



Target4IAS
Together We Can

Weekly Current Affairs

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Population of dolphins in Chilikalake doubled this year

In news

The population of dolphins in Chilika, India's largest brackish water lake, and along the Odisha coast has doubled this year compared with last year.



Growing numbers: An Irrawaddy dolphin seen in the Chilika lake in Odisha. #SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Key takeaways

- The State Environment Department released the final data on the dolphin census conducted in January and February 2021, indicating a spectacular growth in numbers.
- Three species were recorded during the census,.
- 544 Irrawaddy, bottle-nose and humpback dolphins were sighted this year, compared with 233 last year.
- The **endangered Irrawaddy dolphins are mostly found in Chilikalake.**
- The highest growth has been noticed in the case of humpback dolphins with a population of 281.
- These **humpback dolphins were not part of any riverine systems, so they cannot be identified as residential mammals.** They were spotted travelling along the Odisha coast and the number is likely to fluctuate in the next census.

Chilikalake

- It is the world second largest lagoon.
- In 1981, the lake was designated as the first Ramsar site of India.
- The main attraction of the Chilikalake is the Irrawaddy Dolphins. They are often spotted off the Satpadaisland.
- The Nalabanaisland in the lake was declared as bird sanctuary in 1987.

Umngot River

In news

A 210 MW hydroelectric project proposed to be implemented on Meghalaya's Umngot River is being met with strong resistance from locals of at least 12 villages around the Bangladesh border.

Key takeaways:

- The dam is proposed to be constructed upstream in the adjoining West Jaintia Hills on the **Umngotriver considered to be the clearest in India.**
- Everyone is against the megadam project as their livelihood is dependent on the river.
- The locals fear that the project, if executed, would cause irreparable losses by wiping out their areas from the tourism map.
- The project documents say people of 13 villages along the Umngot are likely to lose 296 hectares of land due to submergence if the dam comes up.
- Dawki Bridge is a suspension bridge over the Umngot River.



Indus and Ganges River Dolphins, two separate species

In news

In a recent research, detailed analysis of South Asian river dolphins has revealed that the Indus and Ganges River dolphins are not one, but two separate species.

Key takeaways

- Currently, Indus and Ganges River dolphins are classified as two subspecies under *Platanistaganetica*.
- But according to a new study, this classification needs a revision.

TARGET4IAS: TOGETHER WE CAN

- The study estimates that Indus and Ganges river dolphins may have diverged around 550,000 years ago.
- The **Indus and Ganges River dolphins are both classified as 'Endangered'** species by the IUCN.
- The Ganges dolphin is a Schedule I animal under the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972
- It has been included in Annexure – I of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).



Closely protected: Dolphin tissue or sample cannot be transferred outside the country without permission. • MANSUR-

DIKSHA Platform

In news

As per a study by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, Visually impaired students can't access more than half of NCERT material on DIKSHA platform.

Key takeaways:

- NCERT e-textbooks are only partly readable.
- Out of the 21 SCERT chapters sampled for Tamil Nadu, 90.5% were totally inaccessible
- Out of the 22 SCERTs chapters sampled for Telangana, none were totally inaccessible.
- Mathematics chapters had the highest number of inaccessible learning activities at 80%. It was followed by English, Science, and Geography chapters.

About Diksha

- Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) is a national platform for teachers to excel in school education.
- It is an initiative of the National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT), Ministry of Education.
- It has promoted as a transformative resource for digital education.

SHANTIR OGROSENA-2021

In news

It is a **multinational military exercise**, which started on 04 April 2021, culminated on 12 April 2021 at **Bangabandhu Senanibas (BBS), Bangladesh**. Troops from **four countries (India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh)** participated in this exercise with observers from USA, UK, Russia, Turkey, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Singapore.

The **aim of the exercise was to strengthen defence ties and enhance interoperability amongst neighbourhood countries** to ensure effective peace keeping operations. The Armies of all participating nations shared their wide experiences and enhanced their situational awareness through robust information exchange platforms.

Shaphari Scheme:

In news

Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) launches a certification scheme for aquaculture products called the “Shaphari Scheme”.

Key takeaways

- Shaphari is a Sanskrit word that means the superior quality of fishery products suitable for human consumption.
- It is an Antibiotics free Certification Scheme. It certifies hatcheries and farms for the production of antibiotic-free shrimp products
- The scheme is **based on the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization’s technical guidelines on aquaculture certification**.
- The scheme will **have two components**:
 - Certifying hatcheries for the quality of their seeds and
 - Separately approving shrimp farms that adopt the requisite good practices.
- The entire certification process will be online to minimize human errors and ensure higher credibility and transparency.

Important Facts:

- **India exported frozen shrimp worth almost \$5 billion in 2019-20** to the U.S. and China — its biggest buyers.
- Frozen shrimp is India’s largest exported seafood item.
- **Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu** are the major shrimp producing States, and around 95% of the cultured shrimp produce is exported.

e-SANTA

In news

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal virtually inaugurated **e-SANTA**, an electronic marketplace providing a platform to connect aqua farmers and the buyers.

Key takeaways

- The term **e-SANTA** was coined for the web portal, meaning **Electronic Solution for Augmenting NaCSA farmers' Trade in Aquaculture**.
- It is an initiative of NaCSA. National Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture (NaCSA) is an extension arm of Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Govt. of India, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- It is a Digital Bridge to end the market divide and will act as an alternative marketing tool between farmers & buyers by eliminating middlemen.
- The portal will act as a bridge between the fishermen and buyers, within the country and abroad.
- The farmers have the freedom to list their produce and quote their price while the exporters have the freedom to list their requirements and also to choose the products based on their requirements such as desired size, location, harvest dates etc.
- This enables the farmers and buyers to have greater control over the trade and enables them to make informed decisions.

e-SANTA will **RAISE** the lives & income of farmers by:

- Reducing Risk
- Awareness of Products & Markets
- Increase in Income
- Shielding Against Wrong Practice
- Ease of Processes

Raisina Dialogue:

In news

- 6th edition of the Raisina Dialogue was held virtually
- It is an annual multilateral conference on geopolitics and geo-economics. The Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation have been jointly organizing it since 2016.
- **Theme for 2021** is “#ViralWorld: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control”.
- The design of the dialogue follows Singapore’s Shangri-La Dialogue.

Chief election commissioner of India

In news

ShriSushil Chandra takes over as the 24th CEC of India

About Election commission of India:

- Article 324 provides for an Election Commission for the superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for the conduct of elections to parliament, state legislatures and to the offices of president and vice president.
- The election commission shall consist of the Chief Election Commissioner and a such number of other election commissioners, if any, as the president may from time to time fix.
- The appointment of the chief election commissioner and other election commissioners shall be made by the president.
- The Chief Election Commissioner and other election commissioners hold office for 6 years or till they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier

Indian Rhino Vision 2020 (IRV 2020)

In news

Two adult **one-horned rhinos** were recently translocated from **Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary** to **Manas National Park**, under the aegis of **the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 (IRV 2020)**.

About IRV 2020

- Launched in 2005.
- IRV 2020 is an initiative led by the Forest Department, Government of Assam, in partnership with WWF India, International Rhino Foundation, and several other organizations.
- IRV2020 is believed to have achieved its target of attaining a population of 3,000 rhinos in Assam.
- Rhinos are now found in four Protected Areas in Assam: Pabitora Wildlife Reserve, Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, Kaziranga National Park, and Manas National Park.
- IUCN Red List: Vulnerable.
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES): Appendix I.
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I.

Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)

In news

Government has decided to simplify the process for re-issue of OCI Cards. OCI card is a life-long visa for entry into and stay in India with a number of other major benefits attached to it which are not available to other foreigners.

Key takeaways:

- Presently, the OCI card is required to be re-issued each time a new passport is issued up to 20 years of age and once after completing 50 years of age, in view of biological changes in the face of the applicant.
- It has now been decided by the Government of India to dispense with this requirement. A person who has got registration as OCI cardholder prior to attaining the age of 20 years will have to get the OCI card re-issued only once when a new passport is issued after his/her completing 20 years of age.
- If a person has obtained registration as OCI cardholder after attaining the age of 20 years, there will be no requirement of re-issue of OCI card.

National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC)

In news

The first meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) was held recently.

What is NSAC

- Constituted by the **'Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.
- The council was set up last year to advise the government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country.
- Aim: to foster a culture of innovation amongst citizens and students, promote innovation, and promote creation, protection and commercialization of intellectual property rights.
- The meeting of the council was **chaired by the Minister for Commerce & Industry**.

e-visa

In news

The Union Home Ministry has restored the electronic visa (e-visa) facility for foreigners from 156 countries who intend to visit India for business, conferences and medical reasons, including for medical attendants. e-visa for tourists is yet to be restored.

About e- visa

- An e-visa is provided in **five categories** — tourist, business, conference, medical, and medical attendant.
- Under the arrangement, a foreigner can apply online four days prior to travel.
- After the details are verified, an electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is generated, which has to be presented at the immigration checkpost on arrival.
- Entry through e-visas is allowed only at 28 designated international airports and five major seaports in India.

State of World Population Report 2021

In news

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has released its flagship report “State of World Population Report 2021” titled ‘My Body is My Own’.

Key takeaways:

- It is an annual report published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
- This is the first time a UN report focused on Bodily autonomy, defined as the power and agency to make choices about your body without fear of violence or having someone else decide for you.
- Only 55% of women are fully empowered to make choices over health care, contraception, and the ability to say yes or no to sex.
- Only 75% of countries legally ensure full, equal access to contraception.
- Violation of bodily autonomy include:
 - child marriage
 - female genital mutilation
 - lack of contraceptive choices leading to unplanned pregnancy,
 - unwanted sex exchanged for a home and food
 - when people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities cannot walk down a street without fear of assault or humiliation.

About United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):

- UNFPA is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. It aims to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.
- **Headquarters:** New York, United States.

WPI

In news

Wholesale Price Index (WPI) — shot up to 7.39 per cent in March. **This is the highest wholesale inflation rate since October 2012, and was driven largely by higher prices of crude oil and a surge in price levels of food items such as pulses and fruits.**

About WPI

- The WPI tracks prices at the wholesale, or factory gate/mandi levels.
- It is also known as headline inflation. It is computed by the Office of the Economic Adviser in Ministry of commerce & Industry.
- It only tracks basic prices devoid of transportation cost, taxes and the retail margin etc.
- WPI *pertains to only goods, not services*.
- It is primarily used as a GDP deflator (the ratio of the value of goods an economy produces in a particular year at current prices to that of prices that prevailed during the base year).
- **WPI Components:** Manufactured Products, Primary Articles, Fuel & Power



Artistes perform Gatka, an Indian martial art associated with the Sikhs, to mark Baisakhi at the farmers' protest site in Ghazipur on Tuesday. • SANDEEP SAXENA



New Year cheers: People performing 'Uruka' rituals on the occasion of Rongali Bihu, marking the beginning of the Assamese New Year, in Tezpur on Tuesday. •PTI



Artists performing traditional Bodo community dance 'Bagurumba' during a function to celebrate Rongali Bihu that marks the Assamese new year, at Latashil playground in Guwahati, on Wednesday PTI