

Factly Weekly

Compilation

2024

**For UPSC CSE Prelims
Exam**

**3rd Week
February 2024**

Index

Subject: Polity and Nation	3
Article 142 of the Constitution	3
Subject: International Relations	3
India rejects EFTA's data exclusivity demand in trade talks.....	3
Munich Security conference 2024.....	4
Mission Aspides	5
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)	6
Subject: Indian Economy	7
Govt proposes to hike ministries reporting limits for financial expenditure	7
Rubber Board of India	8
100% FDI in space sector	8
Pigeon Pea	9
Subject: Science & Technology	10
Diphtheria	10
SOFIA (Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy)	11
Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH)	11
Rhodamine-B	12
Proton Improvement Plan Project- (PIP-II).....	13
Subject: Environment	13
Kanha Tiger Reserve	13
International Single Species Action Plan	14
Melghat Tiger Reserve	15
Ponmudi hills	16
States/UTs must adhere to the forest definition from the Godavarman judgment-SC.....	16
Green Anaconda.....	17
Subject: Schemes & Programmes	18
First Skill India Centre	18
Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP)	19
PM-USHA SCHEME	20
Subject: Reports/Indices/Summits	20
Sagar Aankalan- Guidelines for Indian Port Performance Index	20
Subject: Art & Culture	21

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

Morodharo- A Harappan settlement near Dholavira	21
Shompen Tribe	22
Rani Chennamma	23
Subject: Geography & Places in News	24
Char Areas	24
Pandaram lands.....	24
Rip currents.....	25
Papua New Guinea.....	25
Vaitarna River.....	27
Solar Maximum.....	27
Subject: Miscellaneous.....	28
Acharya Shri Vidyasagarji Maharaj.....	28

Subject: Polity and Nation

Article 142 of the Constitution

Why in the News?

The Supreme Court, in its **recent judgment on the Chandigarh mayor election**, utilized its authority under Article 142 of the Constitution to ensure 'complete justice' and uphold the sanctity of electoral democracy.

What is Article 142 of the Constitution?

1. About- Article 142 **grants the Supreme Court discretionary authority**. It **empowers** it to **issue decrees** or **orders deemed necessary to achieve complete justice in any pending cause or matter within its jurisdiction**.

2. Positive utilisation- This provision allows the Supreme Court to exercise wide-ranging powers to ensure justice is served, **even if there is no specific law or provision applicable** to the case at hand.

Significant cases where article 142 was invoked

1. The ban on the sale of alcohol along national and state highways:

a. The central **government's notification banned liquor stores only along National Highways**, but the Supreme Court **extended the ban to a distance of 500 meters by using Article 142**.

b. Moreover, in the absence of similar notifications from any State governments, the court expanded the prohibition to include State highways.

c. Such rulings have raised questions about the court's discretion to invoke Article 142, particularly when fundamental rights of individuals are overlooked.

2. Babri Masjid Case: Article 142 was invoked in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute, leading to the transfer of the disputed land to a trust to be established by the central government.

Subject: International Relations

India rejects EFTA's data exclusivity demand in trade talks

Why in the News?

Recently, India rejected the European Free Trade Association's (EFTA) request for '**data exclusivity**' in their ongoing free trade agreement negotiations.

About European Free Trade Association (EFTA)



Source- Wikipedia

Aspect	Details
About	It is an intergovernmental organization established in 1960 through the Stockholm Convention .
Objective	To facilitate free trade and economic integration among its members both within Europe and on a global scale.
Members	Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.
Function	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The organization works alongside the European Union (EU).2. Unlike the European Union (EU), it does not function as a customs union.3. All four member states participate in the European Single Market through European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement.
Governance	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The EFTA Council is its top authority, meeting about 8 times yearly at the ambassadorial level and twice yearly at the ministerial level.2. The EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) oversees compliance with European Economic Area (EEA) rules in Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway.3. EFTA Court– It is Located in Luxembourg. It has the authority to resolve both internal and external disputes concerning the implementation, application, or interpretation of the EEA agreement.4. The EFTA Secretariat is located in Geneva and supports the EFTA Council in managing relations among the 4 EFTA States. It handles the negotiation and operation of EFTA's free trade agreements.

What is Data Exclusivity?

1. Data exclusivity **safeguards the clinical trial information of a pharmaceutical company** concerning a particular medication.
2. During exclusivity period, **generic competitors cannot use the originator's data** to get approval for similar drugs.

Munich Security conference 2024

Why in the news?

World leaders have gathered for the **Sixtieth (60th) Munich Security Conference**, amidst the growing concerns about a continued war in Ukraine and threats to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) cohesion.

About Munich Security Conference

Created with love ❤️ by ForumIAS- the knowledge network for civil services.
Visit academy.forumias.com for our mentor based courses.

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

Description– It is the world’s **leading forum** for debating international **security policy**. It is often referred to as the ‘**Davos of Defence**’.

Objective– Its objective is to build **trust and contribute to the peaceful resolution** of conflicts, by sustaining a continuous and informal dialogue within the **international security community**.

Venue– It has been held in Munich, **Germany**, since **1963**.

Frequency of conference– The conference is held **annually in February**.

Key features-

- 1) It is a venue for **diplomatic initiatives** to address the world’s most pressing **security** concerns.
- 2) It brings together **security experts, politicians, military leaders** and the **defence industry** from around the world.
- 3) It publishes the **Munich Security Report**. This is an **annual report** about **figures, maps** and **research** on crucial security challenges.

Mission Aspides

Why in the News?

The **European Union** has recently launched a Red Sea mission named **Mission Aspides**, which aims to protect shipping in the Red Sea region from Yemen’s Houthi rebels.

What is the need for a mission in the Red Sea region?

1. The Iran-backed Houthis, who exert control over much of war-torn Yemen, have been **disrupting the vital shipping lane** in the Red Sea region since November 2023.
2. They **claim their actions are in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza** during the Israel-Hamas conflict.
3. Recently, a Greek-flagged cargo ship owned by the U.S. was attacked twice in the Gulf of Aden, near the Red Sea.
4. The EU states that the **mission Aspides, initially set for one year**, is **aimed at safeguarding civilian shipping in the Red Sea** and assures that no attacks will be conducted on Yemeni soil.

About Red Sea



World Atlas

1. Location:

- a. The Red Sea is a seawater inlet of the Indian Ocean lying between Africa and Asia.
- b. It is **connected to the Indian Ocean** in the south through the **Bab el Mandeb strait** and **the Gulf of Aden**.
- c. To the **north of the Red Sea** lies the **Sinai Peninsula**, the **Gulf of Aqaba** and **the Gulf of Suez**.

2. Bordering Countries: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Why in the news?

According to a new report by the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)**, at the current pace of growth, the region will not attain the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) until 2062, and it will be 32 years behind the scheduled year of achievement.

About United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)



Source-ReserchGate

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

Aspect	Details
Description	It is the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in the Asia-Pacific region . It is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations.
Established	It was established in 1947 .
Objective	To promote economic and social development in the Asian and Pacific region by fostering cooperation between its members and associate members.
Headquarter	Bangkok, Thailand
Members	It has 53 member States and 9 associate members.
Functions	1) Its secretariat supports inclusive, resilient and sustainable development in the region by generating action-oriented knowledge. 2) It provides technical assistance and capacity-building services to support of national development objectives, regional agreements and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 3) It provides support to partners at the national level.
Area of work	It carries out work in the areas like Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development, Trade , Investment and Innovation, Transport, Environment and Development etc.
Important reports	Asia-Pacific SDG Progress Report

Subject: Indian Economy

Govt proposes to hike ministries reporting limits for financial expenditure

Why in the news?

Parliament's Public Accounts Committee has recently approved the Finance Ministry's proposal to raise financial limits on spending for 'New Service' and 'New Instruments of Service'.

What are 'New Service' and 'New Instruments of Service'?

New Service (NS)- It refers to expenditure arising out of a new policy decision that was not brought to the **notice of Parliament earlier**. This may include a **new activity** or a **new investment**.

New Instrument of Service (NIS)-It refers to relatively large expenditure arising out of important expansion of an **existing policy**.

What is the new limit approved by Public Account Committee?

The new policy-related expenditure by ministries/departments can be more than **Rs 50 crore but cannot exceed Rs 100 crore**. For exceeding **Rs 100 crore limit**, prior approval of **Parliament** is mandatory.

The panel has fixed the reporting limit for '**New Instrument of Service**', to up to 20% of the original appropriation or up to **Rs 100 crore**, whichever is higher. For exceeding this limit, prior approval of **Parliament** is **mandatory**.

Rubber Board of India

Why in the news?

The government has recently increased the allocation for Sustainable and Inclusive Development of the Natural Rubber Sector by 23% to Rs 708.7 crore for the next two financial years. The scheme runs parallel with the tenure of the award of 15th finance commission and is run by the **Rubber Board of India**.

About Rubber Board of India

Aspect	Details
Description	It is a statutory organization constituted under the Rubber Act, 1947 .
Concerned ministry	It functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Headquarters	Kottayam , Kerala.
Structure	1) The Board is headed by a Chairman appointed by the Central Government . 2) It has 28 members representing various interests of the natural rubber industry.
Functions	1) It is responsible for the development of the rubber industry in the country by assisting and encouraging research, development , extension and training activities related to rubber. 2) It maintains statistical data of rubber. The Board also takes steps to promote marketing of rubber and undertake labor welfare activities. 3) It issues licences to rubber producers, manufacturers, and exporters/traders. This licence is known as the Rubber Board licence/registration . It is mandatory for rubber manufacturing and export .

What are the favourable conditions for growth of rubber?

- 1) **Temperature**– It requires **high temperature** throughout the year – ranging between 20°-35°C or average monthly mean of 27°C.
- 2) **Rainfall**– It requires **heavy rainfall**. The annual average rainfall of not less than 200 cm is optimum. Rubber tree thrives well when the distribution of rainfall is **uniformly high all over the year**.
- 3) **Soil**– Deep, friable, well-drained soils are ideal for rubber cultivation They promote **root development**, and acidic soils are also suitable.

Some important facts about rubber production-

- 1) **Thailand** is the **leading** Rubber producing country in the world. Thailand is followed **Indonesia** and **China** at the second and third place respectively.
- 2) **India** stands at **fourth position** in Rubber production.
- 3) Traditional rubber-growing states comprising **Kerala** and **Tamil Nadu** account for 81% of production.

100% FDI in space sector

Why in the News?

Recently, the Union Cabinet has **approved 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** in the space sector, under the revised FDI policy.

What new changes have been made in foreign direct investment (FDI) norms?

Under the updated FDI policy, the satellite sub-sector has been divided into three different types, with defined limits for foreign investment in each type.

1. Production of parts, systems, or sub-components for satellites- Under the Automatic route, FDI of up to 100% will be permitted for the manufacturing of components, systems, or sub-systems for satellites, ground segments, and user segments.

2. Satellite production and management- The updated policy allows up to 74% FDI under the automatic route for satellite manufacturing and operation, satellite data products, and ground/user segment. For investments beyond 74%, government approval is required.

3. Launch vehicles and their components- Up to 49% FDI under the automatic route will be allowed for launch vehicles, their systems or subsystems, and the establishment of spaceports for spacecraft launch and reception. Investments beyond 49% will require government approval.

Pigeon Pea

Why in the News?

According to the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), a new fast-breeding method will make it easier for scientists to improve pigeonpea quality more quickly.

What is Pigeon Pea?



Source- DownToEarth

Aspect	Details
About	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It serves as a significant legume crop and a protein-rich food, mainly consumed as dal in India.2. In India, it is alternatively known as arhar and tur.
Cultivation	Primarily grown in tropical regions, it is predominantly cultivated in the semi-arid areas of India.
Climate conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Rain- It needs an annual rainfall of 600-650mm, along with moisture during the initial eight weeks and dry conditions during its flowering and pod development phase.2. Temperature- It can be grown between 26°C to 30°C during the rainy season and 17°C to 22°C in the post-rainy season (November to March).3. Soil- It can be grown in any soil type, but sandy loam or loam soil is best for its cultivation.

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

	Note – It is highly sensitive to low radiation during pod development , so flowering in the monsoon or cloudy weather results in weak pod formation.
Intercropping	It is often grown alongside various crops. In India, around 80-90% of pigeonpea is intercropped .
Concern	1. Long growth cycle – Breeding efforts for Pigeonpea have been limited due to its long growth cycle and sensitivity to day length . Only around 250 varieties have been released worldwide in the past sixty years. 2. Disease – Key diseases of pigeon pea include wilt, sterility mosaic disease, phytophthora blight, alternaria blight, and powdery mildew , among others.
Health Benefits	It possesses a low glycemic index and boasts abundant levels of thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B-6, folate, vitamin A, calcium, zinc, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus .
Major Pigeon Pea Producing States	Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Jharkhand

Subject: Science & Technology

Diphtheria

Why in the news?

The World Health Organization (WHO) has recently published the guidelines on the clinical management of diphtheria.

About diphtheria

Aspect	Details
Description	It is a serious contagious bacterial infection of the nose and throat.
Caused by	Strains of bacteria called Corynebacterium diphtheriae that make a toxin
Symptoms	A thick, gray membrane covering the throat and tonsils, sore throat and hoarseness, swollen glands (enlarged lymph nodes) in the neck and difficulty breathing etc
Transmission	1) It can spread from person to person , usually through respiratory droplets, like from coughing or sneezing . 2) People can also get sick from touching infected open sores or ulcers
Current treatment	1) It can be treated with medications but in advanced stages, the bacterial infection can damage the heart, kidneys and nervous system . 2) Neutralization of unbound toxin with Diphtheria Antitoxin (DAT) . 3) Antibiotics to prevent further bacterial growth. 4) Monitoring and supportive care to prevent and treat complications, e.g. airway obstruction, myocarditis.

What are WHO's latest recommendation?

1) It has recommended the use of **macrolide antibiotics** (azithromycin, erythromycin) in preference to **penicillin antibiotics**.

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

- 2) It has recommended that routine sensitivity testing should not be performed **prior** to administration of **diphtheria antitoxin (DAT)**.
- 3) It has suggested an escalation in the dosage regimen for diphtheria antitoxin (DAT) based on **disease severity**. It has also opposed giving **fixed dose** for **all** patients.
- 4) It has suggested to administer antibiotics **alongside DAT**. The antibiotics treatment should not be delayed.

SOFIA (Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy)

Why in the news?

Scientists have recently detected water molecules on the surface of two asteroids using the data from SOFIA airborne observatory.

About SOFIA (Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy)

Aspect	Details
Description	It is the world's largest airborne astronomical observatory, complementing NASA's space telescopes as well as major Earth-based telescopes.
Operated by	It is operated jointly by NASA and the German space agency .
Objective	It was used to make observations of complex molecules, new solar systems, and planets in the solar system
Key features	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) It was a telescope mounted on a Boeing 747 SP aircraft. It used infrared light to observe the universe.2) It could fly into the stratosphere at 38,000-45,000 feet, putting it above 99 percent of Earth's infrared-blocking atmosphere. This allowed the astronomers to study the solar system and beyond.3) It could observe the universe in the widest range of infrared light.4) The airplane is capable of ten-hour flights, with flight paths chosen to keep ahead of the sunrise and maximize the amount of darkness.5) Its ease of mobility allowed researchers to make observations from almost anywhere in the world. This enabled studies of transient events that often take place over oceans, where there are no telescopes.
End of mission	It was cancelled in 2022 due to its high cost and inadequate scientific output.

Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH)

Why in the News?

Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with Indian Govt, launched the Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH), a platform for sharing knowledge and digital products worldwide. This initiative **constitutes one of the three priority areas outlined during India's G20 presidency in 2023**.

What is the Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH)?

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

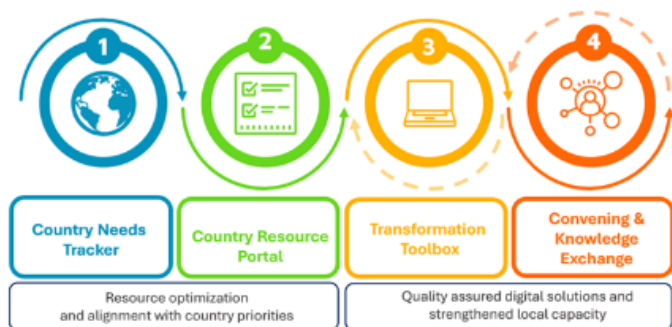


Figure 1. Source- WHO

1. About- It is a WHO managed network aimed at implementing the Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020-2025 and other WHO standards, for digital health system transformation.

2. Launched by- India in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO).

3. Features- The initiative will consist of a network of networks comprising four key elements-

- Country needs tracker-** Helping digital health investments align with country priorities.
- Country resource portal-** A map of resources available in a country.
- Transformation toolbox-** For sharing quality-assured digital tools.
- Convening and Knowledge Exchange-** Encouraging better collaboration and knowledge sharing among global, regional, and national digital health networks.

4. Significance:

- The initiative would aid universal health convergence and improve healthcare service delivery.
- GIDH will help countries by listening to their needs, coordinating resources to prevent duplication, and offering quality-assured products.

What is Digital Health?

- About-** Digital health involves utilizing technology like mobile devices, software applications, and other digital tools to enhance health and healthcare services.
- Objective-** It encompasses a wide range of technologies and platforms aimed at improving access to healthcare, enhancing the quality of care. It empowers individuals to better manage their health and wellness.
- Examples-** India's CoWIN, UNICEF's RapidPro, and FamilyConnect.

Rhodamine-B

Why in the news?

The Tamil Nadu government has recently banned the sale and production of cotton candy after it was found that a toxic chemical Rhodamine-B was being used to make it.

About Rhodamine-B

Description- It is a chemical commonly used for dyeing in various industries, including textiles, paper, leather, and paints. It serves as a colouring agent, producing red and pink hues.

Physical Properties- When in powdered form, it appears green. However, when water is added, it changes into pink colour.

Why it is harmful?

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

1) **Neurological Damage:** Regular consumption of food containing Rhodamine B can damage the cerebellum tissue in the **brain and the brainstem**. This damage can result in functional abnormalities and **hinder motor** functioning.

2) **Liver Dysfunction and Cancer Risk:** Rhodamine B ingestion can cause **liver dysfunction** and may increase the risk of **cancer**. Larger quantities consumed over a brief period may lead to **acute poisoning**.

Read more about-**Transgenic crops in India**

NOTE- As per the **Food Safety Standards Act, 2006**, preparation, packaging, importing, selling and serving food items with Rhodamine-B in wedding ceremonies and other public events is a **punishable offence**.

Proton Improvement Plan Project- (PIP-II)

What is Proton Improvement Plan Project- (PIP-II)?

About- It is the **1st particle accelerator** on U.S. soil.

Location- Fermilab (USA)

Objective- To generate the world's most **intense beam of neutrinos**.

International Collaborators – It is built with significant contributions from international partners. Indian institutions, including the **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre**, the Inter-University Accelerator Centre, and others, will provide **technical components** for PIP-II.

Function- It will **power** the world's **most high-energy neutrino** beam to the under construction **Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment** (DUNE) at Long-Baseline Neutrino Facility (LBNF).

Significance- It provides **Indian scientists** and engineers the training, **technical insight** and **know-how** for the development of their **domestic particle accelerator** program and future projects.

Subject: Environment

Kanha Tiger Reserve

Why in the News?

Recently, a male tiger from the Kanha Tiger Reserve has been transferred to the Mukundpur Safari located in Satna.

About Kanha Tiger Reserve

Aspect	Details
About	1. Kanha Tiger Reserve, also called Kanha-Kisli National Park , is a major tiger reserve and the largest national park of the Madhya Pradesh, India . 2. It is also the largest National Park in Central India .

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

	3. Presently, Kanha area is split into two protected zones : Hallon and Banjar.
Location	1. It is situated within the Mandla and Balaghat districts of Madhya Pradesh. 2. It lies in the Maikal range of the Satpura Mountains .
History	Kanha National Park was established in 1955 and was designated as the Kanha Tiger Reserve in 1973 .
Distinct feature	It is the first tiger reserve in India to have an official mascot named ' Bhoorsingh the Barasingha ' (IUCN Status: Vulnerable).
Vegetation	Tropical moist deciduous forests.
Flora	The park mainly consist of moist Sal and mixed deciduous forest where Bamboo, Tendu, Sal, Jamun, Arjun, and Lendia thrive.
Fauna	1. The Park is globally recognized for saving the Barasingha from extinction and hosting the world's last population of this deer species. 2. Other species found include tiger , leopard, dhole , bear, gaur , Indian python, and more.

Note- Kanha used to be the home of the **Baiga tribe**, a semi-nomadic group from central India. They were relocated as part of efforts to protect the critical tiger habitat.

International Single Species Action Plan

Why in the news?

The 14th Conference of the Parties on the CMS has recently adopted the Single Species Action Plan for conservation of the Hawksbill Turtle.

About International Single Species Action Plan

Description- It is the key instrument developed under the Agreement on the **Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)**.

Objective- To implement coordinated measures to **restore migratory waterbird species** to a favourable **conservation status**.

What is Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds(AEWA)?

Aspect	Details
Description	It is an intergovernmental treaty dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.
Objective	To bring together countries and the wider international conservation community in an effort to establish coordinated conservation and management of migratory waterbirds throughout their entire migratory range.
Administered by	It is developed under the framework of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) .
Secretariat	It is based in Bonn, Germany .

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

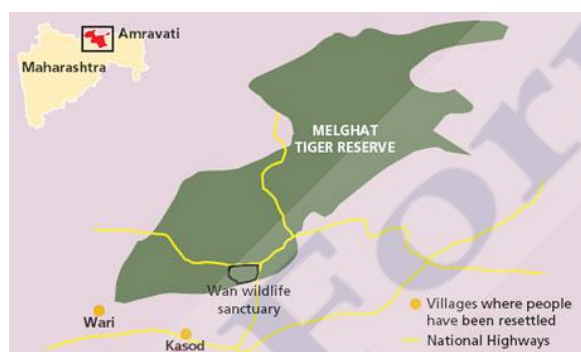
Range	The Agreement area stretches from the northern reaches of Canada and the Russian Federation to the southernmost tip of Africa. It covers 119 Range States from Africa, Europe, the Middle East and parts of Asia and Canada.
Coverage	It covers 255 species of migratory waterbirds that are ecologically dependent on wetlands for at least part of their annual cycle.
Governance	The Agreement has three main bodies:- 1) Meeting of the Parties (MOP) – the governing body of AEWA. 2) Standing Committee (StC) -responsible for steering the operations between sessions of the MOP. 3) Technical Committee (TC) – responsible for providing scientific and technical advice.

Melghat Tiger Reserve

Why in the news?

Melghat Tiger Reserve has recently started Kula mama volleyball tournament to create awareness about significance of protection of tigers.

About Melghat Tiger Reserve



Source-Down to Earth

Aspect	Details
Introduction	It was established as a wildlife sanctuary in 1967 and was declared a tiger reserve in 1974 . The name 'Melghat' means the confluence of various 'ghats' or valleys.
Location	It is located on the southern offshoot of the Satpura Hill Range in Central India, called Gavilgarh Hill in Maharashtra.
Vegetation	The forest is tropical dry deciduous in nature, dominated by teak.
Rivers	The reserve is a catchment area for five major rivers: the Khandu, Khapra, Sipna, Gadga, and Dolar. These are tributaries of the river Tapti . The Tapti River and the Gawilgadh ridge of the Satpura Range form the boundaries of the reserve.
Major tribes	The Korkus are the largest tribal community in Melghat. Other communities include the Gawli community, the Gond tribe etc.

Created with love ❤ by ForumIAS- the knowledge network for civil services.
Visit academy.forumias.com for our mentor based courses.

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

Fauna	The prominent animals are Sloth Bear, Indian Gaur, Sambar deer , Leopard, Nilgais, dhole, hyena, jungle cat, langur, etc. It is considered a stronghold of the critically endangered forest owl .
Some important facts	1) It was among the first nine tiger reserves notified in 1973-74 under Project Tiger . 2) It was the first tiger reserve in Maharashtra. 3) Kula Mama (maternal uncle) is the name affectionately used by Korku tribal people for tigers .

Ponmudi hills

Why in the news?

A team of researchers has recently discovered a new species of damselfly at the Ponmudi hills in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala.

About Ponmudi hills

Description– Ponmudi means ‘**Golden Hill**’ or ‘**Golden Peak**’.

Location– It is located in the state of **Kerala**. It is part of the **Western Ghats mountain range**.

Biosphere reserve– The hills are a part of the **Agasthyamalai landscape**, at the southernmost tip of the Western Ghats.

Significance– These hills are **biodiversity-rich**, and recently the third species of damselfly has been discovered from this region.

States/UTs must adhere to the forest definition from the Godavarman judgment-SC

Why in the News?

The Supreme Court recently issued an interim order directing States and Union Territories to adhere to the 1996 definition of “forest” from the **T.N. Godavarman Thirumalpad vs. Union of India case**. This directive applies while identifying land recorded as forests in Government records under the 2023 amendments to the Forest Conservation Act (1980).

What was the context of the case that led to the issuance of the interim order?

1. A bench led by Chief Justice of India issued the interim order during the **hearing of several writ petitions that contested the 2023 amendments to the Forest Conservation Act (1980)**.
2. The petitioners argued that the **broad definition of ‘forest’** established in the Godavarman judgment has been **restricted by Section 1A introduced by the 2023 amendment**.
3. The Court was informed that the **narrowed definition would exclude approximately 1.99 lakh square kilometers of forest land** from being considered as ‘forest’.

What did the Supreme Court determine in the recent interim order?

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

1. The court instructed states and Union territories to **temporarily apply the dictionary definition of “forest” when evaluating land activities**. Under Rule 16, the principles outlined in the TN Godavarman judgment must continue to be followed.
2. The Court **instructed the Union of India to request detailed records from all States/UTs regarding lands identified as forests** by their respective expert committees, in accordance with the TN Godavarman judgment.
3. The court also **prohibited the establishment of zoos or safaris** in these areas **without prior court approval**.

What was TN.Godavarman Thirumulpad v Union of India (1996) judgement?

1. Background:

- a. The Forest conservation act 1980 aims to safeguard India’s forests from industrial exploitation and promote reforestation.
 - b. It grants the **Central government authority to regulate the extraction of forest resources**, including timber, bamboo, coal, and minerals, by industries and forest-dwelling communities.
 - c. However, this protection **applies only to areas** officially **designated as ‘forest’ in Central or State government records**.
2. The **Supreme Court’s ruling** in the TN.Godavarman Thirumulpad v Union of India (1996) case **broadened the protection of forests**.
 3. According to the ruling, areas that meet the **‘dictionary’** definition of forests are protected, **even if they have not been officially notified by the government or recorded in historical documents**.

Note– Currently in India, there is **no universally accepted definition of ‘forest’**. Each state decides its own definition.

Green Anaconda

Why in the News?

A National Geographic expedition in the Amazon led to the reclassification of Green Anaconda into two genetically distinct species: the southern green anaconda and the newly-discovered northern green anaconda (*Eunectes akayima*).

About Green Anaconda



Source- Wikipedia

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

Aspect	Details
About	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It is the world's biggest snake when you consider both weight and length.2. It can grow up to 30 feet (9 meters) long and weigh as much as 227 kilograms.
Types	Southern green anaconda and the northern green anaconda
Distribution	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The northern green anaconda resides in countries like Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Guyana.2. The southern green anaconda can be found in regions such as Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil.
Habitat	They usually inhabit tropical rainforests and prefer shallow, slow-moving waters like streams, rivers, and flooded grasslands.
Conservation Status	IUCN: Least Concern
Characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The green anaconda belongs to a group of snakes known as constrictors, which aren't venomous.2. Instead of using venom, constrictors wrap around their prey and squeeze until it stops breathing. Then, they open their mouths wide to swallow their prey whole.3. They are well-suited for aquatic life with their nose and eyes positioned on the top of their heads, aiding in seeing and breathing while swimming.4. Typically, females are larger than males.

Subject: Schemes & Programmes

First Skill India Centre

Why in the news?

Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan has recently inaugurated the first Skill India Centre (SIC) of the country in Sambalpur.

About First Skill India Centre

Aspect	Details
Location	It is located in Sambalpur, Odisha .
Objective	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) To empower youth with industry-relevant skills.2) To democratize access to quality education and establish a level-playing field for the aspiring youth.
Implementation	The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) will designate a Centre Manager who will monitor the implementation of training programs.
Salient features	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The centre is equipped with best-in-class infrastructure, cutting-edge technologies and modern facilities.2) The centre will play a pivotal role in designing curriculum along with industry experts. The curriculum will be aligned with the changing industry needs.3) The centre will offer courses in sectors which are high in demand. For example-

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

	media and entertainment, leather, tourism and hospitality, IT-ITeS, banking etc.
Significance	1) It will revolutionize the skilling landscape in India by offering enhanced accessibility, personalized learning experiences, and improved career guidance to learners. 2) It will enable learners to acquire relevant skills and stay updated with industry trends. 3) It will harness the potential of demographic dividends to promote rural development, nurture local entrepreneurship and advance socio-economic growth.

Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP)

Why in the news?

The Cabinet has recently approved the proposal for continuation of centrally sponsored Scheme- Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP).

About Flood Management and Border Areas Programme

Aspect	Details
Description	The Scheme "FMBAP" has been framed by merging the components of two continuing XII Plan schemes titled "Flood Management Programme (FMP)" and "River Management Activities and Works related to Border Areas (RMBA)".
Objective	To assist the State Governments to provide reasonable degree of protection against floods in critical areas by adopting optimum combination of structural and non-structural measures.
Coverage	The FMBAP Scheme will be implemented throughout the country for effective flood management, erosion control and anti-sea erosion.
Components	The Scheme has two components:- 1) Flood Management Programme (FMP) - This includes work related to flood control, anti-erosion, drainage development and anti-sea erosion. 2) River Management and Border Areas (RMBA) component -This includes flood control and anti-erosion works on common border rivers with neighbouring countries, including hydrological observations and flood forecasting.
Funding pattern	1) Under Flood Management Programme (FMP) -The pattern of funding that is to be followed is for Special Category States (8 North-Easter States and Hilly States of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and UT of Jammu & Kashmir)- 90% (Centre) and 10% (State) For General/ Non-Special Category States - 60% (Centre) and 40% (State) 2) Under River Management and Border Areas (RMBA) component - 100% central assistance .

PM-USHA SCHEME

Why in the news?

Uttar Pradesh has recently secured ₹740 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) programme.

About Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) Scheme

Aspect	Details
Description	It was initially launched as Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in 2013. It was renamed as PM-USHA in 2023.
Objective	To improve the overall quality of existing state of higher educational institutions by ensuring their conformity to prescribed norms and standards .
Concerned Ministry	Ministry of Education
Type of scheme	Centrally Sponsored scheme
Funding	90:10 ratio for certain states and 60:40 for others, UTs without Legislature receive 100% central funding .
Salient features	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Rs 100 crore support to each of 35 state universities for multidisciplinary education and research (MERU) Transformation2) Establishment of Model Degree Colleges.3) Grants for strengthening universities.4) Focus on remote, LWE-affected, Aspirational, and low Gross Enrollment Ratio regions5) Aid to state governments for gender inclusion, equity, and ICT-based employability skills.6) It is in alignment with the National Education Policy.
Eligibility criteria to get PM-USHA funding	The colleges of any discipline under the Section 2(f) of the UGC Act are eligible for the funds. The colleges must have grade A of NAAC accreditation or a good NBA score.
Significance	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) It has the potential to transform higher education.2) It is in consonance with the objective of National Education Policy.3) It will promote quality, equity, and innovation in higher education.

Subject: Reports/Indices/Summits

Sagar Aankalan- Guidelines for Indian Port Performance Index

About Sagar Aankalan

Created with love ❤️ by ForumIAS- the knowledge network for civil services.
Visit academy.forumias.com for our mentor based courses.

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

Aspects	Details
Description	It is the guidelines for National Benchmarking of Indian Ports Performance .
Objective	To ensure mapping and benchmarking of Indian Port's – logistics performance and efficiency to improve competitiveness .
Released by	Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways
Applicability	It would be applicable to all Indian seaports .
Significance	1) It will transform the performance assessment of Indian ports 2) It will help in fulfilling " Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 " announced by the Prime Minister. 3) It will help in port development, modernization, green hydrogen and ammonia, port-led development , cruise sector, business and commerce, shipbuilding, and knowledge sharing. 4) It would ensure the realisation of the full potential of the maritime sector. This will drive inclusive growth and prosperity for all stakeholders.

Subject: Art & Culture

Morodharo- A Harappan settlement near Dholavira

Why in the news?

Archaeologists have recently discovered a Harappan-era fortified settlement named Morodharo near Dholavira.

About Morodharo



Source-the Times of India

Factly Compilation for the Month of February (Third Week) 2024

Aspect	Details
Description	It is a fortified settlement dating back to the Harappan-era .
Location	Kutch District, Gujarat
Features	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The settlement looks mature (2,600-1,900BCE) to late (1,900-1,300 BCE) Harappan. 2) Burial cairns, which are mounds of stones to demarcate a boundary, are also found here. 3) Harappan pottery with perforated jar sherds, reserved slipware, and terracotta cakes were unearthed. 4) All these items have a striking resemblance to those found in Dholavira.
Significance	As per archaeologist, this site and Dholavira both were dependent on the sea. This suggests the presence of navigable waters near Rann of Kutch in ancient times.

Shompen Tribe

Why in the news?

India's president recently visited an island earmarked for multi-billion-dollar development. As per some experts, the project could wipe out the indigenous Shompen tribe.

About Shompen Tribes

Aspects	Details
Description	The Shompen or Shom Pen are the indigenous people of the interior of Great Nicobar Island . They are designated as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group within the list of Scheduled Tribe.
Characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Nature-They are one of the most isolated tribes on Earth. Most of them are uncontacted, refusing all interactions with outsiders. 2) Livelihood-They are semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers, and their main sources of livelihood are hunting, gathering, fishing, and a little bit of horticultural activities in a rudimentary form. 3) Food-They collect a wide variety of forest plants, but their staple food is the pandanus fruit, which they call larop.
Population	According to the Census (2011) , the estimated population of Shompen is 229.
Language	They speak their own language , which has many dialects. Members of one band do not understand the dialect of the other.
Social structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) They have nuclear families comprising husband, wife, and their unmarried children. 2) The family is controlled by the eldest male member, who controls all activities of the women and kids. 3) Monogamy is the general rule, although polygamy is allowed too.

Some other important tribes of Andaman & Nicobar Islands



Source- Reseach Gate

Tribes	Location
Andamanese	Strait island
Jarawas	Middle and south Andaman
Nicobarese	Great Nicobar
Onges	Little Nicobar
Sentinelese	Sentinel island

Rani Chennamma

Why in the News?

To commemorate the **200th anniversary of Rani Chennamma's rebellion** against the British, various social groups across the country are organizing a national campaign called "**Naanoo Rani Chennamma**" (I am Rani Chennamma too).

The campaign aims to empower women to oppose patriarchal, anti-democratic, and casteist forces in the country, inspired by Rani Chennamma's legacy of bravery and defiance.

About Rani Chennamma



Figure 2. Source- Wikipedia

1. About:

- a. Rani Chennamma was an **Indian freedom fighter** and **Rani of the Kittur**, a former **princely state in Karnataka**.
- b. She **led the Kittur revolt of 1824**, which stands as one of the earliest woman-led anti-colonial struggles against British rule in India.

2. **Birth**– She was born on October 23, 1778, in Kagati, a small village in

Belagavi district of Karnataka.

3. Marriage– She married Raja Mallasarja of Kittur at 15 and played a crucial role in defending her kingdom after his death.

4. Struggle against the British:

a. She initiated a rebellion against the British in 1824 after they declined to acknowledge her adopted son as the successor according to the ‘**doctrine of lapse**’.

b. Although she was **initially successful**, the **British captured Kittur Fort in their third attempt** in December 1824, **resulting in Rani Chennamma’s imprisonment** and **eventual death in 1829**.

5. Significance– Her brave resistance to colonial oppression has made her a symbol in Karnataka’s political imagination and an important figure in Indian history.

Subject: Geography & Places in News

Char Areas

Why in the news?

Assam government has recently announced that it would undertake a mission to reclaim the chars from encroachers to safeguard the “**ecological integrity**” of the Brahmaputra Valley.

About Char Area

Definition– The riverine areas (island) of the river **Brahmaputra** are locally known as **Char**. Chars are island-like **silt depositions** in the lower parts of river basins. They are made of **sand and silt**. They are created **naturally** due to the **accumulation** of sediment transported in water from **melting glaciers** and **eroding riverbanks**.

Geographical features

- 1) They are subjected to **erosion on their upstream** and **deposition on the downstream**.
- 2) This affects the geometry and **location of the chars** during floods almost every year.

Pandaram lands

Why in the news?

Lakshadweep administration continues to number trees on Pandaram lands, allegedly insisting that such property belongs to the government.

About Pandaram lands

Pandaram lands is a form of land ownership. According to the agreement signed in 1884, the Pandaram land was handed over to them and if they continued to possess them for 40 years, then the ownership of these Pandaram land would pass on to the islanders.

Over 60% of the land in Lakshadweep, falls under the Pandaram lands. This land covers parts of Androth, Kalpeni, Kavaratti, Minicoy, and Agatti islands, as well as six uninhabited islands.

Rip currents

Why in the News?

Recently, The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) and the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** have initiated a joint project aimed at the surveillance and issuance of operational forecast alerts regarding rip currents.

Rip Current

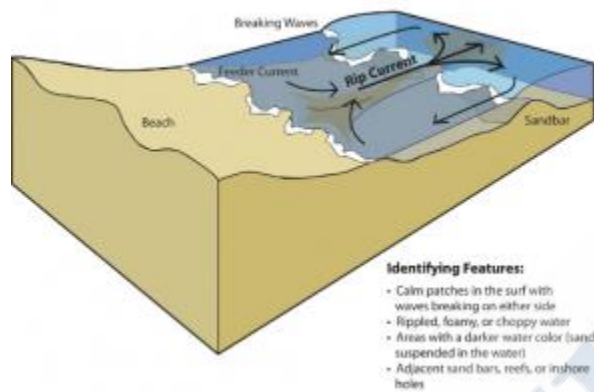


Figure 3. Source- National Geographic Society

What are Rip currents?

1. About- Rip currents are **strong currents that flow from the shore back to the open sea or lake**. They present a **widely recognized coastal hazard on beaches worldwide**.

2. Formation:

- They **form due to beach shapes and can happen in rocky or sandy beach areas**.
- Beach topography encompasses land features such as dunes and water features like **sandbars, piers, and reefs**, where rip currents often form.
- They **may form in spaces between sandbars, piers, or sections of a reef**.

3. Hazards for swimmers and beachgoers:

- Rip currents are one of the most significant hazards for beachgoers and swimmers, as they **can swiftly carry people out to sea**.
- However, it's important to note that rip currents **do not pull swimmers underwater**; rather, they **pull swimmers away from the shore**.

Papua New Guinea

Why in the News?

Recently, numerous men lost their lives in a fresh outbreak of tribal conflict in the remote highlands of Papua New Guinea.

About Papua New Guinea



Source- World Atlas

Location	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is an island country situated in the south-western Pacific. 2. It covers the eastern part of New Guinea, the world's second-largest island, and many smaller nearby islands.
Neighbours	<p>Indonesia to the west, Australia to the south, and the Solomon Islands to the south-east.</p> <p>Note– It shares its land border only with Indonesia.</p>
Area	It is the world's third-largest island nation , spanning 462,840 square kilometers.
Capital	Port Moresby
Terrain	It is mostly mountainous but has some low plains in southern New Guinea .
Language	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English serves as the primary language for government and commerce, while Tok Pisin is the most commonly spoken language in everyday situations. 2. Linguistically, Papua New Guinea is the most diverse country globally, with over 800 languages spoken.
Religion	Majority of the people in Papua New Guinea identify as Christians .
Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Papua New Guinea gained self-government on December 1, 1973, and became independent on September 16, 1975. 2. It is a constitutional monarchy and part of the Commonwealth. 3. The British monarch, represented by a governor-general, serves as the head of state, while the Prime Minister leads the government.
International Affiliation	It is a full member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the Pacific Community, and the Pacific Islands Forum.

Vaitarna River

Why in the news?

A fisherman from Maharashtra's Palghar district was attacked by a bull shark in the Vaitarna river.

About Vaitarna River

Origin– The river rises in the **Sahyadri hill** range in the Nasik district of Maharashtra State.

Mouth– It drains into the **Arabian Sea** near Mumbai.

Tributary– **Left bank tributary**-Tanya

Right bank tributaries- Pinjal, Dehraja, and Surya

Significance– The Vaitarna supplies much of **Mumbai's drinking** water. It is the **largest river** in the Northern Konkan region and drains Maharashtra's whole Palghar district.

West flowing river– It is one of the **west flowing rivers** in the region North of Mumbai and South of the Tapi river.

Threats– The Vaitarna is one of the **most polluted** rivers in India.

Solar Maximum

Why in the news?

A new visualization from the European Space Agency (ESA) has recently shown the increase in activity on the sun's surface as it approaches solar maximum this year.

About Solar Maximum

- 1) The sun goes through a **natural solar cycle** approximately every **11 years**. The cycle is marked by the **increase** and **decrease** of **sunspots**, which are visible as dark blemishes on the sun's surface.
- 2) The **greatest number of sunspots** in any given solar cycle is designated as "solar maximum." Solar maximum occurs roughly in the **middle** of each cycle.
- 3) As the sun approaches the solar maximum, more **brilliant explosions**, dark sunspots, **loops of plasma**, and swirls of super-hot gas are observed.

What is the impact of Solar Maximum?

- 1) The increased solar activity can cause **extreme space weather events**, including solar flares and eruptions.
- 2) It can also disrupt **radio communications** and the **power grid** and have serious health consequences for astronauts.

Subject: Miscellaneous

Acharya Shri Vidyasagarji Maharaj

Why in the News?

Recently, Acharya Shri Vidyasagarji Maharaj **attained samadhi** on February 18, 2024, at **Chandragiri Teerth** in Dongargarh, **Chhattisgarh**.



Figure 4. Source- Wikipedia

Who was Acharya Shri Vidyasagarji Maharaj?

1. About:

- a. He was an **Indian Digambara Jain Acharya** (Digambar Jain Monk).
- b. He was also known as **Sant Shiromani Acharya Shri 108 Vidyasagar Ji Maharaj**.

2. **Birth**– He was **born** in Sadalga, **Belgaum district of Karnataka** on October 10, 1946. His **childhood name was Vidhyadhar**.

3. **Initiation of monk life**– Vidyasagarji **became a Digambara monk in 1968** at the age of 22, **guided by Acharya Gyansagarji Maharaj**, who came from the lineage of Acharya Shantisagarji Maharaj, in Ajmer.

4. **Transition**– Although he was born in Karnataka and **embraced spiritual discipline in Rajasthan**, he **mainly resided in the Bundelkhand region**.

5. Teachings and Works:

- a. He was widely **respected for his teachings on Jain philosophy, spirituality, and ethics**.
- b. He is **credited with reviving educational and religious activities**.
- c. He **wrote extensively in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Hindi**.
- d. He **wrote haiku poems and the epic Hindi poem "Mukamati"**.
- e. He was also known as "**Chote Baba**" in Jain community.

6. Views:

- a. He strongly believed that **education is vital for a fair and enlightened society**.
- b. He **advocated for knowledge as a tool to empower people**, helping them live meaningful lives and make valuable contributions.
- c. He **stressed the significance of self-learning and self-awareness for genuine wisdom**. He encourages his followers to pursue lifelong learning and spiritual development.
- d. He **strongly supported voting**, viewing it as a way to participate in democracy.