TRADE DEFICIT - ECONOMY PRELIMS

News: *Rupee falls to 79.33 after June trade deficit widens*

Trade deficit widens:

- Trade deficit may be defined as the negative net export earnings in the difference between merchandise (goods, not services) export and merchandise import.
- The situation is that our imports are more than our exports.
- If Import > export - Deficit.
- This led to us spending more on imports than what we gained from export.
- India's June trade deficit widened to a record high of $25.63 billion, following a rise in crude oil and coal imports, from $ 9.61 billion.

Trade deficit and Exchange rate of rupee connection:

- Widening trade deficit ---> India have to spend more ---> more demand for Dollar---> strengthen the dollar ---> weakening of rupee---> rupee depreciation.
- Hence Widening trade deficit has a negative relationship with the exchange rate of rupee.

RAMLEELA - ART AND CULTURE PRELIMS

News: *U.P. asks Russian actors to perform Ramleela*

Ramleela in Indo-Russian relationship:

- U.P. Department of Culture has written to 'Disha' (India-Russia Friendship Society of Moscow), inviting actors to perform in Ayodhya.
- Ramleela of Moscow goes back to the 1960s, when Gennady Mikhailovich Pechnikov performed the role of lord Ram.
- Pechnikov was also known as the Russian Ram.
- Disha's Ramleela in memory of Pechnikov was performed for the first time at Ayodhya's 2018 Deepotsav, Which was followed by a performance at the 2019 Prayagraj Mahakumbh mela.
- This shows the Cultural ties, People to people cooperation and Track 3 diplomacy of India-Russia Relationship

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About Ramlila:

- Ramlila, literally "Rama's play", is a performance of the Ramayana epic in a series of scenes that include song, narration, recital and dialogue.
- It is performed across northern India during the festival of Dussehra, held each year according to the ritual calendar in autumn.
- The most representative Ramlilas are those of Ayodhya, Ramnagar and Benares, Vrindavan, Almora, Sattna and Madhubani.
- This staging of the Ramayana is based on the Ramacharitmanas, one of the most popular storytelling forms in the north of the country. This sacred text devoted to the glory of Rama, the hero of the Ramayana, was composed by Tulsidas in the sixteenth century in a form of Hindi in order to make the Sanskrit epic available to all.
- The majority of the Ramlilas recount episodes from the Ramacharitmanas through a series of performances lasting ten to twelve days.
- Ramlila has been recognised as the Intangible cultural heritage of India by UNESCO.

Other Intangible cultural heritage of India:

1. Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre
2. The tradition of Vedic chanting
3. Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana
4. Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India
5. Chhau dance
6. Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan
7. Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala
8. Durga Puja in Kolkata
9. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India
10. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur
11. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India
12. Nowruz, Novruz
13. Yoga
14. Kumbh Mela
15. Durga Puja

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BANNI GRASSLANDS - ENVIRONMENT PRELIMS

News: *Restoring Banni grasslands, Gujarat battles invasive tree species*

About Banni Grassland:

- It forms a belt of arid grassland ecosystem on the outer southern edge of the desert of the marshy salt flats of Rann of Kutch in Kutch District and accounts for almost 45 per cent of the pastures in Gujarat.
- Banni is the largest grassland of Asia.
- It is spread over 2,618 kilometres
- Two ecosystems, **wetlands and grasslands**, are juxtaposed in Banni.
- The word 'Banni' comes from the Hindi word 'banai', meaning made.
- The land here was formed from the sediments that were deposited by the Indus and other rivers over thousands of years.
- On May 11, 1955, the court notified that the grassland will be a **reserve forest**.
- On July 3, 2019, the **NGT** ordered to demarcate the boundaries of the Banni grassland and restricted non-forest activities.
- Banni Grasslands Reserve and Narayan Sarovar Sanctuary, both in Kutch, have been classified by Wildlife Institute of India (WII) as the last remaining habitats of the **cheetah** in India and possible reintroduction sites for the species.
- The grasslands are home to **mammals** such as the nilgai, chinkara, blackbuck, wild boar, golden jackal, Indian hare, Indian wolf, caracal, Asiatic wildcat, desert fox, Indian wild ass.
- During good rainfall years it forms important staging grounds for **migratory birds** like flamingos, cranes and resident birds.
- The Banni Grassland is inhabited by sindhi speaking **cattle breeders** who hail from the Jat, Mutwa, Hingora, Hingorja tribes.
- Recently NGT said that **Maldharis** will continue to hold the right to conserve the community forests in the area, granted to them as per the provisions in Section 3 of Forest Rights Act, 2006.

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Banni Grassland

Threats:

- The landscape of Banni has shown drastic changes with the deterioration of the grassland taking place due to **"heavy uncontrolled grazing",** widespread ingress of Prosopis Juliflora (a harmful exotic tree species), dams constructed on rivers flowing towards Banni, periodic occurrence of droughts and continuous increase in soil salinity.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT - GS 3 MAINS

News: *China said to plan $75-bn infra fund*

What's in the news?

- China will set up a state infrastructure investment fund worth 500 billion yuan ($74.69 billion) to spur infrastructure spending and revive a flagging economy.
- This also provides the significance of Infrastructure development in India to revive the Indian economy from slowdown.

Why Does Infrastructure Matter?

- **Fuel Economic growth** - infrastructure spending, with the so-called "multiplier effect" of spending 1% of real GDP likely to boost India's GDP by at least double that amount.

- **Employment generation**
  - Infrastructure development such as road construction, real estate, railway construction, etc. is labour intensive, leading to increase in employment opportunities in formal and informal sectors.

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- ○ Infrastructure investment will create demand for core industries like Cement, Steel. Hence, increased demand in Core industries will create jobs.
- **Ease of living**
  - ○ Facilitate public transportation and mobility
  - ○ Boost tourism
  - ○ Social infrastructure like health and education will ensure ease of living.
- **Attract investment**
  - ○ It will increase gross capital formation.
  - ○ Through Public Private Partnership, infrastructure investment will attract private investment.
- **Environmental benefits** - Public transportation will considerably reduce the carbon footprint.
- **Trickle down effect** - Ensure inclusive growth with poverty alleviation and Sustainable migration.
- **Benefit for Trade**
  - ○ High quality trade will considerably reduce the transportation cost which constitutes the bigger part in logistics cost. Reduction in logistics cost, from present 14% of GDP to 10% of GDP, will make our trade very competitive.
  - ○ Better Infrastructure will facilitate trade even in remote areas.

Challenges ahead: For Infrastructure Development

1. Need long term debt facilities.
2. Problem of land acquisition.
3. Challenges in environmental clearance.
4. Long gestation period will hamper the investment.
5. Delay in projects will lead to cost overruns

Further Reading: *National Infrastructure Pipeline*

https://indiainvestmentgrid.gov.in/national-infrastructure-pipeline

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TUBERCULOSIS - GS 3 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Op-ed: *The way to control tuberculosis*

Three major deficiencies:

The Op-ed marks out three major deficiencies of the Revised National TB Control Programme as follows.

- The programme is heavily funded by the **Government**, there is no prescribed method of monitoring the trajectory of TB control.
- The assumption that treating pulmonary TB patients alone would control TB was epidemiologically fallacious in India.
    - Large proportions of adults carry TB infection in the lung in a dormant condition for life (**latent TB**). Some among them deteriorate and develop over TB disease (reactivation TB). HIV infection, diabetes, undernutrition, lungs damage due to pollution, tobacco smoking, fall in immune functions due to chronic diseases, alcoholism, etc. accelerate reactivation TB.
- RNTCP has failed to elicit **people's partnership** in TB control.
    - In India's AIDS Control Programme, public education was given high priority. Red ribbon clubs in schools and colleges are its legacy.
    - Without people's informed partnership, stigma and delay in controlling TB will continue for ages.

How to control?

- The burden of TB has been falling by 1% or 1.5% per year.
- **Control** refers to the reduction of disease burden through specific intervention to a predetermined level in a prestated time period.
- Diseases that have social determinants to decline over time with better housing, nutrition, education and income.
- **Elimination** refers to achieving zero frequency of new cases. As we have a huge backlog of latent TB, we cannot eliminate TB, but we must aim for a high level of control (lowering from 200 per lakh per year to 50 per lakh per year) and document it with measurement to achieve PM's vision.
- Trained state and district TB officers coupled with an extensive network of TB clinics and community and field workers can also be used in effective implementation of the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP).

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Go back to basics:

Revised National TB Control Programme (National TB elimination program)

RNTCP incorporates the principles of Directly Observed Treatment-Short course (DOTS). **DOTS** is a systematic strategy which has five components:

1. **Political and administrative commitment:** Since TB can be cured and the epidemic reversed, it warrants the topmost priority, which has been accorded by the Government of India.
2. **Good quality diagnosis:** Good quality microscopy allows health workers to see the tubercle bacilli and diagnose properly.
3. **Good quality drugs:** An uninterrupted supply of good quality anti-TB drugs must be available. RNTCP provides a box of medication for the entire treatment for every person registered.
4. **Supervised treatment to ensure the right treatment:** The RNTCP uses the best anti-TB medications available in a right way.
5. **Systematic monitoring and accountability:** Standard recording and reporting system, and the technique of cohort analyses are used to keep an account of every person treated.

Tuberculosis:

- Worldwide, tuberculosis (TB) has surpassed HIV-AIDS as the leading cause of death due to infectious diseases.
- **India is the TB capital of the world**, the disease kills 1,400 persons every day.
- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- TB commonly affects the lungs (**pulmonary TB**) but can also affect other parts (**extrapulmonary TB**).
- Pulmonary tuberculosis is a chronic consumptive disease, but it can be present as **acute pneumonia**.
- Pneumonia is an inflammatory condition of the lung affecting primarily the microscopic air sacs known as alveoli.
- Tuberculosis spreads from person to person through the air, when people who are infected with TB infection cough, sneeze or otherwise transmit respiratory fluids through the air.
- Most infections do not have symptoms, known as **latent tuberculosis**.

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- About 10% of latent infections eventually progresses to active disease which, if left untreated, kills about half of those infected.
- HIV infection, diabetes, undernutrition, lung damage due to pollution, tobacco smoking, fall in immune functions due to chronic diseases, alcoholism, etc. were the main trigger causes behind it.

GLOBAL LIVEABILITY INDEX 2022 - REPORTS PRELIMS

News: *Global Liveability Index 2022: Here is why Bangalore was ranked 'least liveable' city in India*

What's in the news?

- The European Intelligence Unit (EUI) recently released the Global Liveability Index 2022.
- It ranked 173 cities on the basis of their liveability or living conditions, which was determined by five factors such as stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education, and infrastructure.
- The index for the first time, included five Indian cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Bangalore.
- All five scored poorly, ranked between 140 and 146. Delhi was ranked the best at 140, followed by Mumbai at 141, Chennai and Ahmedabad at 142 and 143 respectively. Bangalore scored the least out of the five Indian cities, ranking 146th with a score of 54.4 out of 100.
- This came as a shocker after the silicon valley of India topped the 'Ease of Living Index 2020', which was released by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Go back to the basics:

Global Liveability index:

- It was released by the Economic Intelligence Unit.
- It consists of five categories such as
    - Stability (25%)
    - Healthcare (20%)
    - Culture and Environment (25%)
    - Education (10%)
    - Infrastructure (20%)
- Vienna topped the index followed by Copenhagen.

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- Damascus (Syria) bordered the list.
- Economist Intelligence Unit founded in 1946 with its headquarters in London, United Kingdom.

Ease of Living Index:

- It was released by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- It consists of the following parameters.
  - Quality of Life (35%)
  - Economic Ability (15%)
  - Sustainability (20%)
  - Citizen Perception Survey (30%)
- Coverage: The index assessed 111 cities by bifurcating them into two categories:
  - Million+ populated cities (those with a population of more than a million) - Bengaluru topped the list.
  - Less than A Million populated cities (those with a population of less than a million) along with all the cities under the Smart Cities Program - Shimla topped the list.

CO-LOCATION - ECONOMY PRELIMS

News: *Market regulator Sebi has penalised 18 entities, including the National Stock Exchange (NSE), its former managing director Chitra Ramkrishna and group president Ravi Varanasi, in the 'dark fibre' case.*
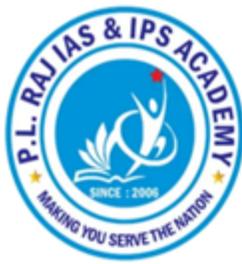
The National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE) is India's largest financial market.

What is the dark fibre case?

- The case relates to the alleged differential access given to certain broking firms in the form of 'dark fibre' at NSE, to connect across the colocation facilities before other members.

What is dark fibre?

- The dark fibre or unlit fibre, with respect to network connectivity, refers to an already laid but unused or passive optical fibre, which is not connected to active electronics/equipment and does not have other data flowing through it and is available for use in fibre-optic communication.

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What is Co-location?

- Co-location is typically associated with a facility where a third party can lease a rack/server space along with other computer hardware.
- A co-location facility provides infrastructure such as power supply, bandwidth, and cooling for setting up servers and storage of data.

Go back to the basics:

- SEBI is a statutory body, the Non-Constitutional body that is set up by a Parliament Established on April 12, 1992 in accordance with the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992.
- The headquarters of SEBI is situated in Mumbai. The regional offices of SEBI are located in Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Chennai and Delhi.
- SEBI Board consists of a Chairman and several other whole-time and part-time members.
- Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) has been constituted to protect the interest of entities that feel aggrieved by SEBI's decision. It has the same powers as vested in a civil court.
- SAT's decision or order can be appealed to the Supreme Court.

Functions of SEBI:

- The basic functions of SEBI are to protect the interests of investors in securities. Also, it promotes and regulates the securities market.
- SEBI is a quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial body which can draft regulations, conduct inquiries, pass rulings and impose penalties.
- Its functions can be generalised to the following three targeted categories:
  - For issuers, it provides a marketplace in which issuers can increase their finance.
  - For investors, it ensures safety and provides information needed.
  - For intermediaries, it enables a competitive professional market for intermediaries.
- By Securities Laws (Amendment) Act, 2014, SEBI is now able to regulate any money pooling scheme worth Rs. 100 cr. or more and attach assets in cases of non-compliance.

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ETHICS CORNER - ETHICAL THINKERS

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Q. At the start of the service, a young officer is ethically upright and resolute for integrity. However, as time progresses, how can they continue to follow the same values with strong determination?

Kalam believed that young officers entering governance have to determine a long-term goal for which they will be remembered. This goal will inspire them at all times during their career and help them overcome all problems.

Q. How can a civil servant tackle the problem of the corrupt political system which leads to compromise on ethical standards?

Young officers can establish a brand of integrity for themselves. It will keep away all those who want them to compromise their ethics. He cautions that there may be some problems. But, finally, the best in human beings will find a way to succeed.

Q. If the job of a civil servant is to provide Good Governance to the nation, how can this objective be realised?

According to Kalam, Governance is judged by how proactive and responsive to people's needs it is. Governance should help people lead a life that is morally upright, intellectually superior and of high quality. This is possible through the acquisition and enrichment of knowledge.

- Kalam suggested evolving a Societal Grid which comprises a Knowledge Grid, Health Grid and E-governance grid that feed into the PURA Grid.
    - **Knowledge grid** - It will empower citizens with appropriate knowledge in a democratic way, thereby ensuring the growth of knowledge society.
    - **Health grid** - It will ensure that the benefits of quality health care services reach the needy. This will enhance their quality of life and increase individual productivity. This will lead to faster development of the nation.
    - **E-governance grid** - It will lead to transparency in government services and ensure that they reach all the people uniformly without and dilution of quantum or quality.
- Note: **Provision of Urban Amenities to Rural Areas (PURA)** is a strategy for rural development in India. This concept was given by former president Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

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During his presidency, Civil Service probationers would come to Rashtrapati Bhavan and take a **five-point oath** from him.

What was Kalam's five-point oath for civil servants?

Kalam's five-point oath for civil servants:

1. I will work towards 100 percent literacy among the people of the region where I work and also ensure that no child drops out of school.

2. I will ensure that the status of women is enriched and work towards parity between girls and boys.

3. I will ensure that no one can lead me to the temptation of corruption.

4. During my tenure in any district, I will ensure that a minimum of one lakh trees are planted and maintained.

5. I will work towards the execution of at least five PURA complexes in the district where I am posted and create employment opportunities for at least 25 per cent of the people through the creation of rural enterprises.

Prelims Questions:

1. Which of the following statements denotes necessarily the "multiplier effect" of Infrastructure investment?

1. Trade competitiveness

2. Enhance ease of living

3. Revival from economic recession

4. Crowding out effect

Choose the correct answer:

A. 1 only

B. 1, 2 and 3 only

C. 3 and 4 only

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D. 2, 3 and 4 only

2. Consider the following pairs of Intangible cultural heritage and its state.

1. Kalbelia dance   - Manipur

2. Sankirtana   - Rajasthan

3. Buddhist chanting.   - Arunachal Pradesh

4. Mudiyettu   - Kerala

How many pair/s is/are correctly matched

A. Only one pair

B. Only two pairs

C. Only three pairs

D. All pairs

3. Consider the following statements regarding 'Banni Grassland'.

1. Banni is the largest grassland in Asia.

2. It comprises three ecosystems, wetlands, grassland and mangroves.

3. Invasive species like Prosopis Juliflora and salinity act as threats to this grassland.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. All the above

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4. ' Ease of living index' is released by Which of the following ministry?

A. Ministry Health and Family Welfare

B. Ministry of Urban and housing affairs

C. Ministry of Women and Child Development

D. Ministry of Education

5. Which of the following are the twin deficits of the economy?

A. Trade deficit and Current account deficit

B. Fiscal Deficit and Revenue Deficit

C. Current account deficits and Fiscal deficit

D. Trade deficit and Primary deficit

Answers: 1.B, 2.A, 3.C, 4.B, 5.C

Mainstreaming:

Q1. 'Infrastructural investment has multiplier effects on Economy'- Elucidate this above statement with suitable examples. (150 words) 10 marks

Q2. Critically examine the Revised National TB control program and Suggest measures to eliminate TB from India. (250 words) 15 marks

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