

Factly Weekly

Compilation

2024

**For UPSC CSE Prelims
Exam**

**4th Week
June 2024**

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UPSC Syllabus: Polity and nation

Leader of Opposition (LoP) Post in Lok Sabha

Why in the news?

After 10 years, the Lok Sabha will have a Leader of the Opposition. Congress party won 99 seats in the recent general elections.

About Leader of Opposition (LoP) Post in Lok Sabha

1. The Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha is akin to a shadow Prime Minister. The post was established by the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977.

2. Importance of the LoP:

- i) He/she acts as the main voice of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha.
- ii) He/ she is ready to take over if the current government resigns or is defeated.
- iii) He/she helps to facilitate the smooth functioning of the House by holding the government accountable.

3. Appointment Criteria: The LoP is the leader of the largest opposition party with the greatest numerical strength in the Lok Sabha. Traditionally, the party must have at least one-tenth of the total seats in the Lok Sabha.

4. Duties and Responsibilities:

- i) Serves on high-powered committees for key appointments (e.g., CBI Director, Chief Information Commissioner).
- ii) Sits in the front row in the House and during ceremonial occasions.
- iii) Engages in debates, ensuring the government is held accountable.
- iv) Strengthens the Opposition's position in Parliament.
- v) Reinforces internal party support and accountability.

5. Impact on Governance: The LoP plays a crucial role in maintaining checks and balances within the parliamentary system. This also enhances the democratic process by providing a structured platform for opposition.

6. After 10 years, Congress secured 99 seats, enabling the appointment of Rahul Gandhi as the LoP. Before Rahul Gandhi, the last LoP was Sushma Swaraj (2009-2014). Other notable leaders who have held the post include L.K. Advani, Sonia Gandhi, Sharad Pawar, and Rajiv Gandhi.

Post of Deputy Speaker

Why in the news?

With the Opposition's increased strength in Lok Sabha, its members hope to secure the Deputy Speaker post. The 17th Lok Sabha (2019-24) did not have a Deputy Speaker throughout its entire duration.

About Constitutional Provisions Regarding Deputy Speaker

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1. Article 93: The House of the People (Lok Sabha) is required to elect two members as Speaker and Deputy Speaker whenever these offices become vacant. The article does not specify a time frame for this election.

2. Article 178: This article provides the corresponding requirement for the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of a state's Legislative Assembly.

Election of Deputy Speaker

1. Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha: The election of the Deputy Speaker is held on a date fixed by the Speaker.

2. The Deputy Speaker is elected once a motion proposing their name is passed in the House. Typically, the Deputy Speaker serves for the entire duration of the House.

Position of Deputy Speaker

Article 95: The Deputy Speaker performs the duties of the Speaker when the office is vacant and acts as the Speaker when the latter is absent from House sittings. In both scenarios, the Deputy Speaker assumes all powers of the Speaker.

Responsibilities and Functions

1. Acting as Speaker: He/she performs all duties and exercises all powers of the Speaker when the latter is absent or when the position is vacant.

2. Independence from Speaker: He/she is not subordinate to the Speaker and is directly responsible to the House. Both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker must submit their resignations to the House.

3. Maintaining Order: He/she helps in maintaining order and decorum in the House during debates and proceedings ensuring the rules of the House are followed.

4. Committees: He/she often presides over various parliamentary committees, facilitating their functioning and ensuring they operate within the rules.

5. Decision-Making: He/she makes decisions on procedural issues and interpretations of rules in the House, similar to the role of the Speaker.

6. Representative Role: In the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker represents the House in ceremonial functions and official events.

Term of a Lok Sabha MP

Why in the news?

The 18th Lok Sabha's first session will start on Monday. Before the House begins its legislative work, the newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) must take the oath as provided in the Constitution.

About the term of a Lok Sabha MP

1. Lok Sabha MP's Term: The five-year term of a Lok Sabha MP begins when the Election Commission of India (ECI) declares the results according to Section 73 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

2. From that day onward, MPs are eligible for certain rights as elected representatives.

3. The start of their term means that if MPs change their party allegiance, their political party can ask the Speaker to disqualify them from Parliament under the anti-defection law.

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4. Requirements for an MP to Participate in Lok Sabha:

i) Winning the election and starting the term does not automatically allow an MP to participate in House proceedings.

ii) To debate and vote in Lok Sabha, an MP must take a seat in the House by making and subscribing to an oath or affirmation as prescribed in the Constitution (Article 99).

iii) The Constitution specifies a financial penalty of Rs 500 if a person participates or votes in House proceedings without taking the oath (Article 104). This is the only financial penalty mentioned in the Constitution.

5. Exception: An individual can become a minister without being elected to Parliament. They have six months to secure a seat in either Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha. During this time, they can participate but not vote in House proceedings.

About Parliamentary oath

1. The text of the parliamentary oath is found in the third schedule of the Constitution.

2. Before taking the oath, MPs must submit their election certificate to the Lok Sabha staff. This requirement was introduced after a 1957 incident where a mentally unsound individual posed as an MP and took the oath.

3. Once verified, MPs can take the oath or affirmation in English or any of the 22 languages specified in the Constitution. Approximately half of the MPs take their oath in Hindi or English. Sanskrit has also become a popular choice in recent Lok Sabhas.

4. MPs must use the name mentioned in their election certificate and adhere to the exact text of the oath.

5. MPs can choose between swearing in the name of God or making a solemn affirmation.

6. The Constitution specifies that if an MP does not attend Parliament for 60 days, their seat can be declared vacant. Courts have used this ground to allow MPs in jail to take an oath in Parliament.

The Telecommunications Act 2023

Why in the news?

Recently, Union Government issued Gazette Notification for enforcing sections 1, 2, 10 to 30, 42 to 44, 46, 47, 50 to 58, 61 and 62 of the Telecommunications Act, 2023.

About the Telecommunications Act, 2023

1. The Telecommunications Act 2023 aims to update and unify the laws related to developing, expanding, and operating telecommunication services and networks. It also covers the assignment of spectrum and other related matters.

2. This new Act replaces older laws like the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, and the Indian Wireless Telegraph Act, 1933, due to significant technological advancements in the telecom sector.

3. The Act promotes digital implementation, including online dispute resolution and other frameworks.

4. It is guided by principles like Inclusion (Samavesh), Security (Suraksha), Growth (Vridhhi) and Responsiveness (Tvarit).

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Key Features:

1. The Act clearly defines various telecom-related terms. This reduces uncertainties and improving investor confidence, which aids in ease of doing business.

2. It provides an effective Right of Way (RoW framework) for both public and private properties. It includes government agencies, local bodies, and PPP projects like airports, seaports, and highways.

Note- RoW framework is one in which a public entity that owns the land has to grant 'right of way' permission expeditiously unless it gives a substantive ground for refusal.

3. Telecommunication infrastructure will be considered separate from the property it is on. This will reduce disputes when the property is sold or leased.

4. The Central Government will establish common ducts and cable corridors, in line with the PM Gati Shakti vision.

5. The Act empowers setting standards and conformity assessments for telecommunication services, networks, and security to ensure national security and promote Indian technology.

6. Universal Service Obligation Fund- It has been expanded to support services in underserved areas and fund research and development of telecom services and technologies.

UPSC Syllabus: Schemes and Programmes

Fast Track Immigration Trusted Traveller Programme

Why in the news?

Recently, Union home minister Amit Shah inaugurated the 'Fast Track Immigration Trusted Traveller Programme' (FTI-TTP) at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport.

About Fast Track Immigration Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP)

1. About: The Fast Track Immigration Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP) is a new initiative by the Central Government to make immigration faster, smoother, and safer.

2. Aims: It aims to reduce crowding at airports by providing quicker immigration clearance for pre-verified travelers.

3. Created by: The Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and the Bureau of Immigration worked together to create the FTI-TTP.

4. How Does It Work: FTI-TTP is similar to the Global Entry Program in the United States. It allows pre-approved, low-risk travelers to go through immigration and security checks faster.

5. Where Is It Available: In the first phase, FTI-TTP is available at airports in New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kochi, and Ahmedabad.

6. How Is It Implemented: The program uses e-gates or automated border gates to minimize human involvement in immigration checks.

It will be rolled out in two phases:

i) First phase: Indian citizens and OCI cardholders

ii) Second phase: Foreign travelers.

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7. How to Enroll: Travelers need to register online through an official portal managed by the Bureau of Immigration. After providing the necessary details and documents, applicants wait for approval. Once approved, travelers can avoid long immigration lines when arriving in India.

8. Validity: The FTI registration is valid for up to five years or until the passport expires, whichever comes first.

9. The Process at the Airport: When a registered traveler reaches the e-gate, they scan their boarding pass to get flight details. The passport is scanned, and the traveler's biometrics (like fingerprints) are checked. If the identity is confirmed, the e-gate opens, and immigration clearance is granted.

The FTI-TTP makes traveling easier and quicker for pre-approved travelers by using advanced technology to speed up immigration checks.

National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)

Why in the news?

Recently, two Geoportals namely 'Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0)' portal for rural land records and "National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)" launched at Prithvi Bhavan.

About National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)

1. The National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0) is a geo-portal designed to disseminate crucial space-based information and services related to natural disasters across India and neighboring countries.

2. The database provides comprehensive geospatial data essential for addressing emergency situations and disaster management efforts nationwide.

3. Purpose: NDEM serves as a centralized repository for space-based inputs, aimed at enhancing disaster management and reducing risks associated with natural calamities.

4. It covers a wide spectrum of natural disasters, extending its services beyond India to neighboring countries.

5. Key Features:

i) Comprehensive Data: NDEM offers a structured, multi-scale geospatial database covering the entire nation.

ii) Situational Assessment: It supports informed decision-making during emergencies by providing up-to-date situational assessments.

iii) Early Warning System: NDEM plays a crucial role in establishing an early warning system, helping to mitigate the impact of natural disasters and safeguarding citizens from unpredictable natural events.

6. Technology and Scope: NDEM leverages advanced geospatial tools to monitor and manage emergencies effectively.

Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0) Portal

Why in the news?

Recently, two Geoportals namely 'Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0)' portal for rural land records and "National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM Ver. 5.0)" launched at Prithvi Bhavan.

About Bhuvan Panchayat (Ver. 4.0)

1. The geoportal is an advanced online platform developed by the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), under the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

2. **Purpose:** This portal serves as a comprehensive WebGIS (Web Geographic Information System) which is designed to support "Space-based Information Support for Decentralized Planning (SISDP)" and empower citizens at the grassroots level in Panchayats across India.

3. **Features:** It provides high-resolution satellite imagery at a scale of 1:10K, enabling visualization and planning for infrastructure development, land use, and disaster risk reduction.

4. **Benefits:** By digitalizing rural land records and improving land revenue management, Bhuvan Panchayat aims to reduce corruption, enhance transparency, and promote ease of living by giving citizens direct access to real-time data.

UPSC Syllabus: Science and technology, Schemes and Programs

eSakshya App

Why in the news?

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is testing eSakshya (e-evidence) app before implementation of the three criminal laws.

About eSakshya App

Aspects	Description
About	1. The eSakshya app is a mobile-phone application to help police record crime scenes, conduct searches, and seizures in criminal cases. 2. It enables police to upload recorded evidence to a cloud-based platform.
Aim	The app aims to create uniformity in investigations, potentially increasing the conviction rate.
Developed by	The app is developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC). It will be available to all police stations for registration and download.
Features	1. Police officials must upload a selfie after completing the procedure. 2. Each recording can be a maximum of four minutes long, with multiple files uploadable per First Information Report (FIR). 3. If there are connectivity issues, police can record on personal devices, generate a hash value, and upload the file later.

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	4. Alternatively, they can upload directly through eSakhsya which requires good Internet speed.
Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Procuring hardware and cloud space is expensive, and many States lack resources.2. Maintaining the sanctity of the chain of evidence submission is crucial to prevent benefiting the accused.3. Forensic evidence integrity is essential, and any issues in procuring digital evidence could lead to criminals escaping justice.

UPSC Syllabus: Governance

INS Sunayna

Why in the news?

Recently, INS Sunayna entered Port Louis, Mauritius.

About INS Sunayna

Aspects	Description
About	INS Sunayna is a Saryu class Offshore Patrol Vessel, commissioned at Kochi. It operates under the Southern Naval Command.
Built by	The ship was built at Goa Shipyard Limited.
Features	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It is designed for fleet support operations, coastal and offshore patrolling, ocean surveillance, monitoring Sea Lines of Communication and offshore assets, and escort duties.2. It is capable of achieving speeds of up to 25 knots.3. It is equipped with an automatic power management system.4. It is fitted with the latest navigation, communication, and electronic support systems.5. Other ships in the Saryu class include INS Sumitra and INS Sumedha.

UPSC Syllabus: Science and Technology

V-LEX-02 Mission

Why in the news?

Recently, ISRO successfully completed the third reusable launch vehicle landing experiment (RLV LEX) at the Aeronautical Test Range in Chitradurga, Karnataka.

About V-LEX-02 Mission

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1. The RLV-LEX-02 mission is the third and final test of a series of landing experiments conducted at the Aeronautical Test Range.

2. Mission Objectives: The primary objective of the RLV-LEX-02 mission was to demonstrate the autonomous landing capability of the reusable launch vehicle (RLV) from challenging initial conditions after being released from a helicopter.

3. In this mission, the winged vehicle named Pushpak was lifted by an Indian Air Force Chinook helicopter and released from an altitude of 4.5 km.

4. Pushpak autonomously approached the runway, performing cross-range corrections. It then landed precisely on the runway, utilizing a brake parachute, landing gear brakes, and a nose wheel steering system to come to a halt.

5. Reusability and Systems: The winged body and all flight systems used in the RLV-LEX-01 mission were reused in the RLV-LEX-02 mission after receiving the necessary certifications and clearances.

6. The mission was accomplished through the collaboration of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), the Liquid Propulsion System Centre (LPSC), and the ISRO Inertial Systems Unit (IISU).

About Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV)

1. The reusable launch vehicle is essentially a space plane with a low lift-to-drag ratio, requiring it to approach at high glide angles and necessitating a landing at high velocities of 350 km/h.

2. The RLV utilizes several indigenous systems, including localized navigation systems based on pseudolite systems, as well as instrumentation and sensor systems developed by ISRO.

Space Variable Objects Monitor (SVOM)

Why in the news?

Recently, a Long March 2-C rocket successfully launched the French-Chinese satellite Space Variable Objects Monitor (SVOM) from southwestern China.

About Space Variable Objects Monitor (SVOM)

1. The Space Variable Objects Monitor (SVOM) is a satellite created by France and China to detect and study gamma-ray bursts (GRBs).

2. It was launched using a Long March-2C rocket from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan Province, China.

3. The satellite weighs 930 kilograms and carries four instruments, two from France and two from China.

4. It orbits over 600 kilometers above Earth and is designed to last five years, though scientists believe it could work for up to 20 years.

5. SVOM can help solve many mysteries about GRBs, including detecting the most distant ones in the universe, which are the oldest GRBs.

6. The data collected will help test the laws of physics in extreme conditions that cannot be recreated on Earth and provide new insights into how the universe works.

About Gamma-Ray Bursts (GRBs)

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1. GRBs are powerful bursts of energy that usually happen when massive stars explode or when compact stars merge. These stars are often more than 20 times the size of the sun.
2. These bursts are extremely bright and can release more energy than a billion billion suns.
3. Observing GRBs is like looking back in time because the light from these events takes a long time to reach Earth.
4. As GRBs travel through space, they carry information about the gas clouds and galaxies they pass, which helps scientists learn more about the history and evolution of the universe.
5. GRBs are difficult to detect because they can appear anywhere in the sky and last only a few seconds. Earth's atmosphere absorbs them, so they must be observed from space.

UPSC Syllabus: World Geography

International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO)

Why in the news?

The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) celebrates World Hydrography Day on 21 June every year to raise awareness about hydrography.

About the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO)

Aspects	Description
About	The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) is a group of countries working together to make sure all the world's seas, oceans, and navigable waters are mapped and charted accurately.
History	The IHO was established in 1921. It coordinates the work of national hydrographic offices to ensure nautical charts and documents are uniform.
Purpose	The IHO sets best practices for surveys, provides guidelines for using hydrographic data, and helps develop hydrographic skills in member countries.
Membership	The IHO has 100 member countries. India is member of the organisation.
Headquarter	Its headquarters are in Monaco.
India's Role	1. India has been a member of the IHO since 1955. 2. The Indian Naval Hydrographic Department (INHD), formerly known as the Marine Survey of India, was established in 1874 in Kolkata. 3. INHD is responsible for hydrographic surveys in India and operates a fleet of modern survey ships built in India.

About World Hydrography Day

1. It is celebrated every year on June 21.
2. The theme for 2024 is "Hydrographic Information – Enhancing Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability in Marine Activities."

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About Indian Naval Hydrographic Department (INHD)

1. The Indian Naval Hydrographic Department (INHD) functions under the Chief Hydrographer to the Government of India.
2. The Department, being the nodal agency for Hydrographic surveys and Nautical charting in India, has a very well established organizational setup.
3. The INHD has seven indigenously built modern survey ships, including one Catamaran Hull Survey Vessel (CHSV) fitted with state-of-the-art surveying equipment.
4. It also has a well-established 'National Institute of Hydrography,' which serves as a center for training in hydrography, accredited by the International Hydrographic Organization for both national and international trainees.

Namaqualand

Why in the news?

Scientists recently discovered that termite mounds along the Buffels River in Namaqualand are the world's oldest inhabited, dating back 34,000 years.

About Namaqualand

1. Namaqualand is a desert area in southwestern Africa.
2. It extends from the Karas region in Namibia in the north to the Northern Cape province in South Africa in the south.
3. From west to east, it stretches from the Namib Desert to the Kalahari Desert.
4. In Namibia, the part of Namaqualand north of the Orange River is known as Great Namaqualand.

Aspects	Description
About	The WCC is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation affiliated with UNESCO. It was established in 1964.
Mission	Its mission is to promote the preservation, protection, and development of traditional crafts.
Aim	The WCC also aims to foster economic development through crafts.
World Craft City Recognition	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. World Craft City Recognition is given by WCC.2. This esteemed designation is given to cities excelling in the promotion and development of traditional crafts and artisanship.3. It acknowledges the city's commitment to preserving its unique craft heritage and supporting local artisans.
Significance of World	1. International Prestige: It elevates the city's status globally as a center of

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Craft City Recognition	<p>excellence for crafts.</p> <p>2. Economic Benefits: It boosts the local economy by attracting tourists, investors, and buyers interested in authentic crafts. It also increases market opportunities for artisans.</p> <p>3. Cultural Preservation: It highlights the city's dedication to preserving traditional crafts. It ensures these cultural practices are passed down to future generations.</p> <p>4. Support for Artisans: It leads to increased support for local artisans, including funding, training, and opportunities for international collaboration and exchange.</p> <p>5. Promotion of Innovation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) It encourages blending traditional techniques with modern designs.ii) Fosters creativity and sustainability within the craft sector.iii) It increases the city's and its crafts' visibility through international media coverage, exhibitions, and events associated with the WCC.
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5. In South Africa, the area south of the Orange River is called Little Namaqualand.
6. Namaqualand is very dry, and for most of the year, you will mainly see succulents. These are special plants that store water and can survive long periods without rain.
7. During winter, when it rains, the desert can bloom with wildflowers for a few weeks in spring.
8. Historically, the Nama people lived in Namaqualand before the Germans took over the region in the 19th century. The area has large copper deposits, which the Nama mined for hundreds of years.
9. In the early 1900s, diamonds were discovered in parts of Namaqualand, such as Sperrgebiet in Namibia and the Richtersveld in South Africa.

World Craft Council (WCC)

Why in the news?

Srinagar has been recognized as a 'World Craft City' by the World Craft Council (WCC). Jaipur, Malappuram, and Mysore are the other Indian cities previously recognized as World Craft Cities.

About World Craft Council (WCC)

Criteria for Recognition as a World Craft City

1. The city must have a significant population of skilled artisans.
2. Demonstrates active promotion and development of craft traditions.
3. Shows commitment to preserving cultural heritage and supporting sustainable practices.
4. Evidence of innovation and creativity in craft practices.
5. Strong community involvement and support for the craft sector.

UPSC Syllabus: International organisation

UPSC Syllabus: Art and culture

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Dodol

Why in the news?

Last week, the Goa government applied for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the Goan sweet Dodol. The All-Goa Baker's and Confectioners Association applied with the Department of Science, Technology, and Waste Management of the Government of Goa facilitating the process.

About Dodol

Aspects	Description
About	Dodol is a traditional Goan sweet treat which is dark brown and made from rice flour, coconut milk, and black palm jaggery. It has a firm, jelly-like texture.
Special method of preparation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It is made through special procedure where rice flour, coconut milk, and black palm jaggery is mixed and mixture is cooked in a copper pot, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon to prevent burning.2. The cooked mixture is poured into a ghee-greased dish. Then flattened with banana leaves. When it cooled down it is cutted into thin slices.
Cultural significance	Traditionally made by Christian families during Christmas for 'consoada,' a tradition of sending sweets to relatives and neighbors. It is a common belief that a Catholic woman should take back Dodol and bananas as a gift when she returns to her husband's house after the birth of her first child. Traditionally prepared in a large pot called 'kail,' which is part of the dowry. If borrowed, it must be returned filled with Dodol as a gesture of gratitude.
Historical Origins	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Some believe Dodol was served at royal banquets in the Medang Kingdom of Indonesia between the 8th and 11th centuries.2. Another version likely came from early 20th century Indonesia during Dutch colonial rule.3. Dodol is thought to have been introduced to Goa during Portuguese rule in the 17th century.
Popularity	Dodol and its variations are also enjoyed in southern India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and parts of Southeast Asia

UPSC Syllabus: Environment

Indian Painted Frog

Why in the News

A rare Indian Painted Frog was recently sighted at Telangana's Kawal Tiger Reserve. This marks a significant find outside its usual habitats.

About Indian Painted Frog

Apects	Description
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Scientific name	Uperodon taprobanicus
Family	Microhylidae
Distribution	1. It is found in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, southern and eastern India, and Nepal up to an altitude of about 1300 metres. 2. In India, found in West Bengal, Odisha, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh. Most common in the southern areas of the Western and Eastern Ghats.
Features	1. Adult length up to 75 millimetres (7.5 cm) from snout to vent, with females being slightly larger. 2. Notable for its striking appearance: smooth, rounded body with distinctive colouration, often including shades of brown with patches of brighter colours like orange or yellow.
Conservation Status	IUCN Red List: Least Concern

About Kawal Tiger Reserve

Aspects	Description
Location	1. It is located at Northeastern part of Telangana (Old Adilabad district). 2. It is Bordered by the Godavari River on one side and the Maharashtra border on the other 3. It is Part of the Deccan peninsula-central highlands.
River flowing through it	Catchment for the rivers Godavari and Kadam, flowing towards the south of the sanctuary.
Neighboring protected areas	It has connectivity to Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra) in the north and Indravati Tiger Reserve (Chhattisgarh) towards the north-eastern side.
Vegetation	Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest
Flora	1. Extensive teak and bamboo presence. 2. 673 plant species recorded, including Anogeissus latifolia, Mitragyna parviflora, Terminalia crenulata, Terminalia arjuna, Boswellia serrata, etc.
Fauna	Major wild animals: nilgai, chousinga, chinkara, black buck, sambar, spotted deer, wild dog, wolf, jackal, fox, tiger, leopard, and jungle cat.

Rhisotope project

Why in the news?

Recently, South African scientists injected radioactive material into live rhino horns under a new project to help stop poaching.

About 'Rhisotope' project

1. 'Rhisotope' project has been started by South Africa to protect rhinos.

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2. Objective: To protect rhinos by making their horns detectable at international borders and rendering them useless for human consumption.
3. Twenty live rhinos are part of the pilot project. South Africa has the largest population of rhinos but also faces high poaching rates due to demand in Asia for traditional medicine.
4. A small hole is drilled in the horn. Radioisotope is inserted into the horn. 11,000 microdots are sprayed over the horn. Two tiny radioactive chips are placed in the horn, making it detectable at border posts.
5. The radioactive material makes the horn useless and essentially poisonous for human consumption.
6. Dehorning and poisoning the horns have failed to stop poachers. Radioactive Material lasts five years on the horn. This method is more cost-effective than dehorning every 18 months.
7. The final phase involves proper scientific and ethical aftercare for the rhinos. Follow-up blood samples will be taken to ensure the rhinos are protected.
8. **Challenges:** Despite government efforts, poaching remains a significant issue. Continued monitoring and adaptation of the project are necessary to ensure long-term success.

India's Largest Leopard Safari

Why in the news?

Recently, India's largest leopard safari was inaugurated at the Bannerghatta Biological Park.

About India's Largest Leopard Safari

1. South India's first and the country's largest leopard safari was inaugurated at Bannerghatta Biological Park by Karnataka.
2. Following Central Zoo Authority guidelines, a 20-hectare area has been fenced for the safari, and eight leopards have been released into this open forest area.
3. Bannerghatta is known for its healthy population of free-ranging leopards, making this safari an important addition.
4. The safari costing ₹4.5 crore, features undulating terrain with natural rocky outcrops and semi-deciduous forest. The area is secured with a vertical chain-link mesh with MS sheets.
5. The park often receives rescued leopard cubs due to increasing human-animal conflicts. These cubs will be raised and eventually moved to the leopard safari, allowing visitors to learn about the animals, understand the reasons for human-animal conflicts, and discover ways to protect them.
6. A four-acre section within the safari area has been set apart with a solar fence to help the leopards adjust to their new environment.
7. Several new facilities, including a renovated elephant weaning center, a baby care room at the butterfly park, a children's play area, an entrance arch, electric buggies, and zoo installations were also inaugurated.
8. Skywalks are also being developed to connect the zoo and the butterfly park.

About Bannerghatta Biological Park

1. In 2004, BBBP was carved out of the Bannerghatta National Park (BNP) and placed under the Zoo Authority of Karnataka (ZAK). BNP was declared a national park in 1974.

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2. BBBP consists of four divisions: the zoo, the safari, the butterfly park, and the rescue center.
3. The park also encompasses the valley of the Champakadhama hills.

Carbon tax in Denmark

Why in the news?

Denmark will impose a tax on livestock farmers for the greenhouse gases emitted by their cows, sheep, and pigs.

About Carbon tax in Denmark

1. Denmark is planning to implement a carbon tax from 2030. Farmers in Denmark will have to pay a tax for the greenhouse gases their cows, sheep, and pigs emit.
2. This is a first-of-its-kind initiative aimed at cutting methane emissions which is a powerful greenhouse gas that traps much more heat than carbon dioxide.
3. Denmark wants to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 70% from 1990 levels by 2030. Farmers will be taxed 300 kroner (\$43) per ton of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2030.
4. This tax will rise to 750 kroner (\$108) by 2035. However, farmers will get an income tax deduction, so the real cost will start at 120 kroner (\$17.3) per ton in 2030, increasing to 300 kroner by 2035.
5. Methane levels have been rising quickly since 2020, with livestock responsible for about 32% of human-caused methane emissions.
6. Denmark aims to become climate neutral by 2045 and hopes other countries will follow its example.

Mainland Serow Mammal

Why in News?

The mainland serow has been recorded at the lowest elevation in western Assam.

About Mainland Serow

About	Details
Mainland Serow	A mammal that looks like a cross between a goat and an antelope. The mainland serow inhabits areas at altitudes of 200 metres to 3,000 metres
Habitat	Species of serow native to the Himalayas, Southeast Asia and China. Bhutan is the natural home and habitat of mainland serow.
Characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The mainland serow, both male and female, is around three feet high at the shoulder, and typically weighs around 200 lb.b. The mainland serow possesses guard hairs on its coat that are bristly or coarse. These also cover the layer of fur closest to its skin.c. The horns are only characteristic of the males and are light-colored. These are approximately six inches in length, and curve slightly towards the animal's

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	back.
Behaviour	The mainland serow is territorial and lives alone or in small groups. Females give birth to a single young after a gestation period of about eight months
Conservation Status	IUCN Status- Vulnerable CITES- Appendix I
Prominent Habitat in India	Its habitat is across the border in the Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary and the Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan.