

UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 07-01-2023

Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc.) in Bengaluru have found that many bird species have started shifting to higher elevations due to rising temperatures in Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary.



It is a protected area of India in the Himalayan foothills of West Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh.

It conjoins **Sessa Orchid Sanctuary** to the northeast and **Pakhui Tiger Reserve** across the Kameng river to the east.

It is situated in the biodiversity hotspot of Eastern Himalayas and home to over 500 bird species.

Altitude ranges are extreme: from 500 metres (1,640 ft) to 3,250 metres (10,663 ft).

It is also a part of the Kameng Elephant Reserve.

It is notable as a prime birding site due to the extraordinary variety, numbers and accessibility of species.

It derives its name from the Red Eagle Division of the Indian army which was posted in the area in the 1950s.

Flora: The temperate cloud forest is intermixed with dense bamboo patches and broadleaved evergreen forest across a wide altitudinal range, with conifers and rhododendrons at the higher elevations.

What are Rhododendrons?

They are a diverse genus of about 1,000 species of woody flowering plants in the heath family (Ericaceae), notable for their attractive flowers and handsome foliage. They are native to the temperate regions of Asia, North America, and Europe, as well as to the tropical regions of southeast Asia and northern Australia.

Laokhowa and Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuaries

Two rhinos have recently returned to the Laokhowa and Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary after almost a 40-year gap following a successful anti-encroachment operation.

About Laokhowa and Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuaries

Location:

The Laokhowa and Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuaries are two centrally located **Protected Areas (PAs) of Assam.**

They are located on the **southern bank of the river Brahmaputra.**

In fact, though these two wildlife sanctuaries have two different names, they are geologically and **geographically a singular entity.**

They are surrounded by many key Parks, like **Kaziranga National Park to the east, Orang National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuaries to the west, Pakke-Nameri NPs to the north, and the rich reserve forests of Karbi Anglong to the south.**

They act as a connecting corridor for the migration of animals between Kaziranga and Orang National parks and hence, have been identified as buffer zones of Kaziranga Tiger Reserve.

Landscape: It comprises a mosaic of wet alluvial grassland, riparian, and semi-evergreen forests dotted by wetland and river systems.

Flora:

A unique vegetation of this sanctuary is the abundance of freshwater mangrove trees.

There are many species of trees and medicinal plants in the sanctuary. Trees like simul, korai, ajar, hijal, etc. are found in the area.

Fauna:

It is home to the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros, tiger, leopard, wild buffalo, hog deer, wild pig, and elephants.

The highly endangered Gangetic River Dolphins are still seen in the waters of the Brahmaputra River adjacent to these Pas.

The numerous natural and perennial wetlands are functioning as breeding grounds for various kinds of local fish species and highly important bird species such as Storks like Adjutant, Lesser Adjutant, White Stork, Black Necked Stork, Black Stork etc.

The Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is found only in the Brahmaputra valley, parts of North Bengal, and parts of southern Nepal. It has a single black horn that can grow up to 60 cm, and a tough, grey-brown hide with skin folds, which gives the animal its characteristic armour-plated look. The Indian rhino is listed as vulnerable (better than endangered, worse than near threatened) in the IUCN Red List; it was earlier placed in the endangered category.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Blog Image

Leaders like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose are “immortal” and do not need bestowing of a recognition through a judicial diktat, the Supreme Court said recently.



About Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

He was an Indian nationalist leader who was a key figure in the Indian independence movement against British colonial rule.

He was born on January 23, 1897, in Cuttack, Orissa.

In 1920, he passed the civil service examination, but in April 1921, after hearing of the nationalist turmoil in India, he resigned from his position.

Bose then joined the Indian National Congress and actively participated in the Indian independence movement.

Bose at first worked with C.R. Das in Bengal, under whose mentorship he flowered.

He was a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Bose was elected president of the Indian National Congress for two consecutive terms but resigned from the post following ideological conflicts with Mahatma Gandhi.

In 1939, he formed the Forward Bloc, an organization aimed at unifying all the anti-British forces in India.

Netaji was strongly influenced by Swami Vivekananda's teaching and was known for his patriotic zeal as a student.

At the outset of the Second World War, he fled from India and traveled to the Soviet Union, Germany and Japan, seeking an alliance with the aim of attacking the British in India.

With Japanese assistance, he reorganized and later led the Indian National Army, formed from Indian prisoners-of-war and plantation workers from Malaya, Singapore, and other parts of Southeast Asia, against British forces.

With Japanese monetary, political, diplomatic, and military assistance, he formed the Azad Hind Government in exile, and regrouped, and led the Indian National Army in battle against the allies at Imphal and in Burma.

He is believed to have died on August 18, 1945, in a plane crash over Taiwan. The exact circumstances of his death are still shrouded in mystery and controversy.

Bobbili Veena

Despite the longstanding fame of the Bobbili veena, the livelihoods of craftsmen face challenges due to a lack of demand from the public and required patronage from the government.



About Bobbili Veena

The traditional 'Saraswati Veena' from Bobbili is famed for its fine tune and distinctive notes.

It is a large plucked string instrument used in Carnatic music.

The making of the veena began in the 17th century during the reign of Pedda Rayudu, the king of Bobbili Samsthanam who was a great patron of music.

Features

These veenas are painstakingly crafted from Jack-wood tree logs in Gollapalli, a town in Bobbili (AndhraPradesh).

It takes almost a full month for a log of mute wood to be crafted into a fine musical instrument.

Jack-wood is preferred as it is light and the unique grain of the wood renders the quality of swara or tone.

A single piece of wood is used to create the instrument giving it the name 'Ekandi Veena'.

These Veenas are also remarkable for the exquisite designs etched on the body, making each piece exclusive.

With their origin dating back to the Seventeenth Century, these veenas are played in a distinctive style, which also led to the coinage of the 'Bobbili Veena Sampradayam'.

It earned a Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2012 for its unique design and high-quality craftsmanship.

RBI Norms for Politically-Exposed Persons (PEPs)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently updated Know Your Customer (KYC) norms for politically exposed persons (PEPs) who transact with regulated entities (REs), seeking to comply with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

New RBI Norms for Politically-Exposed Persons (PEPs)

Who are PEPs? In the amended KYC master direction, the central bank defines PEPs as "individuals who are or have been entrusted with prominent public functions by a foreign country, including the heads of states/governments, senior politicians, senior government or judicial or military officers, senior executives of state-owned corporations, and important political party officials".

REs have the option of establishing a relationship with PEPs (whether as customers or beneficial owners).

REs have to perform regular customer due diligence and also follow additional conditions prescribed by the RBI to transact with PEPs.

Some additional conditions include establishing an appropriate risk management system to determine whether the customer or the beneficial owner is a PEP.

REs have to take reasonable measures to establish the source of funds/ wealth.

They also need to get approval from senior management to open an account for a PEP.

Key Facts about Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

FATF is an inter-governmental policy-making and standard-setting body dedicated to combating **money laundering and terror financing**.

It was established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris to develop policies against money laundering.

In 2001 its mandate expanded to include terrorism financing.

Headquarters: Paris, France.

FATF members include 39 countries, including the United States, India, China, Saudi Arabia, Britain, Germany, France, and the EU as such.

India became a member of FATF in 2010.

What are FATF '**grey list**' and '**blacklist**'? FATF has 2 types of lists:

Black List: Countries known as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs) are put on the blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities.

Grey List: Countries that are considered a safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put on the FATF grey list. This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.

Three countries North Korea, Iran, and Myanmar are currently on FATF's blacklist.

Consequences of being on the FATF blacklist:

No financial aid is given to them by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the European Union (EU).

They also face a number of international economic and financial restrictions and sanctions.

Indrayani River

The recent reappearance of toxic foam on the Indrayani river once again raised concerns about pollution here.

It is a tributary of the Bhima River, which again is a tributary of the Krishna River.



Course:

It originates in Kurvande village near Lonavla, a hill station in the Sahyadri mountains of Maharashtra.

Fed by rain, it flows east from there to meet the Bhima River.

It follows a course mostly north of the city of Pune.

The river has great religious importance, and the two sacred towns of Alandi and Dehu are situated on its banks.

Dehu is known to be a sacred place for being the hometown of the poet Saint Tukaram, who was a popular saint of Maharashtra, and Alandi holds the samadhi of the poet Dnyaneshwar.

Valvan Dam at Kamshet, situated on the Indrayani River, is a hydroelectric generating station.

Key Facts about Bhima River

The Bhima River (also known as the Chandrabagha River) is a major river in southwest India.

It is a major tributary of the Krishna River.

Course:

It originates in the Bhimashankar hills near Karjat on the western side of the Western Ghats, in the Pune District of Maharashtra.

Bhima flows southeast through the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Telangana.

The Bhima River merges into the Krishna River at Kadlur (Raichur) in Karnataka.

This 861 km-long river has the Western Ghats on the west, the Balaghat Range in the north, and the Mahadeo Hills in the south.

The total basin area of the river is 48,631 sq. km, out of which 75 percent lie in the state of Maharashtra.

Major tributaries are the Sina and Nira rivers.

Pandharpur is an important pilgrimage centre located on the right bank of the Bhima River.

The principal tributaries joining Krishna are the Ghataprabha, the Malaprabha, the Bhima, the Tungabhadra and the Musi.

Project Veer Gatha

The third edition of Project ‘Veer Gatha’, as part of Republic Day celebrations, has witnessed an overwhelming pan India response.

About Project Veer Gatha

It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education.

It was instituted under Gallantry Awards Portal (GAP) in 2021.

Aim: With the aim to disseminate the details of acts of bravery of the Gallantry Awardees and the life stories of these brave hearts among the students so as to raise the spirit of patriotism and instill amongst them values of civic consciousness.

Project Veer Gatha deepened this noble aim by providing a platform to the school students to do creative projects/activities based on gallantry award winners.

As part of this, the students framed different projects through various media like art, poems, essays and multimedia on these gallantry award winners and best projects were awarded at national level by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Education.

Key facts about the Gallantry Awards

Gallantry Awards have been instituted by the Government of India to honour the acts of bravery and sacrifice of the officers/personnel of the Armed Forces, other lawfully constituted Forces and civilians.

These are announced twice in a year - first on the occasion of the Republic Day and then on the occasion of the Independence Day.

Post-independence, three gallantry awards namely the Param Vir Chakra, the Maha Vir Chakra and the Vir Chakra were instituted by the Government of India on 26th January, 1950.

Thereafter, other three gallantry awards i.e. the Ashoka Chakra Class-I, the Ashoka Chakra Class-II and the Ashoka Chakra Class-III were instituted by the Government of India on 4th January, 1952.

These awards were renamed as the Ashoka Chakra, the Kirti Chakra and the Shaurya Chakra respectively in January, 1967.

Order of precedence of these awards is the Param Vir Chakra, the Ashoka Chakra, the Mahavir Chakra, the Kirti Chakra, the Vir Chakra and the Shaurya Chakra

It is India's highest military decoration awarded for the highest degree of valour or self-sacrifice in the presence of the enemy. The Param Vir Chakra was introduced on January 26, 1950, on the first Republic Day with retrospective effect from 15 August 1947. It can be awarded posthumously.

Sohrai Painting

Remote Bengal village began their New Year with workshop on ancient indigenous art i.e Sohrai Painting.

About Sohrai Painting

It is an indigenous mural art form.

It is also interesting to note that the word ‘Sohrai’ comes from soro – translating to ‘to drive with a stick’.

This art form dates back to the Meso-chalcolithic period (9000-5000 BC).



The Isko rock shelter excavated in Barkagaon, Hazaribagh area also has rock paintings that are exactly similar to the traditional Sohrai paintings.

Theme: It is usually based on natural elements of the universe, this includes forests, rivers, animals amongst others.

These ancient paintings are made by tribal (Adivasi) women with the use of natural substances like charcoal, clay, or soil.

The very primitive form of Sohrai art was in the form of cave paintings.

It is practiced by indigenous communities, particularly in the States of Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, and West Bengal.

The region of Hazaribagh in Jharkhand that has received the GI tag for this art form.

It is the art of the women of the Kurmi, Santal, Munda, Oraon, Agaria, Ghatwal tribes.

Sohrai paintings are distinctive for their vibrant colours, intricate patterns, and symbolic motifs;

There is a Sohrai festival held every year, marking the harvesting season and the arrival of winter.

A mural is an ancient form of artwork that consists of painting directly onto a wall or ceiling surface. The term mural can apply to paintings on fired tiles but usually does not include mosaic decorations unless the mosaic is part of the overall scheme of the image.

30 Doradus B

Nasa's Chandra X-ray Observatory recently captured a stunning image of **30 Doradus B, a supernova remnant** that is part of a vibrant region of space where stars have been forming for millions of years.



The team of astronomers studying the remnant discovered that it could not have been formed by a single supernova. Instead, the researchers believe it was created by at least two.

About 30 Doradus B

30 Doradus B, also cataloged as NGC 2060, is a supernova remnant found in the Large Magellanic Cloud, a small satellite galaxy of the Milky Way.

It is part of a large star-forming region where stars have been continuously forming for the past 8 to 10 million years.

It is a complex landscape of dark clouds of gas, young stars, high-energy shocks, and superheated gas, located 160,000 light-years away from Earth.

What is a Supernova?

A supernova is the explosion of a star whose luminosity after an eruption suddenly increases many millions of times its normal level.

Supernovas are "the largest explosion that takes place in space."

A star can go supernova in one of two ways:

Type I supernova: The star accumulates matter from a nearby neighbour until a runaway nuclear reaction ignites.

Type II supernova: The star runs out of nuclear fuel and collapses under its own gravity.

Supernovas can briefly outshine entire galaxies and radiate more energy than our sun will in its entire lifetime.

They're also the primary source of heavy elements in the universe.

They heat up the interstellar medium, distribute heavy elements throughout the Galaxy, and accelerate cosmic rays.

Key Facts about NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory

It is a telescope specially designed to detect X-ray emission from very hot regions of the Universe, such as exploded stars, clusters of galaxies, and matter around black holes.

It was launched by NASA on July 23, 1999.

Because X-rays are absorbed by Earth's atmosphere, Chandra must orbit above it, up to an altitude of 139,000 km (86,500 mi) in space.

X-rays are a form of electromagnetic radiation, similar to visible light. Unlike light, however, x-rays have higher energy and can pass through most objects, including the body. Medical x-rays are used to generate images of tissues and structures inside the body.

Tapioca plant (cassava)

The ICAR-Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (CTCRI) here has issued an advisory on feeding animals with parts of cassava (tapioca) in view of the incident in Idukki where 13 cows died in a farm recently.

About Tapioca plant

It is a major horticulture crop cultivated on nearly 3 lakh hectares in Tamil Nadu, producing 60 lakh tonnes of the crop.

It is cultivated throughout the tropical world for its tuberous roots, from which cassava flour, breads, tapioca, a laundry starch, and an alcoholic beverage are derived.

Climatic conditions required

Soil: Any well-drained soil, preferably red lateritic loamy soil.

It thrives best in a tropical, warm, humid climate.

Rainfall: Well-distributed rainfall of over 100 cm per annum.

This crop can be cultivated upto an elevation of 1000 m.

All parts of cassava/tapioca – leaves, stem, tuber and rind – contain the compounds called cyanogenic glucosides (CNGs), that is, linamarin and lotaustralin which are hydrolysed by endogenous enzyme linamarase to acetone cyanohydrin which may break down spontaneously liberating free hydrogen cyanide.

Both acetone cyanohydrin and free cyanide are toxic.

Its leaves contain about 10 times higher amounts of CNGs than roots.

The CNG content of cassava leaves decreases with the increase in the age of the leaves.

Feeding crushed peels or leaves immediately after crushing or without proper drying poses a high risk of cyanide poisoning in animals.

It is a rapidly acting, potentially deadly chemical that interferes with the body's ability to use oxygen. Cyanide can be a colorless gas or liquid, such as hydrogen cyanide (HCN) or cyanogen chloride (CNCl). Cyanide can also be a crystal (solid) form such as sodium cyanide (NaCN) or potassium cyanide (KCN).