National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)

Context:
Government to set up National Company Law Appellate Tribunal Bench in Chennai.

About the NCLAT:
- The NCLAT was constituted under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013 for hearing appeals against the orders of National Company Law Tribunal.
- The NCLAT is also the appellate tribunal for hearing appeals against:
  - Orders passed by NCLT(s) under Section 61 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC).
  - Orders passed by Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India under Section 202 and Section 211 of IBC.
  - Any direction issued or decision made or order passed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI).
- Benches of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) are set up in various States depending on the case load and other relevant factors.
- Considering the heavy case load at some existing benches, additional members have been appointed and additional courts have been operationalised from time to time.

Independent Director’s Databank

Context:
The Corporate Affairs Ministry launched ‘Independent Director’s Databank’.

Details:
- The Ministry launched the databank in accordance with the Companies Act, 2013 and the rules made thereunder.
- The databank can be accessed at the official website of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- It is an initiative of the Ministry to provide an easy to access & navigate platform for the registration of existing independent directors as well as individuals aspiring to become independent directors.
- Powered by an Integrated Learning Management System, the various e-learning capsules and videos available in the system will enable individual users to easily acquire knowledge from diverse resources, develop distinct skills and assess their understanding of company operations, regulations and compliances.
- Companies also may register themselves with the databank to search, select and connect with individuals who possess the right skills and attitude for being considered for appointment as Independent Directors.
- The Databank is expected to become a comprehensive repository of both existing independent directors as well as individuals eligible and willing to be appointed as Independent Directors.
- The Databank portal which has been developed and will be maintained by the Indian Institute for Corporate Affairs (IICA) is a first of its kind initiative from the Ministry.
- It provides for a wide array of e-learning courses on various topics including the Companies Act,
Securities laws, basic accountancy, board practices, board ethics and board effectiveness.

- As per the notified rules, all existing Independent Directors are required to register themselves in the databank within 3 months from 01 December 2019.
  - They are also required to pass a basic online proficiency self-assessment test which will be available from March 2020 onwards within 12 months thereafter.
  - In order to provide sufficient practice to individuals, a number of online mock tests have also been made available in the system.

**Purana Quila**

**Context:**

The Government/Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will set up a museum at Purana Quila to house objects excavated from across India which have been lying in the Central Antiquities Collection (CAC).

**Details:**

- The proposed museum will open in April 2020.
- The museum will be housed in the arched cells of Purana Quila.
- The objective to open a new museum is to display antiquities such as tools, potteries, terracotta, beads of semi-precious stones, sculptures, architectural fragments, etc. for the general public, students and research scholars.
- The objects to be displayed date from the pre-historic period to the medieval era such as Harappan seals, pre-historic animal and human figurines, coins and pottery from the Mughal period among several others.
- This is the third such museum at the Purana Qila.

**About the Central Antiquities Collection (CAC):**

- The Central Antiquity Collection Section is a centre for housing the collection of antiquities explored and excavated by the Archaeological Survey of India.
- The CAC is under the ASI and the artefacts stored here are accessible only to researchers.
- The Collection includes samples of pottery and artefacts of different periods from all major sites from across the country.
- Over 2 lakh excavated antiquities are stored in the CAC. Out of this, about 1000 artefacts will be displayed in the new museum.

**About Purana Qila:**

- Purana Qila is one of the oldest forts belonging to the Mughal era.
- The massive gateway and walls of the Qila were built by Mughal ruler Humayun and the foundation was laid for the new capital, Dinpanah.
The construction was taken forward by Sher Shah Suri, who displaced Humayun.
The walls of the Purana Quila are made of enormous red stones having minimal ornamentation and decoration.
The major attractions inside the fort are the Qila-i-Kuhna mosque (an example of Indo-Islamic architecture) of Sher Shah Suri, Sher Mandal (a tower, which is traditionally associated with the death of Humayun), a stepwell and the remains of the extensive rampart, which has three gates.
The unique features of Indo-Islamic architecture like horseshoe-shaped arches, bracketed openings, marble inlay, carving, etc. are very prominent in the structure.
Excavations have revealed that the Purana Quila stands at the site of Indraprastha, the capital of the Pandavas.
Excavations near one of the walls of the fort show that the site had been occupied since 1000 B.C.
The PGW (Painted Gray Ware Pottery) recovered from the site date back to around 1000 B.C.

For more on Indo-Islamic Architecture, click here.

Exercise Hand-in-Hand-2019

Context:
The 8th India-China joint training exercise 'HAND-IN-HAND 2019' with the theme counter-terrorism under the United Nations mandate is scheduled to be conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya in December 2019.

About Exercise Hand-in-Hand 2019:
- The Chinese contingent from the Tibet Military command comprising of 130 personal and the Indian Contingent of similar strength will participate in the 14-day long training exercise.
- The exercise is planned at the company level with the respective Battalion Headquarters controlling the training.
- The aim of the exercise is to practice joint planning and conduct of counter-terrorist operations in semi-urban terrain.
- The exercise schedule is focused upon training on various lectures & drills associated with counter-terrorist handling & firing with each other’s weapons, special heliborne operations and case studies of various operations carried out in counter-terrorist environment.
- Two tactical exercises are scheduled during the training; one on counter-terrorism scenario and the other on Humanitarian and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.
- The exercise was suspended in 2017 amid strained bilateral ties after the Doklam standoff.
- In 2018, the exercise was held in China.

Tiger Corridors in Country

Context:
The National Tiger Conservation Authority in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India has published a document titled “Connecting Tiger Populations for Long-term Conservation”, which has mapped out 32 major corridors across the country, management interventions for which are operationalised through a Tiger Conservation Plan, mandated under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
List of the published Tiger Corridors:

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<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Landscape</th>
<th>Corridor</th>
<th>States/ Country</th>
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<td>(ii) Corbett-Dudhwa</td>
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<td>(iii) Dudhwa-Kishanpur-Katerniaghat</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Central India &amp; Eastern Ghats</td>
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<td>(ii) Bandhavgarh-Achanakmar</td>
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<td>(iii) Bandhavgarh-Sanjay Dubri-Guru Ghasidas</td>
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<td>(iv) Guru Ghasidas-Palamau-Lawalong</td>
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<td>(v) Kanha-Achanakmar</td>
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<td>(vii) Pench-Satpura-Melghat</td>
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<td>(x) Similipal-Satkosia</td>
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<td>(xi) Nagarjunasagar-Sri Venkateshwara National Park</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Western Ghats</td>
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<td>(ii) Dandeli Anshi-Shravathi Valley</td>
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<td>(iii) Kudremukh-Bhadra</td>
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<td>(v) Nagarahole-Bandipur-Mudumalai-Wayanad</td>
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<td>(vii) Parambikulam-</td>
<td>Kerala, Tamil Nadu</td>
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### Blue Flag Certification for beaches

**Context:**

The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change has embarked upon a programme for ‘Blue Flag’ Certification for select beaches in the country.

**About the Blue Flag Certification:**

To know more about the [Blue Flag Certification](https://byjus.com), click on the linked article.

### Promotion to Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles

**Details:**

- The government approved Phase-I of [FAME India Scheme](https://byjus.com) in March, 2015 for a period of 2 years from April 2015 to promote the adoption of electric vehicles with an aim to reduce dependency on fossil fuel and to address issues of vehicular emissions. The Phase-I of the Scheme was extended from time to time and the last extension was allowed till March 2019.
- Based on outcome and experience gained during the Phase-I of FAME India Scheme and after having consultations with all stakeholders including industry and industry associations, the

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<td>(vi) Manas-Buxa</td>
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<td>(vii) Pakke-Nameri-Sonai Rupai-Manas</td>
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<td>(ix) Kamlang-Kane-Tale Valley</td>
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<td>(x) Buxa-Jaldapara</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
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Government notified Phase-II of the FAME India Scheme.
- Phase II of the scheme commenced in April 2019 and will be operational for a period of three years.
- There is total budgetary support of Rs. 10,000 crore.
- Phase II will mainly focus on supporting the electrification of public & shared transportation, and aims to support through incentives about 7000 e-buses, 5 lakh e-3 wheelers (e-3W), 55000 e-4 wheelers (e-4W) passenger cars and 10 lakh e-2 wheelers.
- In addition, the creation of charging infrastructure will be also supported to address range anxiety among users of electric vehicles.
- Incentives are being provided to the consumers on purchase of electric vehicles, used for public transport or those registered for commercial purposes in e-3W, e-4W (including Strong Hybrid) segment, however, privately owned registered e-2W are also to be covered under the scheme.

Context:
The above information was given by the Minister for Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.

National Pension Scheme for Traders, Shopkeepers and Self-Employed Persons

Context:
The National Pension Scheme for Traders, Shopkeepers and Self-Employed Persons has been launched in September 2019.

About the Scheme:
- The originally proposed name of the scheme was ‘Pradhan Mantri Laghu Vyapari Maan-Dhan Scheme’.
- It is a voluntary and contributory pension scheme.
- Enrolment to the Scheme is done through the Common Service Centres.
- In addition, eligible persons can also self-enroll through visiting the portal www.maandhan.in.
- The traders in the age group of 18-40 years with annual turnover, not exceeding Rs.1.5 crore and who are not members of EPFO/ESIC/NPS/PM-SYM and are not income taxpayers can join the scheme.
- Under the scheme, 50% monthly contribution is payable by the beneficiary and equal matching contribution is paid by the Central Government.
- Subscribers, after attaining the age of 60 years, are eligible for a monthly minimum assured pension of Rs.3,000/-.  

Read more on the National Pension Scheme [here](#).

Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD)

Context:
Identifying Road Accident Prone Areas.

Details:

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has decided to take up a project “Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD)” with funding from the World Bank.
- The main objective of this project is on-site collection of accident data through app-based software and analyse data for the identification of black spots and other accident-prone areas.
- 789 black spots have been identified based on accidents/fatality from the year 2011 to 2014. A total of 660 black spots are on the stretches of National Highways (NHs) and 129 black spots are under State Government. 395 black spots have already been rectified and 215 black spots are at implementation stage on stretches of NHs.

Pedestrian Deaths in Road Accidents

Context:
The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has formulated a multi-pronged strategy to address the issue of road safety based on Education, Engineering (both of roads and vehicles), Enforcement and Emergency Care.

Details:

- The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has constituted a Parliamentary Constituency Committee on Road Safety in each district of the country to promote awareness amongst road users under the chairmanship of the MPs.
- The National Road Safety Policy outlines various policy measures such as promoting awareness, establishing road safety information database, encouraging safer road infrastructure including the application of intelligent transport, enforcement of safety laws with regard to road safety.
- The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 focuses on road safety and includes, among other things, stiff hike in penalties for traffic violations and electronic monitoring of the same, enhanced penalties for juvenile driving, computerization/automation of vehicle fitness and driving, tests, recall of defective vehicles, extending the scope of third party liability and payment of increased compensation for hit and run cases, etc.
- Some of the other initiatives of the Government:
  - Advocacy/Publicity campaign on road safety through the electronic media and print media to create awareness.
  - Issue of Guidelines for the protection of Good Samaritans. Read more about the Good Samaritan Law
  - Setting up of model driving training Institutes in States.
  - Launch of mobile app for highway users i.e. “Sukhad Yatra 1033” which enables highways users to report potholes and other safety hazards on National Highways including accidents.
  - Observance of Road Safety Week every calendar year for spreading awareness and strengthening road safety.
  - Safety standards for automobiles have been improved.
  - High priority has been accorded to identification and rectification of black spots (accident-prone spots) on national highways.