

1. GST Appellate Tribunal

Topic: Polity and Governance



In News: The Lok Sabha has cleared changes in Finance Bill 2023 to pave the way for setting up of an appellate tribunal for resolution of disputes under GST (Goods and Services Tax).

More on the Topic:

- Currently, taxpayers are filing writ petitions before high courts in the absence of the appellate tribunal.
- Benches of the GST Appellate Tribunal would be set up in every state while there will be **a principal bench in Delhi which will hear appeals related to 'place of supply'**.
- The GST Appellate Tribunal is a quasi-judicial body proposed to be established to resolve disputes related to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India.
- It will function as **an independent body to hear appeals against orders passed by the GST authorities or the Appellate Authority**.
- The tribunal will be **composed of a national bench and various regional benches**, headed by a chairperson appointed by the central government.
- The proposed tribunal is expected to help expedite the resolution of disputes related to GST and reduce the burden on the judiciary.

Significance of GST Appellate Tribunal:

- Even after more than five years of implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the appellate tribunal has not been set up.
- As a result, unresolved legal matters under GST have accumulated.
- The appellate tribunal would result in **lower burden on high courts, Supreme Court and at the same time**, would also provide taxpayers the much needed reprieve.
- Overall, the establishment of the GST Appellate Tribunal is expected to improve the **efficiency and effectiveness of the GST system in India**.

About GST:

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- GST is a destination-based taxation system has been established by the **101st Constitutional Amendment Act**.
- It is an indirect tax for the whole country to make India a unified market.
- It is a single tax on the supply of Goods and Services in its entire product cycle or life cycle i.e. from manufacturer to the consumer.
- It is calculated only in the “**Value addition**” at any stage of goods or services.
- There is a provision of the **GST Council** to decide upon any matter related to GST whose chairman in the finance minister of India.

Source: Indian Express

2. One World TB Summit 2023

Topic: Health



In News: Prime Minister has Inaugurated the One World TB Summit 2023 in Varanasi.

More on the Topic:

- One World TB Summit is being organised by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Stop TB Partnership.
- At the summit PM has launched some significant initiatives.
- **TB-Mukt Panchayat Initiative** (representatives to take a resolution that not a single TB patient will be there in the village) and New Shorter Regimen for TB Preventive Therapy to raise awareness about TB and prevent the spread of the disease.

- Alongside, a **family-centric care model** was also announced to ensure the wellbeing of families affected by TB.
- The Prime Minister has also unveiled the “**Annual India TB Report 2023**” which is a compilation of the country’s efforts towards making India TB-free by 2025.

Highlights from the Report:

- Despite the brief decline in TB notifications in 2020 and 2021 because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) has recorded a high notification of 24.2 lakh cases; an increase of 13% as compared to 2021.
- The treatment initiation rate among the notified cases for 2022 was 95.5%.
- In India, it is estimated that the five risk factors to which TB cases are mainly attributed are: undernourishment, harmful use of alcohol, smoking, diabetes and HIV.

About Tuberculosis:

- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium Tuberculosis*.
- It generally affects the lungs but can impact other parts of the body.
- Latent TB is when the infections **do not show any symptoms which is the case most of the time.**
- With 28 percent of cases, **India was among the eight countries accounting for more than two-thirds (or 68.3 per cent) of the total TB patients’ count** (the World Health Organisation (WHO) data).
- India aims to eliminate TB by 2025, five years ahead of the global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of 2030.

Source: AIR

3. Western Disturbance

Topic: Geography





In News: In March 2023, large parts of the country experienced hailstorms, accompanied by torrents of rain caused by multiple western disturbances (WD).

More on the Topic:

- The reasons for this excessive storm activity throughout India were **multiple weather systems being active over the country simultaneously**. In March, six WDs affected India.
- One of the rain was caused by multiple weather systems such as **troughs and cyclonic circulations (swirling winds in the middle and upper troposphere — the lowest layer of the atmosphere) associated with two consecutive WDs**.
- **A warming Arabian Sea** could also be responsible for the intense storm activity and rain.
- The IMD also cited a **strong subtropical westerly jet stream**, a band of winds that circles the subtropical regions of the planet in the upper layers of the troposphere, as a reason for the storm activity.
- This was aided by the **incursion of moisture-laden winds from the Bay of Bengal and the lowering of the freezing level in the atmosphere**, which helped in the formation of hail.

About Western Disturbances:

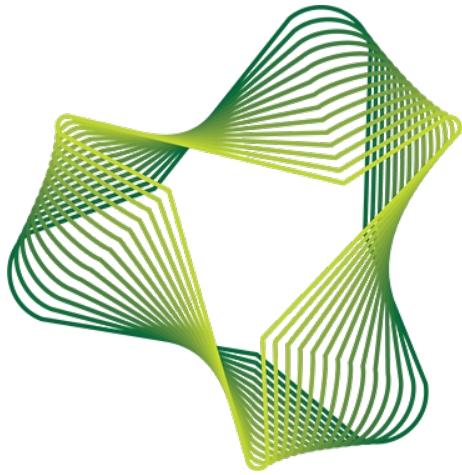
- Western disturbances are **extra-tropical storms that originate in the Caspian or Mediterranean Sea**, which is an area of low pressure & bring sudden showers(non-monsoonal), snow and fog to northwest India.
- The meaning of WD lies in its name.
- The disturbance travels from the **“western” to the eastern direction**.
- These travel eastwards on high-altitude westerly jet streams - massive ribbons of fast winds traversing the earth from west to east.
- **Disturbance means an area of “disturbed” or reduced air pressure**.
- Equilibrium exists in nature due to which the air in a region tries to normalise its pressure.
- WD brings **winter and pre-monsoon rain** and is important for the development of the Rabi crop in the Northern subcontinent.

Source: Hindu



4. New Development Bank

Topic: International Relations



New Development Bank

In News: New Development Bank (NDB) on Friday announced that former Brazilian President Dilma Vana Rousseff has been elected as the new President of the Bank.

More on the Topic:

- NDB also known as BRICS bank. It is a multilateral financial institution set up by the five BRICS countries including Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa.
- Present members are **Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates and Egypt.**
- It is headquartered at **Shanghai, China.**
- In 2018, the NDB received observer status in the United Nations General Assembly, establishing a firm basis for active and fruitful cooperation with the UN.
- It aims to mobilise **resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in emerging markets and developing countries (EMDCs).**

Source: Indian Express



5. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

Topic: Government Schemes



In News: Government has extended ₹200 subsidy on LPG cylinder under Ujjwala scheme by 1 year.

More on the Topic:

- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana is a scheme of the **Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for providing LPG connections to women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households.**
- The scheme was launched in May 2016 in Uttar Pradesh.
- The target under the scheme was to release 8 Crore LPG Connections to the deprived households by March 2020.
- As on 1st March 2023, there are 9.59 crore beneficiaries.
- Additional 1 Crore LPG connections under the PMUY scheme has been made. In this phase, special facility has been given to migrant families.

Significance of the Scheme:

- Providing LPG connections to BPL households will ensure **universal coverage of cooking gas in the country.**
- This measure will **empower women and protect their health.** It will reduce drudgery and the time spent on cooking. It will also provide employment for rural youth in the supply chain of cooking gas.

Source: Business Standard



6. CRISP Mobile App

Topic: Polity and Governance



In News: Rubber Board has launched a mobile app–CRISP–to inform growers about rubber cultivation and provides solutions online.

More on the Topic:

- Farmers will now be able to obtain suggestions on production and productivity increase, cultivation cost reduction, soil fertility management, disease control measures, and so on with the use of CRISP.
- Rubber Board is a statutory body constituted under Rubber Act 1947, for overall development of rubber industry.
- It functions under administrative control of Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Significance of Rubber:

- One of the most significant polymers for human society is natural rubber. Natural rubber is a critical raw material utilised in the manufacture of over 40,000 items.
- Latex is found in medical gadgets, surgical gloves, aviation and automotive tyres, pacifiers, clothing, and toys, among other things.

Source: Business Standard



7. Gandhamardan Hill Range of Odisha

Topic: Art and Culture



In News: Odisha government has declared the Gandhamardan Hill Range in Bargarh and Balangir district as a Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS).

More on the Topic:

- This hill is well known for medicinal plants.
- Hosts two historical monuments, **Nrusinghanath Temple located on northern slope and Harishankar Temple situated on southern slope.**
- **Hiuen Tsang had described the hill shrine as a Buddhist heritage site named Parimalagiri.**
- There is a Bauxite reserve which is planned for exploration by the state government through a private venture.
- Lord Hanuman is believed to reside here and in the Piduru Mountains in Sri Lanka.

Source: Business Standard
