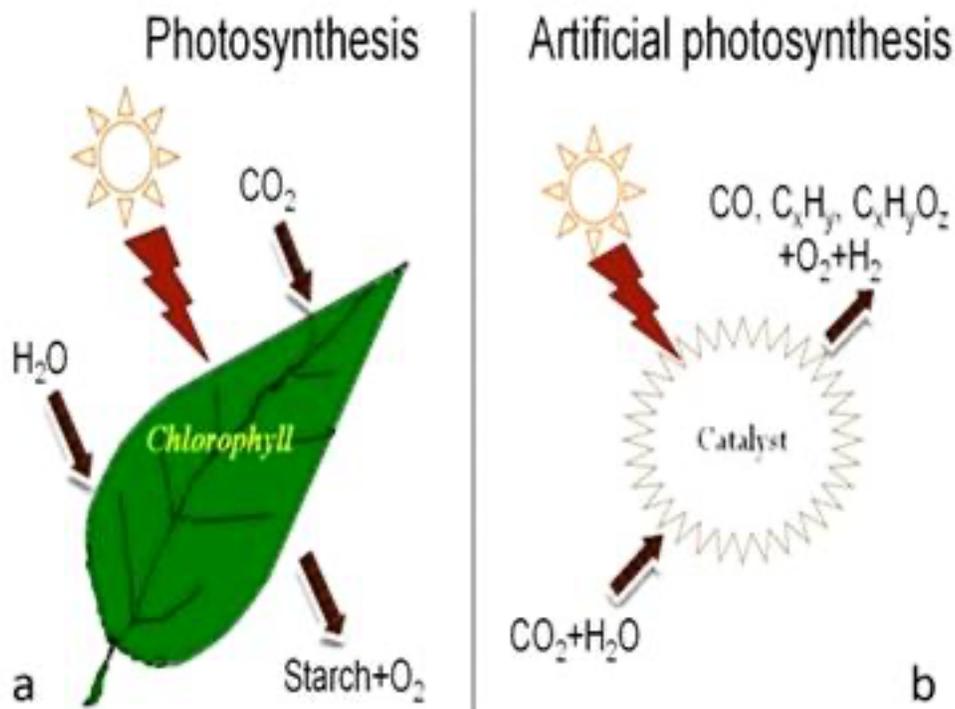
- It is not found in the text of the Constitution itself. By evolving a test, which is not a textual application of judicial review, an argument is made that the judiciary is encroaching on the Parliament’s powers.
- Some critics of the doctrine argues that the power of “unelected judges” to strike down amendments to the Constitution on the basis of this doctrine is **“anti-democratic and counter-majoritarian.”**

Counter Arguments:

- The doctrine rests on a **sound structural interpretation of the Constitution.**
- It is a **testimony to the theory of Constitutionalism** to prevent the damage to the essence of COI by the brute majority of the ruling majority.
- It saved the Indian democracy as it acts as a **limitation of constituent power or else unlimited power of parliament** might have turned India into a totalitarian regime.
- It helps us to retain the **basic tenets of our constitutions meticulously framed by the founding fathers of our Constitution.**
- It **strengthens our democracy by delineating a true separation of power** where the Judiciary is independent of the other two organs.
- Being dynamic in nature, it is more **progressive and open to changes in time, unlike the rigid nature of earlier judgements.**

Source: Indian Express

5. Artificial Photosynthesis



Topic: Environment and Ecology

In News: A study published recently has reported a way to achieve a relatively high efficiency in an artificial photosynthesis reaction in which water is split into oxygen and hydrogen using sunlight and a catalyst. The technique is called photocatalysis.

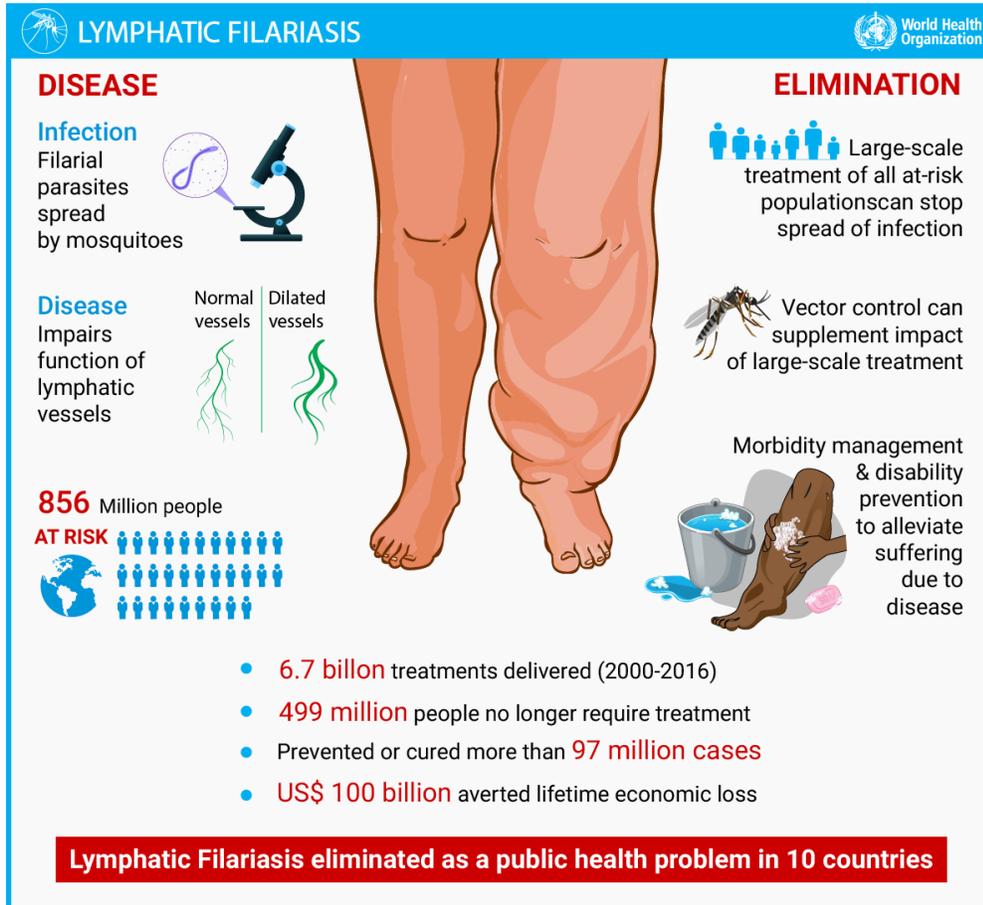
More on the Topic:

- The technology could help lower the cost of green hydrogen.
- Photocatalytic STH is inspired by photosynthesis, where leaves use energy from incident sunlight to split water into oxygen and hydrogen.
- Here, “the process consists of a **semiconductor photocatalyst wafer immersed in freshwater or seawater.**
- When photons in sunlight strike the wafer, **they dislodge electrons in its atoms, which trigger a redox reaction in the water and separate hydrogen and oxygen.**
- The energy source is sunlight and the feedstock is water – both abundant on Earth and green by nature.

Source: TH

6. Lymphatic Filariasis

Topic: Health



LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS

World Health Organization

DISEASE

Infection
Filarial parasites spread by mosquitoes

Disease
Impairs function of lymphatic vessels

Normal vessels | Dilated vessels

856 Million people
AT RISK

ELIMINATION

Large-scale treatment of all at-risk populations can stop spread of infection

Vector control can supplement impact of large-scale treatment

Morbidity management & disability prevention to alleviate suffering due to disease

- 6.7 billion treatments delivered (2000-2016)
- 499 million people no longer require treatment
- Prevented or cured more than 97 million cases
- US\$ 100 billion averted lifetime economic loss

Lymphatic Filariasis eliminated as a public health problem in 10 countries

In News: Union health minister informed that India is committed to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (LF) by 2027 three years ahead of the global target through mission mode through the five-pronged roadmap.

More on the Topic:

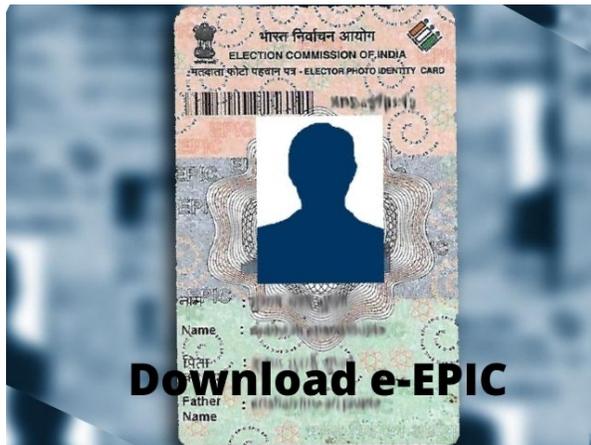
- The elimination of the disease will be achieved via **multi-drug administration (MDA)** campaign twice a year synchronized with national deworming day.
- **It is a tropical, parasitic disease that affects the lymph nodes and lymph vessels.**
- Lymphatic filariasis is spread **by infected mosquitoes**. Their bites deposit a parasite that travels to the lymph system.
- The worms are spread by the bites of infected mosquitoes.
- Three types of worms are known to cause the disease: **Wuchereria bancrofti, Brugia malayi, and Brugia timori, with Wuchereria bancrofti being the most common.**

- Most cases are symptomless. Rarely, long-term damage to the lymph system causes swelling in the legs, arms and genitalia.
- It also increases the risk of frequent bacterial infections that harden and thicken the skin (elephantiasis).
- A drug taken yearly can kill the parasites.

Source: Business Standard

7. Electoral Photo ID Card (E-EPIC) or digital voter ID

Topic: Science and Technology



In News: 67 lakh voters have downloaded their electronic Electoral Photo ID Card (E-EPIC) or digital voter ID till 23rd December 2022.

More on the Topic:

- The **digital version of EPICs** is available for download from the Voter Helpline app, voterportal.eci.gov.in and nvsp in.
- It is a non-editable PDF that can be downloaded on the phone and stored on the DigiLocker app or self-printed.
- The ECI is working to link voters' registrations to their Aadhaar, following the passage of the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021.

Source: Business Standard
