



News Analysis (13 May, 2019)

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Mapping Tissues

Recently, Department of Biotechnology (DBT) launched '**MANAV: Human Atlas Initiative**', a project for mapping every tissue of the human body to help better understand the roles of tissues and cells linked to various diseases.

Purpose of the Programme

The programme will seek to provide:

- Better biological insights through physiological and molecular mapping,
- Develop disease models through predictive computing
- Allow for a holistic analysis and finally drug discovery.

The aim of the project is to understand and capture human physiology in two stages – normal stage and disease stage.

Why it Matters

- The collated data can be useful for future researchers and clinicians and drug developers, who finally handle human bodies in disease conditions.
- Such a database will come in handy in tracing causes of a disease, understanding specific pathways and ultimately decoding how the body's disease stage is linked to tissues and cells.

Delay in Resolutions under IBC

A number of hurdles have delayed the debt resolution at Essar Steel India Ltd. under the [Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code \(IBC\)](#).

Resolution Process under IBC

- The IBC requires a **corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) to be completed in 180 days**, which can be **extended by another 90 days** to a maximum of 270 days.
- **Status:** As on 31st March 2019, out of total 1143 cases that were undergoing resolution under the IBC, a total of 548 cases exceeded the 180-day deadline.

Reasons Behind Delay in the Resolution Process

- **Burdening the NCLT** and the appellate tribunals with matters relating to the Companies Act and Competition Act along with the IBC is probably one reason.
- **Limited number of Information Utilities (IUs) in the ecosystem.** The IUs provide access to credible and transparent evidence of default, which helps in expediting the process of ascertaining a default for initiating the resolution process. As of now, there is **only one information utility – National eGovernance Services Ltd** – which was registered with Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) in September 2017.
- **Lack of appropriate bids** to takeover companies, differences among the lenders, **legal challenges** posed by existing promoters and operational creditors are among the other reasons behind delay in resolutions under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

IBC vs DRT/SARFAESI

Financial Creditors have witnessed a **recovery rate of 43% under IBC** resolution process. In the existing regime of **DRT/SARFAESI** (Debt Recovery Tribunal/Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest), **banks recover less than 20 % of the stuck loans** with significant delays.

Suggestions

- Digitisation of the NCLT platform, proactive training/on-boarding of judges, lawyers and other intermediaries will help in the effective implementation of the code.
- **Pre-packed insolvency arrangements** that is allowing the sale of a business (subject to the approval of a majority of the creditors) as a going concern prior to the appointment of an administrator or insolvency professional, can be considered.

Note: The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI) empowers Banks/Financial Institutions to recover their non-performing assets without the intervention of the Court.

Kerala's New Protocols for Managing Disasters

Picking up valuable lessons from the Cyclone 'Ockhi' disaster and the 2018 floods, the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) has updated Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), '**Orange book of disaster management – Kerala – SOP and emergency support functions plan**', and adopted new protocols for disaster management in the State – '**Monsoon preparedness and emergency response plan**'.

Key Points

- Containing information on emergency response assets available across the State, the orange book explains the SOP for flood, cyclone, tsunami, high waves (swell waves, storm surges, 'Kalla Kadal'), petrochemical accidents and even mishaps caused by space debris.
- It describes incidence response mechanisms to be adopted at the State, district and taluk level.
- The 'Monsoon preparedness and emergency response plan' is season-specific and meant to be strictly complied with during the south-west and north-east monsoon seasons (June to December).
- It lists the roles of the State emergency operations centre, central agencies, district disaster management authorities, etc. Earlier, no single document had clarified the responsibilities of individual government departments.
- The Monsoon preparedness plan is a season-specific dynamic sub-plan of the Orange book of disaster management. It will be updated every year after receiving the first long-range forecast of the India Meteorological Department on Monsoon.

State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA)

- State Disaster Management Authorities are statutory bodies constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- The Disaster Management Act established the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister, and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) headed by respective Chief Ministers, to spearhead and implement a holistic and integrated approach to disaster management in India.

Kalla Kadal

- In Kerala, fishermen use the term 'Kalla Kadal' to refer to the **unusual occurrence of high swell waves during good weather**. It is often triggered by storms as far away as the Antarctic region.
- Travelling thousands of kilometres across the ocean basin, the swell **amplifies when it encounters a coastal current**, a phenomenon known as **remote forcing**.
- 'Kalla Kadal' is known to **occur along the southern coast of India**, mainly **during the pre-monsoon period**, in April and May, marked by clear weather. The flooding turns severe on the days of a spring tide.

- The term Kalla Kadal has been recognised by the UNESCO, the World Meteorological Organisation and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission to explain the unusual occurrence of high swell waves.
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Food Inflation Set to Return

The past couple of months have seen **prices of a host of farm commodities surge**, mainly on the back of **drought** in large parts of western and southern India, coupled with an **early and harsher-than-usual summer**.

- **Impact:** Food inflation may **benefit farmers** as they will receive higher returns for their produce, whereas **consumers will suffer** as they will have to pay higher prices as compared to last year for the same food items.
- **Food Inflation**
 - The food and fuel inflation form one of the components of headline inflation in India.
 - **Headline Inflation**, as the name suggests, is the total inflation for the period, comprising a basket of commodities.
 - **Core Inflation** excludes volatile goods from the basket of commodities tracking Headline Inflation. These volatile commodities mainly comprise food and beverages (including vegetables) and fuel and light (crude oil).

Core inflation = Headline inflation – (Food and Fuel) inflation

Important Facts For Prelims (13th May 2019)

Apache Helicopter

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has received the **first AH-64E (I)-Apache Guardian helicopter** at the Boeing production facility in Mesa, Arizona, USA.
- The Indian government has signed a **contract for 22 Apache helicopters** with the US government and M/s Boeing Ltd.
- Better known as an **'attack helicopter'**, Apache will lead to the modernisation of the IAF's attack helicopter fleet which at present is equipped with Russian origin MI-35 helicopters that are on the verge of retirement.
- The helicopter has been customized to suit IAF's future requirements and would have significant capability in mountainous terrain.
 - The helicopter has the capability to carry out precision attacks at standoff ranges and operate in hostile airspace with threats from ground.
 - The helicopter also has the ability to transmit and receive battlefield picture

through data uplinking and networking.

Lecanorchis taiwaniana

- ***Lecanorchis taiwaniana*** has been recently discovered in Assam.
- It is one of India's smallest orchids in terms of size and duration of bloom to be recorded botanically.
- The orchid, discovered earlier in Japan, Taiwan, and Laos, is found to have a maximum height of 40 cm and a blossoming period of five-six days.
- ***Lecanorchis taiwaniana* is a myco-heterotroph** – one of the parasitic plants that have abandoned photosynthesis.

Abandoning Photosynthesis

- There are a number of flowering plants that have abandoned photosynthesis, and these fall into two categories: **haustorial parasites** and **myco-heterotrophs**. (It is also called, parasitic plant, as both these groups derive their nutrients from another plant).
- The difference is that haustorial parasites feed directly on another plant via a modified root called the **haustorium**.
- Mycoheterotrophs obtain their nutrition indirectly from the plant via a **mycorrhizal fungus**. The mycorrhizal fungus, attached to the roots of a photosynthetic plant, thus acts as a bridge between that plant and the mycoheterotroph, such that nutrients (carbon) flow from plant root, to mycorrhizal fungus to the myco-heterotroph.

Ganga Jatara

- Tirupati Ganga Jatara is the annual folk festival of Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. It is a weeklong event which falls between the first and second weeks of May every year.
 - This festival is to offer prayers to the goddess **Gangamma, the Gramadevata** (the goddess looking after the village) of Tirupati.
 - Tirupati Balaji temple has its origins in **Vaishnavism**, which advocates the principles of equality and love, and prohibits animal sacrifice. The sanctum sanctorum, which houses the awe-inspiring idol of the Lord of the Seven Hills, is situated in the main temple complex of Tirumala.
 - The ancient and sacred temple of Sri Venkateswara is located on the seventh peak, **Venkatachala (Venkata Hill)** of the **Tirupati Hill**, and lies on the southern banks of Sri Swami Pushkarini what is known popularly today as Tirupati Balaji Temple.
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