

**DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS
ANALYSIS**



LAKSHYA ACADEMY®

03 FEBRUARY 024

1 – Steel Industry of India:

GS III

Indian Economy

- **Context:**

- The steel industry has expanded rapidly over the years, and India is now the world's second-largest producer of steel, behind China, and a major player in the global steel market.

- **How is the Indian steel industry doing?**

- **Current Situation:**

- 125.32 million tonnes (MT) of crude steel and 121.29 MT of finished steel were produced in India in FY23.

- **Importance:**

- One of the materials that is utilised extensively worldwide is steel. The industry that produces the most profit is the iron and steel sector.
- The steel industry is essential to several important industries, including engineering, defence, automobiles, infrastructure, and construction.
- The Indian economy depends heavily on the steel industry, which in FY 21–22 accounted for 2% of the nation's GDP.

- **States that produce:**

- Among the top three states in India in terms of steel production is Odisha, followed by Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. Gujarat, West Bengal, Maharashtra, and Karnataka all have important responsibilities to play.

- **What are the Government's Initiatives to Promote the Steel Industry's Growth?**

- **Specialty steel's inclusion in the PLI scheme:**

- A five-year budget of Rs 6322 crore was allocated by the government to support the production of speciality steel, draw investments, and encourage technological improvements in the industry.
- **Making Green Steel:**
- In order to discuss, consider, and make recommendations regarding various levers for the decarbonisation of the steel sector, the Ministry of Steel established 13 Task Forces with participation from industry, academia, think tanks, S&T bodies, several Ministries, and other stakeholders.
- A National Green Mission has been announced by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) to promote the production and use of green hydrogen. The mission has included the steel industry as a stakeholder.
- The steel industry has included the Best Available Technologies (BAT) for modernization and expansion projects that are accessible worldwide.
- **The involvement of the Ministry in the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan:**
- In order to obtain information about steel production facilities, the Ministry of Steel uploaded the geolocations of almost 2000 steel units into the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, utilising BISAG-N's capabilities.
- Planning for inland waterways, ports, highways, railway line extensions, and gas pipeline connectivity will be made easier with the use of this data.
- **Policy for Recycling Steel Scrap:**
- In order to facilitate and encourage the establishment of metal scrapping centres across the nation for the scientific processing and recycling of ferrous scrap produced from a variety of sources, including end-of-life vehicles (ELVs), the Steel Scrap Recycling Policy (SSRP) was notified in 2019.
- **2017 National Steel Policy:**
- In order to promote long-term growth for the Indian steel sector by 2030–31, both on the supply and demand sides, the government developed the National Steel Policy 2017.
- Steel demand and consumption in the nation would be stimulated by the government's push for infrastructure development through the Gati-Shakti Master Plan, the "Make-in-India" effort for the industrial sector, and other flagship programmes. ..Steel and Steel Products (Control of Quality):
- In order to guarantee the availability of high-quality steel for the industry, users, and general public, the Ministry of Steel introduced the Steel Quality Control Order, which prohibits the importation and domestic sale of substandard or faulty steel products. Only high-quality steel that complies with the applicable BIS standards is made available to end users in accordance with the Order.

- **Security in the Iron and Steel Industry:**

- A comprehensive set of 25 standard minimum safety guidelines for the iron and steel sector was developed following lengthy talks with stakeholders, academic institutions, etc.
- These safety guidelines meet the requirements of the ILO Code of Practice on Safety in the Iron and Steel Industry and are on par with international standards.
- The World Steel Association's "Safety & Health Principles and Definitions" guidance document has also been consulted.

- **Award for National Metallurgists:**

- The Ministry of Steel bestows this esteemed honour to honour metallurgists for their exceptional achievements to the iron and steel industry.

- *Source* → *The Hindu*

2 - Phase 1 of Bharatmala: Extended Deadline:



GS II
LAKSHYA ACADEMY

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**

- The government has just extended Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I, the flagship highway development project, to 2027–2028.
- The decision reflects the project's implementation slowdown and budgetary constraints, and it comes after an expected cost increase of over 100% for the massive undertaking.

- **Bharatmala Pariyojana: What is it?**

- **About:**

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways launched the Bharatmala Pariyojana umbrella plan.
- Bharatmala's first phase was scheduled to be finished by 2022 and was originally announced in 2017.

- **Silent Attributes:**

- Bharatmala is focused on improving the efficiency of the infrastructure that has already been constructed, merging national and economic corridors, bridging infrastructure gaps for smooth mobility, and multimodal integration. The programme has six main features:
- Economic Corridors: By integrating the corridors, economically significant centres of production and consumption can become more integrated.
- Inter-corridor and feeder routes: This would guarantee connectivity in the first and last miles.
- National Corridor Efficiency Improvement: By doing this, the larger concrete objective is to expand the lanes and relieve traffic on the current National Corridors.
- Roads that connect borders and other areas: Improving border road infrastructure would allow for more mobility and increase trade with surrounding nations.
- Roads connecting ports to coastal areas: Connectivity to coastal areas promotes industrial and tourism growth, which in turn boosts port-led economic development.
- Green-field motorways would be advantageous in choke points because they would alleviate some of the traffic congestion found on motorways.

- **Present Situation:**

- 15,045 km, or 42% of the project, have been finished as of November 2023.
- Problems:
- Cost of raw materials; higher land acquisition costs; building of high-speed corridors; and higher rates of goods and services tax.

- **Way Ahead:**

- Analyse tactical sourcing techniques to obtain raw materials at affordable costs. Engage in supplier negotiations to secure favourable rates, especially when the market is fluctuating.
- Reduce compensation conflicts by implementing effective and transparent land purchase procedures. To expedite the process, look into options like land pooling and community involvement.
- Do extensive investigations of the viability before adding high-speed corridors. Optimise corridor layouts to strike a compromise between affordability and usefulness.
- To reduce uncertainty, support stable and predictable GST policy. Interact with government representatives to offer business perspectives on the effects of shifting tax rates.

- **Source** → *The Hindu*

3 - Issues with Sanitation in Indian District Courts:

GS II

Judiciary related issues

- **Context:**
- Inequalities in gender-specific amenities in district court buildings across the nation have come to light in a new report titled "State of the Judiciary," which was released by the Supreme Court of India's Centre for Research and Planning.
- The study clarifies the deficiency of gender-neutral restrooms, the absence of sanitary napkin vending machines, and the poor availability of separate restrooms for women.
- **Which are the report's main conclusions?**
- **Inadequate Facilities for Women:**
- There aren't any separate restrooms for women in about one-fifth of district court buildings.
- Rest rooms with vending machines for sanitary napkins only have 6.7% of them.
- **Issues with Current Restrooms:**
- Existing restrooms frequently experience problems with their water supply and have cracked doors.
- Concerns regarding equality and privacy are raised when male and female judges use the same restrooms.
- Court restroom cleanliness is ensured by the judges themselves, who personally hire sweepers and cleaners.
- For example, no maintenance facility was contracted to clean the restrooms in the Peren area of Nagaland. It was the responsibility of the staff members to maintain the restrooms.
- **Absence of Accessible Facilities:**
- The majority of district courts lack transgender-accessible restrooms.
- underlined the necessity of "gender-inclusive toilets" in all court buildings.
- In Kerala, people with impairments share restrooms with transgender people.
- There are only four transgender restrooms in the entire state of Uttarakhand.
- Chennai and Coimbatore are the only two districts in Tamil Nadu that have these amenities.
- Transgender people may experience discomfort and harassment when using restrooms that do not correspond with their gender identity.

- **What Problems Do Inadequate Sanitation Facilities Cause?**

- **Risks to Health and Hygiene:**

- Inadequate lavatory facilities can lead to unsanitary circumstances and health hazards for women, including a higher risk of infections and illnesses like dysentery, cholera, and typhoid.
- Women may feel less protected when there aren't separate restrooms, particularly in dimly lit or remote locations where they may be more susceptible to harassment or attack.
- Accessing shared lavatory facilities can be difficult for older people and pregnant women, which might affect their comfort and mobility.

- **Human rights violations under the United Nations:**

- According to the UN Human Rights, everyone has the right to physical, inexpensive access to sanitation in all areas of life that is secure, hygienic, safe, and acceptable in terms of society and culture. This right also includes the right to privacy and the maintenance of dignity.

- **Fundamental right violation:**

- In *Virendra Gaur v. State Haryana* (1995), the Supreme Court highlighted that Article 21 guarantees the right to life, extending that right to hygienic conditions necessary for living a dignified life.

- **How Can Court Sanitation Facilities Be Made Better?**

- **Set Aside Specific Resources:**

- Allocate adequate resources for maintaining sanitary conditions and designate personnel in charge of cleaning and upkeep. To increase awareness and keep an eye on standards, think of designating cleanliness champions inside the court.
- The former CJI recommended that the National Judicial Infrastructure Authority of India (NJIAI), a specialised organisation, be set up to act as a focal point for raising money for courtroom sanitary improvement initiatives.

- **Modernise Current Facilities:**

- Bathroom renovations should provide accessibility, usability, and cleanliness for those with impairments. Install sanitary bins, paper towels, soap, and adequate lighting as well as ventilation and lighting.

- **Create Sanitation Guidelines:**

- Establish national guidelines for court sanitation facilities to guarantee uniformity and high standards in various states and at various judicial levels. This could involve standards for hygienic practices, accessibility needs, and minimal amenities.
- **Encourage customer comments:**
- Establish channels for court users to voice their opinions about the sanitization services, point out problems, and suggest fixes. This can entail questionnaires, suggestion boxes, or open forums.
- Assure prompt and efficient handling of complaints and suggestions.
- **What is India's Current State of Toilet Facilities?**
- Since sanitation is a state responsibility, it is up to the states to provide restrooms, start behaviour modification programmes, set up solid and liquid waste management systems, and continue the various initiatives.
- The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) reports that 69.3% of families have access to either private or renovated restrooms.
- 2.9% of households have access to unimproved facilities, while 8.4% of households have shared restrooms.
- According to the NFHS data, 63.6% of rural and 80.7% of urban families, respectively, have access to upgraded lavatory facilities. For rural homes, the number is 63.6.
- Between 2019 and 2021, 19.4% of Indian families did not use any kind of toilet facility.
- 6.1% of households in urban areas and 25.9% of households in rural areas, respectively, practise open defecation.
- Bihar has the least amount of access to restrooms among states and union territories (accessible in only 61.2% of households). Jharkhand (69.6%) and Odisha (71.3%) come next to Bihar.
- According to Lakshadweep, every home has access to restrooms.
- **Source → The Hindu**

4 - RBI's Guidelines for Unclaimed Deposits and Inoperative Accounts:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- With the intention of expediting the classification and activation procedures, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has updated its criteria pertaining to inactive accounts and unclaimed deposits.
- Effective April 1, 2024, all Commercial Banks and all Cooperative Banks will be subject to the new instructions.
- **What are Unclaimed Deposits and Inoperative Accounts?**
- **Not Working Account:**
- When an account hasn't had any "customer-induced transactions" in more than two years, it is considered inactive.
- A customer-induced transaction can be any of the following: a non-financial transaction, a financial transaction started by the bank or another party at the account holder's request, or a KYC (know your customer) update completed in person or over digital channels like the bank's mobile banking app or internet banking.
- It is estimated that there are between Rs 1 and Rs 1.30 lakh crore in dormant bank accounts.
- **Reclaimed Deposits:**
- Term deposits that remain unclaimed ten years after they mature or balances in savings or current accounts that remain dormant for ten years are classified as unclaimed deposits.
- Approximately Rs 42,270 crore is still unclaimed in banks as of March 2023.
- **Which RBI guidelines have been revised?**
- **Annual Assessment:**
- Accounts that have not had any customer-initiated transactions for more than a year are subject to an annual assessment by banks.
- Banks are required to examine these accounts even if they are not specifically mandated to renew term deposits.

- To keep such deposits from going unclaimed, banks must examine accounts where consumers have not taken the proceeds upon maturity or moved them to their savings or current account.
- **Protocol for Communication:**
 - Banks are required to inform customers about the absence of activities for the past year by letters, emails, or SMS.
 - The impending "inoperative" condition of the account, should no operations take place during the following year, must be made clear in alert notifications.
 - In these situations, customers will need to reactivate by submitting new KYC papers.
- **Criteria for Classification of Inoperative Accounts:**
 - Transactions caused by customers alone—not those induced by banks—are taken into account for classification.
 - Requirements that are imposed by the client, such as standing orders or auto-renewals without further action, are likewise regarded as such.
 - Transactions that are prompted by banks include levies, fees, interest payments, fines, and taxes.
 - An account's designation as inoperative will only apply to that specific client's account—not to the customer as a whole.
- **Non-operational Classification Exemptions:**
 - Accounts opened with no balance for students and recipients of government assistance should be kept apart in the main banking system.
 - This makes sure that if anything is not used for more than two years, it won't be labelled as "inoperative."
- **Procedure for Reactivation:**
 - KYC documents are required for the reactivation of inactive accounts. All branches—including non-home branches—are subject to this procedure.
 - If the account holder requests it, the Video-Customer Identification Process (V-CIP) may also be used for reactivation.
 - Activating accounts that are not operational is free of charge.
- **Interest and Penalties:**
 - Banks are not allowed to charge penalties for failing to maintain minimum balances in any account that has been labelled as inactive.
 - Accounts opened with no balance for students and recipients of government assistance should be kept apart in the main banking system.

- This makes sure that if anything is not used for more than two years, it won't be labelled as "inoperative."
- Savings account interest should be credited on a regular basis whether or not the account is being used.
- **Fund for Depositor Education and Awareness:**
- Banks must send the credit balance from any deposit account they hold that hasn't been used for 10 years or more to the RBI's DEA (Depositor Education and Awareness) Fund.
- *Source → The Hindu*

5 - Sickle cell illness:

GS II

Health related issues

- **Context:**
- The National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission has screened over one crore individuals for sickle cell disease (SCD).
- By 2047, sickle cell anaemia should no longer exist in India because to the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission, which was established in 2023.
- **What is SCD, or sickle cell disease?**
- **About:**
- There are several hereditary abnormalities of red blood cells (RBCs) that make up SCD. The oxygen-carrying protein haemoglobin is found in red blood cells (RBCs), and healthy RBCs are spherical. Haemoglobin abnormalities in sickle cell disease (SCD) result in hard, sticky red blood cells that resemble a C-shaped sickle.
- **Signs:**
- While sickle cell disease symptoms might vary, the following are some typical symptoms:
- Chronic anaemia can cause weakness, paleness, and exhaustion.

- Sickle cell crises, sometimes referred to as painful episodes, can result in abrupt, severe pain in the arms, legs, back, chest, and bones.
- delayed puberty and growth
- **Therapy:**
 - Blood transfusions: These can lessen the chance of pain crises and assist treat anaemia.
 - Hydroxyurea: This drug can help lessen the frequency of excruciating episodes and stop some of the illness's long-term consequences.
 - Stem cell or bone marrow transplantation is an additional treatment option.
- **Government Programmes to Address SCD:**
 - In 2016, the government published technical operational recommendations for sickle cell anaemia prevention and control.
 - To address the difficulties in illness detection and treatment, Madhya Pradesh developed the State Haemoglobinopathy Mission.
- *Source → The Hindu*



LAKSHYA ACADEMY®