



21 December 2024

National and International News

<p>National Disputes Commission</p> <p>Consumer Redressal</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Supreme Court granted appeals filed by banks, contesting a 2008 order from the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) that determined charging more than 30% interest on credit card dues constituted an unfair trade practice under the Consumer Protection Act. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a quasi-judicial commission set up in 1988 under the Consumer Protection Act of 1986. Mandate: To provide inexpensive, speedy, and summary redressal of consumer disputes. It is headed by a sitting or a retired Judge of the SC or a sitting or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court. NCDRC shall have jurisdiction to entertain a complaint valued more than two crore and also have appellate and revisional jurisdiction from the orders of State Commissions or the District fora as the case may be. The provisions of this act cover 'goods' as well as 'services'. A complaint may be filed by the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A consumer Any voluntary consumer association registered under the Companies Act 1956 The Central Government or any State Government One or more consumers where there are numerous consumers. Appeal: Any person aggrieved by an order of NCDRC, may prefer an appeal against such an order to SC within a period of 30 days.
<p>India - Kuwait relations</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM Narendra Modi is set to visit Kuwait on December 21-22, 2024. It would be the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Kuwait in 43 years. The visit aims to further enhance trade, energy, and cultural ties, reinforcing the strategic partnership between India and Kuwait. It reflects India's growing global outreach and



commitment to strengthening relationships with Gulf nations.

Key Points:

- **Political Relations:**
 - India was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Kuwait in 1961.
- Celebrated the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2021-22.
- **Economic Relations:**
 - India has been a natural trading partner of Kuwait.
 - Until 1961, the Indian Rupee was a legal tender in Kuwait.
 - Before oil development, Kuwait's economy was based on shipbuilding, pearl diving, fishing, and maritime trade with India.
 - Bilateral trade in FY 2023-24 was USD 10.47 billion, with a 34.7% growth in Indian exports.
 - Kuwait is India's 6th largest crude oil supplier, meeting 3% of energy needs.
- **Cultural Relations**
 - A 'Festival of India' was held in Kuwait in March 2023 under the Ministry of Culture.

About Kuwait

- It is a country in **West Asia**, part of the Middle East.
- **It is bordered by**
 - Iraq to the north
 - Saudi Arabia to the south.
- It also shared its maritime border with Iran, across the Persian Gulf.
- **Capital:** Kuwait City
- **Economy:** It is a high income country with six largest oil reserves globally.
- **Known as:** "Hollywood of the Gulf" due to its vibrant art and cultural scene.

India's Underwater Cable Project

Why in news?

- As data usage continues to grow year after year, India's undersea cable network is expanding with the upcoming launch of two new systems in the next three months: **the India Asia Xpress (IAX) and the India Europe Xpress (IEX)**, which will provide additional internet links between India and both Asia and Europe.

Key Points:

- **India's Cable Projects:**
 - **India-Asia Xpress (IAX) and India-Europe Xpress (IEX):** Reliance Jio is leading these projects, connecting India to Singapore, the



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	<p>Persian Gulf, and Europe. The capacity is around 200 Tbps, with funding from a consortium including Facebook and Google.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MIST: This cable will link Mumbai and Cochin in India to Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore. It has a capacity of 218 Tbps and is scheduled for operation in 2024. ○ Blue-Raman: Connecting Italy, Greece, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and India, this cable bypasses the Egyptian chokepoint. It has a capacity of over 200 Tbps and is funded by a consortium led by Google. ○ SEA-ME-WE 6: Upgrading the link from Singapore to Marseille, this cable spans 19,200 km with a capacity of 126 Tbps. It is scheduled to be operational in 2025 and involves a consortium of telecommunications companies. ○ 2 Africa Pearl: Extending from India and Pakistan, this cable orbits Africa, connecting 33 nations across three continents. It has a capacity of 180 Tbps and is funded by a consortium that includes Facebook and China Mobile. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are Undersea Cables? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Undersea cables, also known as submarine cables, are Fiber optic strands enclosed in protective layers laid on the ocean floor. ○ They are essential for global connectivity, transmitting data and communication signals between continents and nations.
<p>Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Around 36 crore beneficiaries have been verified, and 8.39 crore hospital admissions, totaling over ₹1.16 lakh crore, have been authorized under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY). <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launched in September 2018, the scheme aimed to offer secondary and tertiary care services to the vulnerable population in the society. ● It was launched as a second component of the 'Ayushman Bharat' scheme. ● This scheme aimed to offer medical coverage of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation to poor and vulnerable families. ● The scheme covers over nearly 40% of the population targeted towards the poorest and the vulnerable. ● Eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The scheme is targeted to cover 10.74 crore poor, deprived rural families and identified



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	<p>occupational category of urban worker's families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The beneficiaries as identified by latest Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It provides cashless access to health care services for the beneficiary at the point of service, i.e., the hospital. ○ Under the scheme every eligible family will be given Rs 5 lakh Insurance coverage benefit per year. ○ It offers Health Benefit Packages which covers surgery, medical and day care treatments, cost of medicines and diagnostics.
<p>BharatNet Project</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recently, the third and largest phase of BharatNet was launched. ● This phase aims to connect 6.25 lakh villages with high-speed internet of 100 Mbps or more. <p>Key Points: It is one of the biggest rural telecom projects in the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is implemented in a phased manner to all Gram Panchayats in the country for providing non-discriminatory access to broadband connectivity to all the telecom service providers. ● Objective: To enable access providers like mobile operators, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Cable TV operators, content providers to launch various services such as applications like e-health, e-education and e-governance in rural and remote India. ● The Telecom Commission approved to implement the project in three phases. ● BharatNet Phase-I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was approved in 2011 the project for the creation of the National Optical Fibre Network (now BharatNet) to provide broadband connectivity at the Gram Panchayat (GP) level by connecting block headquarters to GPs by using existing fibre of Central Public Sector Undertakings such as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and RailTel Corporation of India Limited and laying incremental fibre to bridge the connectivity gap up to the GPs. ● BharatNet Phase-II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was approved in 2017, which integrates the implementation experience of Phase-I of the project and aligns it with the vision of Digital India. ○ The modified strategy provides an optimal mix of



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media (OFC, Radio and satellite) to connect Gram Panchayats (GPs).

- Under Phase II, GPs are to be connected through multiple implementing models like State-led Model, Private Sector Model and CPSU Model, along with last mile connectivity in GPs through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology.

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