

**DAILY
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ANALYSIS**

LAKSHYA ACADEMY®

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1 - Railway link between Tripura and Bangladesh:

GS II

International Issues

- **Context:**

- A train link that connects Bangladesh and Northeast India was essentially opened by the prime ministers of Bangladesh and India.

- **Important information:**

- The journey duration between Agartala and Kolkata will be reduced from 31 hours to 10 hours by the Agartala-Akhaura project.
- It is anticipated that the project will increase trade, tourism, and people-to-people interactions between the two nations.
- Throughout the 12.24-kilometer Agartala-Akhaura railway track:
 - In Tripura, there are 5.46 km on the Indian side, and
 - 6.78 kilometres in Bangladesh's Brahmanbaria district's Akhaura upa-zilla.
- Gangasagar will be the first station on the Bangladeshi side.

- **Finance for the initiative:**

- The project began with Rs 972.52 crore in 2016 after an agreement was reached in 2013. This included:
 - Work on the Indian side has been approved for Rs 580 crore, and
 - About Rs 392.52 crore on behalf of Bangladesh.
- Later, because of additional ancillary costs and cost inflation, the budget was altered again.
- An estimated Rs 1255.10 crore would be spent on the project in its whole, with Rs 862.58 crore allotted for development on the Indian side alone.
- India is covering the full project cost.
- The development on the Indian side was supported by the Ministry for Development of North East Region (DoNER), and

- Under the programme "Aid to Bangladesh," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) covered the costs for the Bangladeshi side.

- **Companies engaged:**

- On the Indian side, the work was completed by the Indian Railway Construction International Limited (IRCON), a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Indian Railways.
- The work was carried out by Texmaco, a private Indian company, on the Bangladeshi end.

- **The project's importance to Tripura:**

- Any connectivity project is extremely important from a practical standpoint for landlocked Tripura.
- The proposed Agartala-Akhaura railway project will effectively cut the 1600 km gap between Agartala and Kolkata in half.
- Maintaining emotional ties to Bangladesh is also important.
- Bangladesh and Tripura have the second-longest international border at 856 kilometres, after West Bengal.
- With the exception of Assam on the fourth side, the nation encircles the northeastern state on all three sides.
- Only 14 lakh people were in Tripura at the time, but during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war and the formation of Bangladesh, the state took in over 15 lakh East Pakistani refugees.
- It oversaw at least eight significant training camps for muktijoddha, or liberation warriors.
- People on both sides may now look forward to easier and closer ties thanks to the new connectivity initiative.

- **Additional trains that travel from India to Bangladesh:**

- **Between Bangladesh and West Bengal, three trains are operated:**

- **Bandhan Express:**

- An outdated train connection between Kolkata and Khulna, Bangladesh's third-largest city, is reactivated by the Bandhan Express.
- The Barisal Express ran this route up to the India-Pakistan conflict of 1965.
- In 2017, the governments of Bangladesh and India brought the service back online.
- The Petrapole-Benapole border crossing is used by the Bandhan.

- **Maitree Express:**
- In 2008, the Maitree Express began service between Kolkata and Dhaka Cantonment.
- **Mitali Express:**
- India announced the Mitali Express in 2021, which links Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, with Siliguri, a city in North Bengal.
- *Source → The Hindu*

2 - Kozhikode is designated as a "city of literature" by UNESCO:

GS I

Indian Culture

- **Context:**
- The Keralan city of Kozhikode has been included in the Creative Cities Network (UCCN) of UNESCO.
- **Important information:**
- Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior was one of the 55 new cities to sign up for the network.
- **Seven creative professions are represented by these carefully chosen cities:**
- folk arts & crafts,
- create,
- video,
- culinary arts,
- literature
- arts in media, and
- tunes.
- Gwalior was added to the music category and Kozhikode to the literary category.

- **Regarding the Creative Cities Network (UCCN) of UNESCO:**

- In order to foster collaboration among cities that have recognised creativity as a critical component of sustainable urban development, the UCCN was established in 2004.
- There are already 350 cities in more than 100 nations included.

- **Goal:**

- The network aims to maximise the cultural industries' creative, social, and economic potential.
- It was started with the intention of advancing UNESCO's objectives for cultural variety and bolstering resistance to dangers including rising inequality, climate change, and fast urbanisation.
- It promotes a creative culture in urban planning and problem-solving techniques.

- **Purpose of the UCCN:**

- Through collaborations between the public and private sectors as well as civil society, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network enables its member cities to acknowledge creativity as a crucial aspect of urban development.
- Its goals include creating centres of innovation and creativity and expanding possibilities for professionals and artists working in the cultural field.
- These cities must implement the sustainable development agenda of the UN.

- **Action areas:**

- Through the exchange of best practises, knowledge, and experiences, the network's goals are carried out on a global scale as well as within its member cities.
- There are studies and assessments on the experiences of the creative cities, as well as professional and artistic exchange initiatives.

- **The Network Cities Annual Conference:**

- The annual conference of mayors and other network city stakeholders is one of the network's highlights and a special chance to forge stronger connections amongst innovative towns worldwide.
- The conference's primary goal is to promote inter-city cooperation by exchanging useful information on the policies and initiatives that cities implement.
- The most recent meeting took place in Santos, Brazil.
- The conference was held in Istanbul this year.
- The following meeting is scheduled for July 2024 in Braga, Portugal.

- **Members are required to:**
- In order to exhibit their unwavering dedication to carrying out the UCCN Mission Statement, member cities are obliged to submit a Membership Monitoring Report every four years.
- Together with an action plan spanning the next four years, they offer an analysis of their accomplishments, lessons learned, and the significance of the designation.
- **The network's Indian cities:**
- In addition to Kozhikode and Gwalior, the network includes Varanasi (music), Srinagar (crafts and folk arts), and Chennai (music).
- **Concerning the literary heritage of Kozhikode:**
- Kozhikode, a city in North Kerala, is home to numerous well-known figures from the state's literary and cultural scenes.
- Numerous prominent media companies have their headquarters in this city, which also boasts hundreds of publishing houses and libraries that contribute to the city's rich literary heritage.
- In 1887, Kundalatha, the first Malayalam novel, was born in Kozhikode.
- The author of it is Appu Nedungadi.
- Kozhikode has been honoured by a number of notable writers, including S K Pottekkatt, Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, Uroob, Thikkodiyam, NN Kakkad, P Valsala, Akbar Kakkattil, Punathil Kunjabdulla, and MT Vasudevan Nair.
- Throughout the past 50 years, the city has also produced a large number of specialists in theatre and film.
- *Source → The Hindu*

3 – New type of Mushroom Coffee Brand:

GS II

Biotechnology related issues

- **Context:**
- Recent introduction of the mushroom coffee brand La Bae took place in Thalavoor, a village in Kerala.

- **Important information:**

- It is maybe Kerala's first mushroom coffee brand, created with the Krishi Vigyan Kendra's assistance.
- The Thalavoor panchayat came up with "Koon Gramam," a scheme to expand mushroom growing in the area, as a result of the small business's success.
- Approximately 100 farmers have been trained by the local organisation to cultivate the mushrooms that will be used to make La Bae.

- **In addition to organic arabica coffee beans from Wayanad, about five kinds are used to make mushroom coffee:**

- a button
- oysters
- creamy
- Mane of a lion
- Turkey's tail.
- What's coffee with mushrooms?
- There are many other ways to make mushroom coffee, but the most popular version resembles ordinary coffee grinds.
- The beneficial chemicals are extracted from the mushrooms through a drying and extraction process, after which they are blended into normal coffee.

- **Usually, the most widely used mushrooms in these mixtures are:**

- Shiki.
- Chaga.
- Mane of a lion.
- In cordyceps.

- **Advantages:**

- **Enhanced immunity:**

- Turkey's tail and its fermented substrates have shown some immune-stimulating qualities in test tube experiments.

- **Possibility to avoid cancer:**

- Research has suggested that chaga, cordyceps, reishi, turkey tail, and lion's mane may have some utility as supportive therapy for cancer patients, maybe by reducing nausea and vomiting.

- **Antidiabetic:**

- Rat studies suggested that chaga mushrooms could be useful in the fight against ulcers.

- **Food allergies that are anti-allergenic:**

- The Chaga mushroom has demonstrated indications of decreasing immune cell activity that causes an allergic reaction to some meals in test-tube research.

- **Heart conditions:**

- Extracts from reishi have the ability to lower blood cholesterol, which lowers the risk of heart disease.

- *Source → The Hindu*

4 - Gentiana Kurroo:

GS III

Environmental Conservation

- **Context:**

- Gentiana Kurroo, a plant that is critically endangered, has been successfully saved from extinction by the Uttarakhand Forest Department's research division.

- **Important information:**

- The plant is native to the Western Himalayas and is well-known for its therapeutic qualities.

- The species is under danger because of overexploitation of its roots and rhizome, as well as road widening and quarrying.
- Himalayan Gentian, or Trayman, is another name for Gentiana Kurroo.
- It's a rare and highly valued medicinal herb.

- **Therapeutic attributes:**

- It has a history of aiding with
- liver conditions,
- gastrointestinal issues,
- diabetic,
- asthma in the bronchi, and
- bladder infection.

- The Himalayan gentian root is well-known for its medicinal qualities, especially in the treatment of liver conditions.
- It has always been overexploited as a result, pushing it dangerously close to extinction.
- This plant's striking characteristic is its unusually vivid, trumpet-shaped blue blooms.
- It is an angiosperm, and blue-colored blossoms are not very frequent in angiosperms.
- These flowers have a distinctive white or yellow patch at the base and usually bloom from mid-September to October.

- **Status of conservation:**

- **Current status of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):**
- seriously threatened.

- **List of the Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board:**

- The Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board has identified 16 plant species as "threatened species" in the state, including the Himalayan Gentian.

- **How is it being kept safe?**

- The projects centred on using a rhizome-based method to sustainably preserve and propagate this endangered species.
- Plants reproduce by the use of their leaves, roots, or stems.
- It may happen as a result of vegetative plant fragmentation or distinct plant regeneration.

- Approximately 600 specimens of Himalayan Gentian have been successfully conserved thus far.
- *Source* → *The Hindu*

5 - Designation of State Police Chiefs:

GS III

Science and Technology

- **Context:**
- The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has tightened the guidelines for State police head appointments.
- **Important information:**
- A candidate for appointment as a State's Director-General of Police (DGP) must be a police officer with at least six months remaining on their contract before leaving for retirement.
- If the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) states that it will not be able to release the Indian Police Service (IPS) personnel on Central deputation for a State DGP's job, the Empanelment Committee, which was established by the UPSC, will not evaluate the officers.
- In accordance with the standards, officers who have served for at least 25 years may now be appointed as DGPs, as opposed to the previous minimum of 30 years.
- The shortlist of cops may include fewer officers in special cases, but it cannot include more than three officers.
- Officers will only be added to the panel with their own consent.
- **The necessity of the changes:**
- Following some States' decisions to appoint acting DGPs rather than regular DGPs, hence avoiding the need to go via the UPSC-selected panel of qualified officials, the UPSC has changed its guidelines.
- A number of States have appointed acting DGPs in order to circumvent the due process process, while some have appointed DGPs who were close to retiring.
- The updated standards aim to deter States from trying to prolong the tenure of their favoured officers who are ready to retire by not nominating them.

- *Source → The Hindu*



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