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MK Yadav Sir

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Rising tide, shifting lives: Panama becomes first nation to evacuate island community over climate impact



Context: Recently, on a tiny island of Panama's Caribbean coast, people of Guna community are forced to leave **Gardi Sugdub** due to climate change and rising sea level.

Gardi Sugdub

- **About:** It is one of about 50 populated islands in the archipelago of the Guna Yala territory, Panama.
- **Annual Flooding:** Every year, especially when the strong winds whip up the sea in November and December, water fills the streets and enters the homes.
- **Impact:** Climate change isn't only leading to a rise in sea levels, but it's also warming oceans and thereby powering stronger storms.
- **Guna People:** These are the indigenous people of Panama and Colombia.
 - Guna people live in three politically autonomous comarcas or autonomous reservations in Panama, and a few small villages in Colombia.
 - **Community Organization:** In Guna Yala, each community has its political organization, led by a saila.
 - ✓ The saila is customarily both the political and religious leader of the community.

Go green fast, cut carbon footprint: Govt to steel cos

Subhash Narayan

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NEW DELHI

India's steel ministry has asked all major exporters of the alloy to focus on reducing their carbon footprint as the European Union (EU) prepares to tax companies that do not meet its environmental standards.

The EU's carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM) proposes a tax on embedded carbon imports from sectors including steel, aluminium, cement, hydrogen, electricity, and fertiliser from 1 January.

While India is exploring tariff and non-tariff measures to counter CBAM, it wants the country's steelmakers to develop carbon-capture technologies as well as replace coal with green hydrogen to fire their furnaces, according to government officials aware of the development.

The ministry has in recent meetings with steel producers including Tata Steel Ltd, Jindal Steel and Power Ltd and JSW Steel asked them to begin pilot projects aimed at reducing emissions from their existing facilities, the officials said on the condition of anonymity.

The ministry didn't immedi-

ately reply to emailed queries.

India's steel industry is on unparalleled expansion spree to add fresh capacity, and poised to witness an all-time-high capacity addition of 15.6 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) in the ongoing fiscal year, 2024-25.

But the Indian steel industry's carbon emission intensity is much higher than global standards. Indian steel producers face challenges in reducing their carbon footprint because their average emission intensity from blast furnaces is 2.6 million tonnes of carbon emission per million tonne of crude steel production, which is 12% higher than the global average, according to rating agency Icra.

The steel ministry wants all the fresh capacities created to be fully compliant with new and emerging emission standards, said the people mentioned earlier.

From 2026, Indian steel exports to the EU, among other specified exports, will be subject to an additional tariff of 20-35% under CBAM if not compliant with its requirements.

"With the advent of EU CBAM and similar carbon tar-

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CARBON FOOTPRINT (Syllabus GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Context: The steel ministry plans to write to all major steel companies with export interests to assess their preparedness for reducing their carbon footprint and for facing the green challenges emerging in global markets.

Carbon Footprint

- **About:** It is the amount of greenhouse gases—especially carbon dioxide—released into the atmosphere by a particular human activity.
- **WHO Definition:** A carbon footprint as a measure of the impact of human activities on the production of carbon dioxide (CO₂) resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels.
- **Quantification:** It is quantified in terms of the weight of CO₂ emissions produced, measured in tonnes.
- **Measurement:** Carbon footprint is measured in terms of the weight of CO₂ emissions produced, quantified in tonnes.
- **Direct and Indirect Emissions:** Carbon footprint includes direct emissions, such as from driving a car, as well as indirect emissions required to consume any goods and services.
- **Types of Carbon Footprints**
 - **Organizational Carbon Footprint:** This includes emissions from all activities across an organization, encompassing energy use, industrial processes, and company vehicles.
 - **Product Carbon Footprint:** This involves emissions throughout the entire life cycle of a product or service, from the extraction of raw materials and manufacturing to its use, final reuse, recycling, or disposal.

Difference from Ecological Footprint

- Carbon footprint is different from ecological footprint. While the carbon footprint measures the emission of gases that contribute to global warming, the ecological footprint focuses on measuring the use of bio-productive space.

Baobab trees come from Madagascar – study reveals that seeds, seedlings floated to mainland Africa and Australia

Context: Recently, it was noted that the world's eight baobab species have a unique distribution: six in Madagascar, one in Africa, and one in Australia.

Baobab Tree

- **About:** The tall and **uniquely shaped deciduous trees** which are famously spotted on the **island of Madagascar**.
 - Known for their great heights, with some extending **up to 50 metres, and exceptionally long lifespans going up to 2,000 years**.
- **Distribution:** Grows in low-lying areas in **Africa and Australia**. Found in dry savannah habitats.
 - The trees belong to the **genus Adansonia**, which comprises eight distinct species:
 - ✓ *Adansonia digitata* found in continental Africa, *Adansonia gregorii* in Northwestern Australia:
 - ✓ Six other **species endemic to Madagascar**.
- **In India:** Baobabs trees are found in abundance in **Mandu town (Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh)**, where the Bhil tribe has preserved them for centuries.
- **One near the Golconda Fort in Andhra Pradesh that is believed to be more than 400 years old.**
- **Unique Appearance:** Baobabs have thick trunks with large circumferences and thin, spindly branches, giving them a distinctive "**upside-down tree**" appearance during the dry season.
 - This is how it became known as "**The Tree of Life**".



CJI: Arbitration now preferred method for commercial justice

Utkarsh Anand

letterstothindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud has underscored the pivotal role of arbitration in the realm of commercial justice, asserting it is no longer an alternative but a preferred method of dispute resolution. He stressed that arbitration must be steered by considerations of public policy, thereby empowering courts to intervene when necessary to prevent injustice.

Delivering an address at the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom on Thursday, the CJI highlighted the evolution of arbitration from a supplementary dispute resolution mechanism to a primary choice for commercial entities worldwide. "Arbitration is no longer an 'alternative'. It is, in fact, the preferred method of seeking commercial justice," stressed the CJI, adding the shift is driven by the desire of parties to distance themselves from domestic court systems and resolve their disputes through a neutral, third-party arbitrator.

Adding a historic touch to the event, Lord Reed, the President of the UK Supreme Court, extended the unique privilege to Justice Chandrachud of occupying the President's seat during his speech, signifying a deep respect and solidarity between the judiciary of the two nations. The event was attended by legal luminaries and arbitration experts from around



CJI Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud at the centre, Lord Reed to his right, senior counsel Gourab Banerji to his left.

the globe.

In his address, the CJI pointed out that courts in India are overburdened despite high courts disposing of 2.15 million cases and the district courts disposing of 44.70 million cases in 2023.

"These figures show the trust that the people of India have in their judiciary... Every aggrieved person who approaches the doors of the judiciary has the right to a just remedy. In attending to these grievances, the courts in India perform their plain constitutional duty. The width of our jurisdiction was designed to ensure the widest access to justice. But surely every case need not find a remedy before a court, with emerging forms of dispute resolution such as arbitration and mediation gaining acceptance," he said.

The CJI added the values of a liberal democracy enshrined in the Indian Constitution allow peo-

ple to seek individualised solutions to their legal problems outside the judicial setup, if the solutions do not violate established law, and that arbitration is one such alternative method of dispute resolution.

"Arbitration provides this level playing field outside domestic court systems. I firmly believe that now is the time for countries such as India to step up to the occasion to create and promote a culture of commercial arbitration. The robust institutionalization of arbitration will further the culture of arbitration in the Global South," maintained the Judge, adding arbitral institutions ought to be transparent, accountable, technologically advanced and the same tinging greater diversity in terms of gender or from the Global South to make for a broad-based process.

ARBITRATION IN INDIA (Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Context: The Chief Justice of India recently emphasized that arbitration has become a preferred method of dispute resolution in commercial justice, underscoring its pivotal role.

Arbitration in India

- **Statutory recognition:** Arbitration in India was statutorily recognized as a form of dispute resolution for the first time when Indian Arbitration Act, 1899 was enacted.
 - It was **confined to the three presidency towns** only i.e. Madras, Bombay and Calcutta.
- **Codification:** It was further codified in Section 89 and Schedule II of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, where provisions of arbitration were extended to different regions of British India to which the Act of 1899 was not extended.
- **Arbitration Act, 1940:** It repealed the Act of 1899 along with the relevant provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.
 - The Act of 1940 was a reflection of the English Arbitration Act, 1934 and was a comprehensive legislation on the subject but it had no provisions to deal with enforcement of foreign awards and hence, dealt only with domestic arbitrations.
- **Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996:** It repealed the Act of 1940 and was based on UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration, 1985 and covered both domestic and international arbitration.
- **Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2015:** The amendment of 2015 imposed a time limit in a strict sense for concluding the process of arbitration.
 - The time period was fixed at 12 months which could be extended for an extra time period of 6 months for which the arbitration tribunal will take extra fees for the purpose.
- **Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2019:** It seeks to encourage Arbitration, Mediation, Conciliation and other methods of ADR with the establishment of the ACI that will ensure professional and uniform standards that meet the global expectation.

Constitutional provisions

- **Fundamental rights:** Alternative Dispute resolution in India was founded on the constitutional basis of Article 14 (Equality before law) and Article 21 (right to life and personal liberty).
- **Directive Principles of State Policy:**
 - **Article 39A:** It states that the state shall make a principle of state policy relating to equal justices and free legal aid.
 - **Article 40:** It gives a directive to the state to take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.

Artificial Sweeteners, Real Health Problems

Too Much Of Xylitol Could Lead To Clots: Study

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WIDELY USED IN SUGAR-FREE GUMS, CANDIES

New Delhi: Consuming high levels of xylitol, a popular sugar substitute found in a wide range of products — sugar-free chewing gum to low-sugar baked goods, mints and even toothpaste — may lead to blood clots, increasing the risk of serious cardiovascular events like heart attacks and strokes, reveals a study published in European Heart Journal.

According to doctors across the city, the findings are troubling, given xylitol's potential to increase the risk of major adverse cardiovascular events and enhance platelet reactivity and thrombosis. This may have significant implications for patients with cardiovascular diseases, they said.

Xylitol, a sugar alcohol that occurs naturally in various fruits and vegetables, has gained significant popularity over the past one decade. Its chemical composition resembles that of sugar, but it contains fewer calories, making it an attractive alternative for health-conscious individuals.

Dr Nityanand Tripathi, head of cardiology and electrophysiology at Fortis Shalimar Bagh, said, "Xylitol is often promoted as a safe sugar substitute, but these results highlight the need for caution, especially for individuals at risk of cardiovascular diseases." He added that more research was needed to fully understand the mechanisms and establish clear guidelines for its consumption.

"High consumption of xylitol can lead to a state of hypercoagulability, where the blood has an increased tendency to clot. This effect is mediated through xylitol's ability to enhance the aggregation and activity of platelets, small blood cells that play a crucial role in the clotting process," explained Dr Amar Singh, director of interventional cardiology at Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute. "The heightened platelet reactivity induced by xylitol can result in the development of clots within blood vessels. These clots have the potential to obstruct blood flow in both arteries and veins, leading to serious cardiovascular events."

Beyond cardiovascular concerns, xylitol can cause gastrointestinal issues like bloating, gas, and diarrhoea when consumed in large amounts.

In individuals predisposed to cardiovascular issues, it may increase the risk of clotting and thrombosis.

For those who need to avoid sugar, natural alternatives include stevia and monk fruit extract.

They provide a similar sweetness to sugar without the associated risks, making



them suitable for individuals managing diabetes or seeking healthier dietary options.

Xylitol is found in sugar-free gums, candies, mints, oral care products (like toothpaste and mouthwash), baked goods and some medications as a sugar substitute.

The study, conducted by Cleveland Clinic, US, indicates that every measure of clotting ability significantly increased immediately after the ingestion of a xylitol-sweetened drink, but not with a glucose-sweetened drink. Explaining the difference, Dr AK Sahani, director and chief of neurology at Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, said, this could be due to xylitol's specific metabolic pathway, influencing platelet function and vascular response differently.

It is advisable to use natural sweeteners like honey, maple syrup and fruits in moderation, said Dr Bharat Kukreti, director and unit head of cardiology at Paras Health, Gurgaon. "Patients, especially those with cardiovascular risk factors, should be cautious with sugar substitutes and prioritise a balanced diet. For products like toothpaste and gum, the occasional use is likely to be safe due to the minimal amount of xylitol ingested," he added.

Choosing natural items over artificial ones can provide numerous benefits. "Saufr is a great wholesome option. By making such a switch, you can improve your overall well-being," said prof Vinay Goyal, chairman of neurology at Medanta Hospital, Gurgaon.

The same research team found a similar link between erythritol and cardiovascular risk last year. Xylitol is not as prevalent as erythritol in keto or sugar-free food products in the US, but is common in other countries, said researchers.

Context: A recent study in the European Heart Journal warns that consuming high levels of xylitol, an artificial sweetener found in various products, may increase the risk of serious cardiovascular events such as heart attacks and strokes by causing blood clots.

Artificial Sweeteners

- **About:** It provides a sweet taste without the high calorie content of regular sugar, aiding in weight management.
- **Chemical Synthesis:** These sweeteners are synthesized chemically to provide a sweet taste without the high calorie content found in regular sugar.
- **Examples:** Saccharin, aspartame, acesulfame potassium (Ace-K), sucralose, neotame, and advantame.
- **Benefits**
 - These sweeteners have minimal impact on blood sugar levels, making them suitable for individuals with diabetes.
 - Individuals with PKU can safely consume artificial sweeteners since they are free from phenylalanine, a compound harmful to those with this genetic disorder.
 - Artificial sweeteners are used in various food and beverage products, providing low-calorie options for diet sodas, sugar-free desserts, and low-calorie snacks.

Xylitol

- **About:** It is a sugar alcohol naturally found in small amounts in fruit and vegetables, and it's also produced by the human body.
- **Advantage:** As an additive, xylitol resembles sugar in taste and appearance but contains 40% fewer calories, making it a popular choice for low-calorie products.
- **Common Uses:** It's utilized in various products such as sugar-free gum, candies, toothpaste, and baked goods, often at concentrations much higher than its natural occurrence.
- **Keto-Friendly:** Xylitol is frequently featured in products labeled "keto-friendly," particularly in European markets, catering to consumers following low-carb diets.

India participates in the inaugural Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Clean Economy Investor Forum

Context: Indian delegation participated in the inaugural Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Clean Economy Investor Forum.

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)

- **About:** The initiative, spearheaded by the US, seeks to bolster economic cooperation among participating nations, fostering resilience, sustainability, inclusivity, growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Launched by:** United States (US) in Tokyo at the QUAD summit on May 23, 2022.
- **Aim:** The framework intends to “advance resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness” in these economies.
- **Not an FTA:** IPEF is not a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and Comprehensive and Progressive Transpacific Partnership (CPTPP).
- **IPEF Pillars:** Trade, Supply chains resilience, Clean Economy, and Fair Economy.
- **Members:** Quad members (India, USA, Australia and Japan),
 - 7 members of ASEAN (Except Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar).
 - Together they account for 40 per cent of the world’s economic output and 28 per cent of trade.

India and IPEF

- **Participation in Key Pillars:** India is a part of three key pillars of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF):
 - Resilient Economy (Supply Chain)
 - Clean Economy (Decarbonization and Infrastructure)
 - Fair Economy (Anti-Corruption and Tax)
- **Non-Participation in Connected Economy (Trade) Pillar:** India has opted not to join the Connected Economy (Trade) pillar of the IPEF.

Centre proposes new excise law, ease of doing business in focus

Context: The Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs has invited suggestions on the draft 'Central Excise Bill, 2024', which aims to enact a comprehensive modern central excise law with an emphasis on promoting ease of doing business and repealing old and redundant provisions.

Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC)

- **About:** CBIC, formerly known as the Central Board of Excise and Customs, operates within the Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
- **Establishment:** Under the Central Board of Revenue Act, 1963
- **Structure:** The CBIC is led by a Chairman appointed by the Indian Government.
- **Divisional Structure:** The organization is divided into various divisions and zones, each managed by a Chief Commissioner or Director General.
- **GST Intelligence Wing:** CBIC also houses a GST intelligence wing tasked with detecting and preventing tax evasion related to Goods and Services Tax.

Functions of CBIC

- **Administration of Indirect Taxes:** CBIC is responsible for the administration of all indirect tax-related matters in India.
- **Policy Formulation:** It formulates policies regarding the levy and collection of Customs, Central Excise duties, Central Goods & Services Tax (GST), Integrated Goods & Services Tax (IGST), and oversees prevention of smuggling.
- **Administrative Authority:** CBIC acts as the administrative authority for its subordinate organizations, such as Custom Houses, Central Excise and Central GST Commissionerates, and the Central Revenues Control Laboratory.
- **Tax Collection:** It ensures prompt deposit of taxes collected by collection agencies into the public exchequer, including taxes on foreign and inland travel.
- **Customs Administration:** At various locations such as International Airports, Seaports, Custom Houses, International Air Cargo Stations, International Inland Container Depots (ICDs), Land Customs Stations, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), etc.

White Goods, FMCG Imports Failing to Get Custom-fit Tag

Move comes amid
FTA-abuse concerns;
could lead to supply
issues, says industry

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New Delhi: White goods, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and FMCG companies are faced with import delays or higher duties as customs authorities at various ports are holding up import consignments over third-party invoicing, people familiar with the matter said.

Multinational companies typically employ third-party invoicing for ease of sourcing and tax optimisation — billing is through a nation other than the country of origin of the exported goods. Third-party invoicing is permitted under free trade agreements (FTAs).



While such invoicing is possible for any import, the maximum instances are seen in the cases of white goods, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), and chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

■ DRI Clears Air on Import Duty on Mobile Parts

WHITE GOODS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Context: Recently, white goods, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and FMCG companies have encountered import delays and higher duties as customs authorities at various ports hold up consignments due to third-party invoicing issues.

White Goods

- **About:** These are large home appliances such as stoves (British: cookers), refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, tumble driers, dishwashers, and air conditioners.
 - They are large electrical goods for the house which were traditionally available only in white.
 - Even though you can purchase them today in a wide range of different colors, they continue being called white goods.
- **Major appliances:** Consumer durables made of enamel-coated sheet steel – are the same as white goods.
- **White goods vs. brown goods**
 - The term contrasts with brown goods, which are relatively light electronic consumer durables such as computers, digital media players, TVs and radios.
- **Interconnected White Goods:**
 - White goods, including appliances like refrigerators, are increasingly becoming interconnected through the Internet.
 - The trend involves these appliances collecting and exchanging data, contributing to the Internet of Things (IoT).

Remarkable new plant species steals nutrients from underground fungi

Context: Researchers recently discovered that a new plant species, *Thismia malayana* steals nutrients from underground fungi.

Thismia malayana

- **About:** It is a newly discovered plant species belonging to the group of mycoheterotrophs.
- **Group:** Mycoheterotrophs, such as *Thismia malayana*, do not undergo photosynthesis but instead act as parasites, obtaining carbon resources from fungi on their roots.
- **Habitat:** Discovered in the tropical rainforests of Peninsular Malaysia, specifically in Gunung Angsi Forest Reserve and Gunung Benom in the Tengku Hassanal Wildlife Reserve.
- **Nutrition:** *Thismia malayana* obtains its carbon resources from fungi on their roots.
- **Interconnectedness:** The existence of *Thismia malayana* highlights the intricate interconnectedness within ecosystems, particularly between plants and fungi.
- **Adaptation:** This plant demonstrates adaptation through its symbiotic relationship with colonizing fungi, a relationship typically benefiting both parties.
- **Proliferation:** Thriving in low-light conditions of dense forest understories, *Thismia malayana* has specialized flowers pollinated by fungus gnats and other small insects.
- **Conservation Status:** Listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List due to threats to its habitat and population.



India Eyes Bangladesh's Mongla Port

The move could enable New Delhi to counterbalance China's growing strategic presence in India's immediate neighbourhood

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New Delhi: India has expressed interest in operating the Mongla Port in Bangladesh and constructing a new terminal there amid China's efforts to run the strategically-located port.

India already has operational rights to the Chabahar Port in Iran and the Sittwe Port in Myanmar. The move, if successful, will enable New Delhi to counterbalance China's growing strategic presence in India's immediate neighbourhood and give it management of ports in both western and eastern part of the Indian Ocean Region as the net security provider, according to persons familiar with the development.

The matter that could be a milestone in the partnership is expected to figure when PM Narendra Modi meets PM Sheikh Hasina here over the weekend, it has been learnt. Later this month or early July, the Bangladesh PM plans to visit India on a state visit. Hasina congratulated Modi on Tuesday night itself following the BJP-led



Mongla terminal in Bangladesh - PTI

NDA's third straight victory in Lok Sabha elections.

China has been urging Hasina to include Beijing as well in her itinerary but she is not keen to make that trip before her India visit.

New Delhi stood by her, providing legitimacy to her government after every election there amid western allegations of "one-sided polls". Hasina, along with leaders from Nepal, Bhutan, Mauritius and Sri Lanka, have been invited for the government's swearing in ceremony. Chinese moves to man-

MEET WITH HASINA



The matter is expected to figure in talks when PM Modi meets Sheikh Hasina here over the weekend, it has been learnt

age key infrastructure projects in India's immediate neighbourhood is a matter of discomfort for India, sources explained. Cross-border connectivity projects and business initiatives will figure high when Modi meets his counterparts here over the weekend.

India already has transshipment access to both Chittagong and Mongla ports for moving cargo to northeastern states, skipping the 1,650 kilometre chicken's neck corridor. Last month, an Indian delegation from India Ports Global

Limited, headed by its managing director Sunil Mukundan, visited Mongla Port to study the operational facilities in detail. ET has learnt. If the negotiations proceed successfully, Mongla will be the third international seaport operation taken up by India after Chabahar Port in Iran and Sittwe in Myanmar, which both are managed by India Ports Global Limited (IPGL). In Sri Lanka, an Indo-Russian joint venture has got management rights of the airport in the vicinity of the China-managed Hambantota port.

IPGL has been asked to submit a detailed written proposal to the Mongla Port Authority for consideration. The representative of the Mongla Port Authority said the delegation was informed that after receiving the proposal it would be evaluated and if found profitable then would be sent to the government for decision.

Mongla Port operates container and bulk carrier vessels at its five jetties. Construction of two more jetties is being planned for handling increased volume of cargo generated thanks to transshipment facilities given to India, Nepal and Bhutan.

MONGLA PORT (Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

Context: India has expressed interest in operating the Mongla Port in Bangladesh and constructing a new terminal there amid China's efforts to run the strategically-located port.

Mongla Port

- **Location:** Mongla, also called Mongla Port, formerly Chalna Port, is a port city in southwestern Bangladesh.
 - Formerly located at Chalna, about 11 miles (18 km) upstream on the Pusur River, the port now serves as the main seaport for the country's western region.
- **Geographic Position:** Mongla Port lies close to the shore of the Bay of Bengal and the Pashur River.
- **Rank and Activity:** Mongla Port is the second largest and second busiest seaport in Bangladesh.
- **Alternative:** Due to increasing congestion in Bangladesh's largest port in Chittagong, many international shipping companies have turned to Mongla as an alternative.
- **Major Exports:** Jute, leather, tobacco, frozen fish, and shrimp.
- **Major Imports:** Grain, cement, fertilizer, coal, and wood pulp.
- **Tourism Gateway:** Mongla serves as a gateway for tourist ships traveling to the Sunderbans, the world's largest mangrove forest and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



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