Factly Weekly

Compilation

2026



For UPSC CSE Prelims Exam

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Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)

News: Maruti Suzuki India received a favourable ITAT order in tax matters covering eight financial years, with an estimated tax impact of ₹13,000 crore, including interest.

About Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)



Source – ITAT

- The **Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)** is a **quasi-judicial institution** that **hears appeals under direct tax laws.**
- **Establishment:** It was established in **January 1941 under Section 5A of the Income Tax Act, 1922.**
    - It is known as **the 'Mother Tribunal'** because it is the **oldest tribunal in the country.**
- **Nodal Ministry:** It functions under the **Ministry of Law and Justice.**
- **Initial Benches:** Initially, it had **three Benches in Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai.**
- **Present Structure:** ITAT currently has **63 Benches across 27 cities, covering almost all cities with a High Court.**
- **Composition:**
    - **President:** The **President constitutes Benches** from **among ITAT members.**
    - **Regular Benches:** Each Bench has **one judicial member and one accountant member.**
    - **Special Benches:** A Special Bench with **three or more members may be formed to decide tax appeals.**
- **Functions:**
    - **Hearing Appeals:** It hears **appeals against orders passed by income-tax authorities.**
    - **Dispute Resolution:** It **provides a platform** for **taxpayers and income-tax authorities** to resolve tax disputes.
    - **Final Fact-Finding Body:** It **examines facts related to tax disputes.**
- **Power:** An **appeal against an ITAT order can** be filed **before the High Court only when a substantial question of law arises for determination.**

GSAT-7C Satellite

News: The Ministry of Defence signed a ₹2,563-crore contract with NewSpace India Limited for the acquisition of GSAT-7C on October 15, 2026.

About GSAT-7C Satellite



Source – ZEE News

- **GSAT-7C (Geosynchronous Satellite 7C)** is a **planned Indian military communication satellite** designed to **strengthen the Indian Air Force's secure communication network.**
- **Developed by:** The satellite is **indigenously designed, developed and manufactured** by **Space India Limited (NSIL), Bengaluru**, the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organisation **(ISRO).**
- **Aim:** The satellite aims to provide **secure, resilient and seamless communication** among **Indian Air Force assets and support communication beyond the line of sight.**
- **Expected Timeline:** The satellite is **expected to become operational by 2030.**
- **Key Features:**
    - **Dedicated Communication Network:** Unlike GSAT-7A, which also supports the Indian Army, **GSAT-7C will serve the Indian Air Force exclusively.**
    - **Beyond-Line-of-Sight Communication:** It will **help aircraft and ground stations communicate over long distances** when conventional radio links are unavailable or unreliable.
    - **Software-Defined Radios (SDRs):** The **satellite will support secure communication through SDRs,** whose functions can be modified using software.
    - **Indigenous Development:** The satellite is **indigenously designed, developed and manufactured**, supporting the government's **Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiatives.**

Varunastra Heavy Weight Torpedoes

News: The Ministry of Defence signed a contract worth ₹1,543 crore with Bharat Dynamics Limited for additional Varunastra Heavy Weight Torpedoes.

About Varunastra



Source – TNIE

- **Varunastra** is an indigenously developed **heavy-weight torpedo** launched **from ships to target enemy submarines.**
- It is **powered by electricity.**
- **Developed by:** It was developed by the **Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL)**, Visakhapatnam, which works under the Defence Research and Development Organisation **(DRDO).**
- **Objective:** It aims to strengthen the **Indian Navy's anti-submarine warfare capability** by engaging enemy submarines at long ranges.
- **Key Features:**
    - **Operational Capability:** It can target quiet submarines in **deep and shallow waters, even in an environment with intense countermeasures.**
    - **Speed and Range:** It can achieve **speeds exceeding 40 knots and has a range of 40 km.**
    - **Operating Depth and Warhead:** It can operate at **depths of up to 600 metres and carry a 250 kg high-explosive warhead.**
    - **Guidance System:** It uses **active-passive acoustic homing, wire guidance, and GPS/NavIC satellite guidance to locate and engage targets.**
    - **Maneuverability:** Its advanced maneuvering capabilities help it **engage enemy submarines over long distances.**

CT Scanners

News: The Technology Development Board has signed an agreement with Panacea Medical Technologies to develop and commercialise an indigenous 32-slice CT scanner.

About CT Scanners



Source – Echelon Health

- A **Computed Tomography (CT) Scanner** uses **X-rays and computer processing** to produce detailed **cross-sectional images of internal body structures.**
- **Working Mechanism**
  - The scanner **takes X-ray pictures from multiple angles** as it rotates around the patient.
  - **Different body tissues absorb X-rays at different rates**, helping distinguish bones, soft tissues and air.
  - A **computer processes the collected data** to create cross-sectional images and **three-dimensional views of internal structures.**
  - Doctors may use contrast material to make specific tissues, organs or blood vessels easier to see.
- **Applications**
  - **Disease Diagnosis:** CT scans help **identify tumours, lung diseases, strokes and other internal disorders.**
  - **Emergency Care:** They help detect **internal bleeding, fractures and organ damage.**
- **Safety Concerns:** CT scans involve **exposure to ionising radiation,** while contrast materials **may cause side effects** in some patients.

About Indigenous 32-Slice CT Scanner

- A **32-slice CT scanner** is a type of CT scanner **designed to capture 32 image slices in a single rotation, enabling detailed imaging of internal body structures.**
- **Aim:** The project aims to **strengthen India's domestic manufacturing capabilities in advanced medical devices and reduce dependence on imported technologies.**

Sukhna Wetland (Chandigarh)

News: Recently, India has added Sukhna Wetland (Chandigarh) and Sauj Jheel to the List of Wetlands of International Importance.

About Sukhna Wetland (Chandigarh)



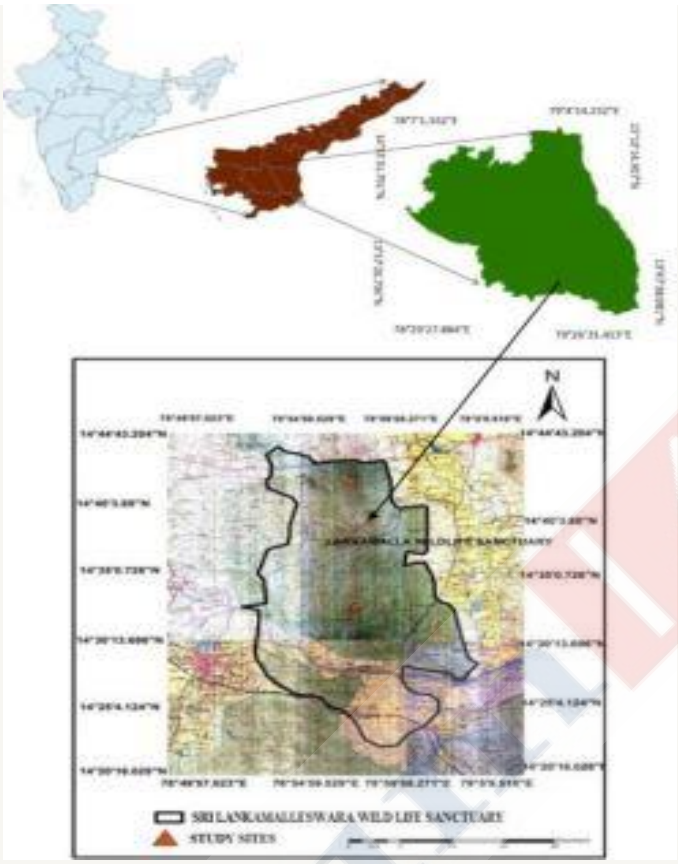
Source – ResearchGate

- **Sukhna Wetland** is located at the **edge of the city of Chandigarh and at the base of the Outer Himalayas.**
- It is a **peri-urban reservoir** that plays an important role in regulating sediment and water flows from the surrounding catchment.
- **Ecosystem:** It experiences **seasonal fluctuations in water levels and supports a range of habitats**, from **open water to littoral vegetation, scrub and forest, providing habitat for diverse species.**
- **Notable species:** It include the **vulnerable common pochard (*Aythya ferina*) and the endangered Pallas's fish eagle (*Haliaeetus leucoryphus*).**
    - **Reptile:** The shallow littoral habitats also **support reptiles such as the endangered black pond turtle (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*).**
    - It is **particularly important for resident waterbirds and others migrating along the Central Asian Flyway**, providing **feeding, breeding, roosting and wintering habitats.**
- It serves as an **important recreational and educational resource for Chandigarh's** residents, offering a natural refuge close to the urban landscape.

Lankamala Wildlife Sanctuary

News: Camera traps used during the tiger census in Lankamala Wildlife Sanctuary have recorded diverse wildlife, including bears, leopards, wild boars and peafowl, highlighting the need for habitat conservation.

About Lankamala Wildlife Sanctuary



Source – ResearchGate

- **Location:** It is a wildlife sanctuary located in **Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh, India**.
- It is **officially** known as the **Sri Lankamalleswara Wildlife Sanctuary.**
- **Rivers**: The sanctuary serves as the catchment area for the **Pennar River**.
    - The **Telugu Ganga Canal** flows into the eastern flank of the sanctuary, eventually **draining into the Pennar River**.
- **Vegetation**: It consists of **Southern tropical dry deciduous forest** in the hills, scrub forest in the plains, Southern dry mixed deciduous forest, **Tropical thorn forests** and Tropical dry evergreen forest.
- **Flora:** The area is home to rare and endangered plant species such as **Red Sanders and Sandalwood**. The riparian vegetation is highly rich in floristic diversity, featuring **Terminalia species, Syzygium species (Jamun),** Wild Mangoes, Anogeissus latifolia, Phoenix species, Bamboo, Hardwickia binata, and more.
- **Fauna:** It has good representation of species like **Common toad, Bullfrog, Common Indian skink**, Green vine snake etc. Endangered mammals like Panther, Jackal, Chinkara, Chowsingha, Sloth bear, etc; make this Sanctuary their home. It is the only home and hope for the rare and endangered bird the **Jerdons courser**.

Atacama Desert

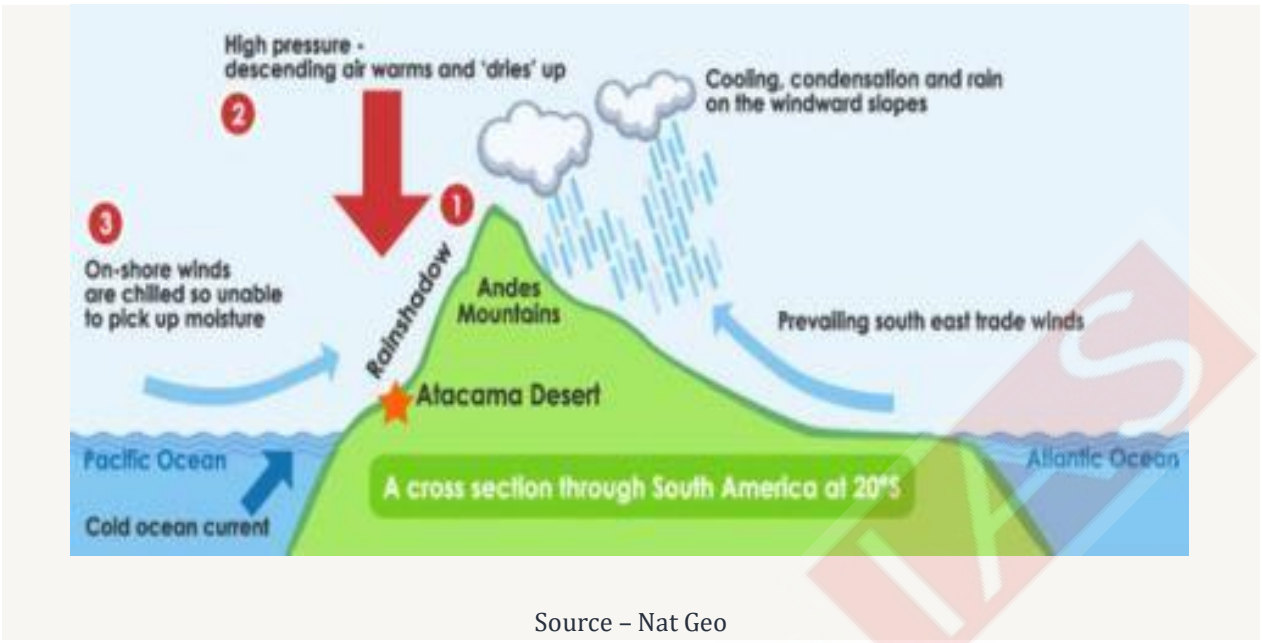
News: Indian researchers have identified geological sites in Tamil Nadu and Chile's Atacama Desert that share mineralogical and environmental characteristics with Mars.

About Atacama Desert



Source – Britannica

- **Location:** The **Atacama Desert** is located in **northern Chile**, near the **borders of Peru, Bolivia and Argentina** in **South America**.
- It **stretches** along the **Pacific coast** for about **1,000 km,** flanked by the towering **Andes Mountains** to the **east** and the **Chilean Pacific Ocean coast** range to the **west**.
- It is the **driest non-polar desert** in the world and the **largest fog desert** on Earth.
    - A **fog desert** is a type of desert where **fog drip supplies the majority of moisture** needed by animal and plant life.
- **Climate:** The Atacama has a **cold desert climate** (in the Köppen climate classification, **BWk**) with generally **mild temperatures year-round** and **only slight temperature differences** across seasons.
    - The **average rainfall** is about **15 mm per year**, although some locations receive **only 1 to 3 mm** in a year.
- **Three different reasons** contribute to the **Atacama Desert being the driest place on earth. These are-**



Source – Nat Geo

- The **desert** sits on the **wrong side of the Andes** with regards to prevailing winds.
    - The **prevailing south-east trade winds** carrying **moist air** are **forced to rise**. The **moisture condenses**, and falls on the **opposite side** of the Andes to the Atacama. This is commonly known as a **rain shadow**.
- The **second reason** is **high air pressure**. Essentially, **descending air warms up**, meaning that any moisture within turns to water vapour (gas, not liquid) as opposed to rain.
- Finally, the last reason is the **cold Humboldt Current** from the Pacific Ocean. Any **onshore winds are chilled** so they are **unable to pick up moisture** from the ocean.

Terrain: The wider Atacama region includes **closed drainage basins, salt flats, volcanic landscapes** and **high-altitude lagoons** along the Andes.

Biological diversity: The species diversity of the Atacama Desert is **highly restricted.**

Resources: The Desert contains the **world's largest supply of sodium nitrate.**

- It is also rich in **metallic mineral resources** such as **copper, gold, silver and iron**, as well as **non-metallic minerals** including important deposits of **boron, lithium, sodium nitrate, and potassium salts.**

The Atacama is a globally **important centre for astronomy** because it combines **very dry air, high elevation, clear skies and low atmospheric water vapour** at suitable sites.

- A major facility is the **Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA)**.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

News: India has called on member states of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) to unite against all forms of terrorism.

About Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)



Source – CICA

- Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (**CICA**) is a **multinational forum** for **strengthening cooperation** towards **promoting peace, security and stability in Asia**.
- **Founded by:** The idea of convening CICA was **first proposed** by the **First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan** – H.E. Mr. **Nursultan** Nazarbayev, on **5 October 1992.**
- **First Summit and Meeting:** The **Almaty Act**, serving as the **charter** of CICA, was adopted at the First CICA Summit in **Almaty, Kazakhstan in 2022.**
- **Secretariat: Almaty** (Kazakhstan)
- **Administration:** The **highest decision making** organ of CICA is the **Council of the CICA Heads of State or Government (Summit).**
    - All **decisions** within CICA framework are taken by **consensus**.
- **Summits and Meetings:** The **CICA Summit** is convened **every four years** in order to conduct consultations, review the progress of, and set priorities for CICA activities.
    - The **Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs** is required to be **held once every two years.**
- **Members:** To be a member of CICA, a **state must have at least a part of its territory in Asia.**
    - CICA currently has **twenty-eight Member States** accounting for nearly **ninety percent of the territory and population of Asia**.

- **Ten countries** and **five multi-national organizations**, including the **United Nations**, have **observer status**.

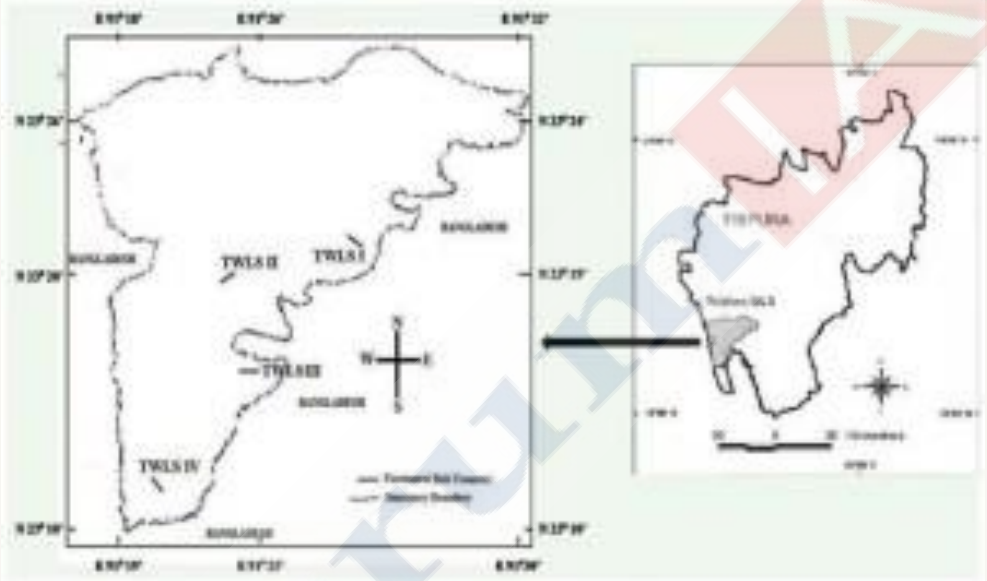
- **Participation of India: India** is one of the **founding members of CICA.**

Note: The **Seventh Summit (2026)** of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) will be **held in Baku** under the **Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan.**

Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary

News: A rare sighting of Phayre's Leaf Monkeys has been captured on camera at Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary in South Tripura.

About Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary



Source: Research Gate

- The **Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary** is located in **Tripura.**
  - It is **bounded by the international border with Bangladesh** on both its **eastern and western sides**.
- **Established in:** It was established in **1988.**
- **Area:** It has an area of **194.708 sq. km.**
- **Vegetation:** It is dominate by **Tropical Semi evergreen Forest, Moist Mixed Deciduous Forest, and Savanah woodland.**
  - It has a **number of perennial water rivulets, water bodies, and grass land.**
- **Flora:** Trees such as **Sal, Gurjan, Asan, Toon, Safed Siris, bamboo, sedges, tall grasses, and shrubs such as Phalsa, Siam weed and Lantana.**
  - It is home to several important **medicinal plants, including Kurchi, Tulsi (Holy Basil), Vasaka, Sarpagandha, Rudraksha and Bael.**
- **Fauna:** Animals such as **Indian Gaur (Bison), Deers, Hollock Gibbon, Golden Langur, Capped Langur, Pheasant and many other reptiles and birds** are found in the sanctuary.
  - **Phayre's Leaf Monkeys** has recently been captured on camera at the Sanctuary.

Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026

News: Soldiers of the Indian Army's Assam Regiment have won a gold medal at Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026.

About Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026

- The **Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026** is the **premier patrolling event of the British Army**.
  - It is widely known as the **"Olympics of Military Patrolling.**
- It is a **mission focused and scenario-based exercise**.
- **Aim:** It aim **to assess operational effectiveness, physical endurance and tactical skills** under realistic battlefield conditions.
- **Frequency:** It is conducted **annually.**
- **First edition:** It began in **1959 as a field-training exercise** devised by **Welsh Territorial Army soldiers** to test basic soldiering skills, including endurance, leadership, navigation, teamwork and marksmanship.
  - It has been **running for over 60 years** and is the **British Army's principal All Arms Patrol Exercise.**
- It is the **British Army's principal All Arms Patrol Exercise** and is **open to all three Services (Regular and Reserve)** and **international participants** are encouraged to take part.
- **Assessment Criteria:** It is **not a competition,** although patrol performance is assessed throughout based on **Battlecraft Syllabus (BCS)** and **Individual Training Requirement (ITR).**
- **Team Composition:** Each patrol typically consists of **eight** personnel who cover around **60 km** while carrying loads of up to **32 kg per person.**
- **Activities:**
  - Teams undertake **reconnaissance, navigation, casualty evacuation, tactical decision-making and combat drills.**
  - The exercise includes o**bstacle and minefield crossings, intelligence gathering, communication procedures, artillery targeting and responses** to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats.
  - **Modern Warfare Scenarios:** Recent editions have incorporated scenarios i**nvolving drones, persistent surveillance and other emerging threats,** while continuing to emphasize navigation, intelligence gathering and mission execution under pressure.
- **Prizes: Patrols are evaluated against established military training standards, with gold, silver and bronze medals awarded** according to their level of achievement.
  - Teams that complete the exercise but fall below the medal thresholds receive a completion award.

About Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026

- The Exercise was conducted from **2nd to 12th October 2026.**
- **Location:** It is held in **Wales, United Kingdom.**
- **Hosted by:** It is hosted by **Headquarters 160th (Welsh) Brigade.**
- **Hosting nation: Wales, United Kingdom (British Army)**
- **Phases and duration:** The Exercise is currently **made up of eight phases, each of 48 hours, over 10 days.**
  - Teams operate for **approximately 48 hours in difficult mountainous terrain** while completing various military tasks under strict time limits.
- **Indian Army Participation and achievement:**

- The Indian team competed against more than 100 teams from across the world and was **among the 10 teams awarded gold medals** in one of the **most demanding military patrolling exercises anywhere.**
- Soldiers of the **Indian Army's Assam Regiment** have won a **gold medal at Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2026,**

Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) Mission

News: Japan is set to launch the Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) mission to study Mars's moons and bring back samples from Phobos.

About Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) Mission



Source – Space

- **MMX** is a **Japanese space mission** to study the **moons of Mars i.e. Phobos and Deimos and return a sample from Phobos to Earth.**
- **Led by:** Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency **(JAXA)**
- **Partnership:** The mission involves **NASA, the French space agency (CNES), the German Aerospace Center (DLR), and the European Space Agency (ESA).**
- **Launched From:** It is scheduled to **launch aboard Japan's H-3 rocket.**
- **Aim:** The mission aims to **study the formation and composition of Mars's moons and explore their history.**
- **Timeline:** The spacecraft is planned for **launch on 19 October 2026.**
  - It will **reach the Mars region after about one year**, **study Phobos for three years** and **return to Earth in 2031.**
- **Key Features:**
  - **Sample Collection:** The mission aims to collect **at least 10 grams of soil from Phobos using two sampling methods.**
  - **Scientific Instruments:** The spacecraft **will carry 13 instruments, including a rover** jointly developed by France and Germany.

- **NASA's Technological Support:** The **MEGANE (Mars-moon Exploration with GAmma rays and NEutrons) instrument** will help identify the elements present on Phobos.
  - NASA is also providing a **pneumatic sampler that uses high-pressure nitrogen gas to collect surface particles.**
- **Three Modules:** The spacecraft consists of **propulsion, exploration and return modules.**
- **Deimos Observation:** The mission will **also fly by Deimos and collect observations.**
- **Future Exploration:** The mission will **develop technologies for round-trip missions to Mars** and support future human exploration.

India's Nutrient-Rich Purple Potato

News: The development of nutrient-rich purple potato varieties in India highlights efforts to improve nutritional quality and address hidden hunger.

About India's Nutrient-Rich Purple Potato



Source – PIB

- The **Indian Council of Agricultural Research–Central Potato Research Institute (ICAR-CPRI)** has developed **three coloured potato varieties** through biofortification.
  - **Kufri Neelkanth (2018)**

- **Kufri Manik (2021)**
- **Kufri Jamunia (2024)**

- **Aim:** This type of biofortification aims **to improve the nutrient content of crops through plant breeding and strengthen long-term nutritional security.**
- **Different varieties developed are:**
  - **Kufri Jamunia (2024):**
    - **Appearance:** It has **dark-purple skin and flesh, oblong tubers, shallow eyes and a mealy texture.**
    - **Nutritional Value:** It contains higher levels of **ascorbic acid, anthocyanin and carotenoids than Kufri Manik and Kufri Neelkanth.**
    - **Mineral Content:** Its **flesh** contains **22.77 ppm zinc** and **32.23 ppm iron.**
    - **Yield and Storage:** It produces **32–35 tonnes per hectare** under recommended cultivation practices.
      - It also has **good storage quality, with low rottage and minimal weight loss.**
    - **Cultivation Suitability:** It has shown stable performance in **multi-location trials and is recommended for cultivation in the North Indian plains.**
    - **Uses:** It can be used to **prepare curries, parathas, halwa and dosa.**
      - It is also suitable for making **processed food products.**
  - **Kufri Neelkanth (2018):**
    - It was the **first purple-skinned specialty potato variety.**
    - **Nutritional Value:** It has a **high antioxidant content.**
    - **Cultivation:** It is suitable for **Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.**
    - **Suitability:** It is **suitable for people of all age groups.**
  - **Kufri Manik (2021):**
    - **Appearance:** It produces **round, deep-red tubers with yellow flesh and medium-sized eyes.**
    - **Nutritional Value:** It contains **high levels of anthocyanin, zinc and iron.**

Melanterite and Gypsum

News: Researchers identified two hydrous sulphate minerals, melanterite and gypsum, at sites in Tamil Nadu and Chile that resemble Martian environments.

About Melanterite



Source: Wikimedia Common

- **Melanterite** is a **hydrated iron sulphate.**
- It is **formed** through the **oxidative weathering and decomposition of primary iron sulfide minerals,** most commonly **pyrite (FeS_2)** or its unstable **polymorph marcasite**.
- It is often **found in mines as a post-mining formation on mine walls.**
- **Properties:**
    - **Colour:** It is **colorless** to **white or green**, also **greenish-blue to blue** with **increased copper content** and **colourless to pale green in transmitted light.**
        - Melanterite has **conchoidal fracture** and displays **cleavage in two directions.**
    - It is **highly soluble in water.**
    - **Formula:** $Fe^{2+}(H_2O)_6(SO_4) \cdot H_2O$
- **Recent findings:** Melanterite has been detected in Neyveli, Tamil Nadu.
    - It forms under **temporary wet, acidic and oxidising conditions** and **provides evidence of short-lived water activity relevant to understanding Mars' geological history**.

About Gypsum



Source: Wikimedia Commons

- **Gypsum** is a **common sulfate mineral.**
- It is **found in large beds along with other evaporite minerals,** especially in Permian and Triassic sedimentary formations.
    - It is also **found in salt pans and saline lakes** and **is a key part of cap rock on salt domes.**
- **Properties:**
    - **Forms:** It appears in **various forms, including selenite (well-developed crystals), satin spar (fibrous, silky, and opalescent), alabaster (fine-grained and massive), and gypsite (earthy and pulverulent).**
    - **Composition: It is composed of hydrated calcium sulfate.**
    - **Colour:** It is **colourless to white,** often tinged other hues due to impurities and **colourless in transmitted light.**
    - **Formulae:** $CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O$
- **Applications:** It is used as a **fluxing agent, fertilizer, filler, and retarder in portland cement**.
    - When **calcined, it becomes plaster of Paris,** used in building materials.
- **Leading Producers:** Its deposits occur in many countries, but **Spain, Thailand, the United States, Turkey, and Russia are among the leading producers.**
- **Recent findings:** Gypsum is **one of the two hydrous sulphate minerals** identified in the **Atacama Desert in Chile and the Tiruchirappalli Badlands, a semi-arid geological and palaeoclimatic region in Tamil Nadu.**

- It **records past water activity and can preserve potential biosignatures within its mineral structure,** making it significant for astrobiological investigations.

Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure (FIST) Programme

News: Researchers used a Raman spectrometer supported by the DST-Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure (FIST) Programme to identify Mars-analogue minerals in Tamil Nadu and Chile.

About Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure (FIST) Programme



Source: Department of Science & Technology (DST)

- The Fund for Improvement of S&T Infrastructure (**FIST) programme** is a flagship research and development programme to **upgrade research and teaching facilities in Indian universities, PG colleges, and scientific institutions.**
- **Aim:** It is intended **to provide basic infrastructure and enabling facilities for promoting R&D activities in new and emerging areas** and **attracting fresh talents in universities & other educational institutions.**
  - It is considered as **complimentary support for enabling Departments/ Centres/ Schools/ Colleges** to pursue research activities more effectively and efficiently.
- **Nodal Department: Department of Science & Technology (DST)** is the nodal ministry.
  - It is also the **funding Agency.**
- **Focus Area:** All Science Disciplines
- **Features:**
  - **Focus of the research:** The **synergy and focus of research** may **preferably be aligned to National Missions/ priorities.**
  - **Duration**: The duration of support for **each FIST Project will be for a period of 5 years.**

- It **provide optimal infrastructure for postgraduate and higher research** through renovation and modernization of existing laboratories, cold rooms, equipment, and research facilities, without undertaking new construction.
- It also **supports upgradation of research support facilities,** including networking and computational resources, software and databases, scientific and technical books (excluding journals), and maintenance and refurbishment of existing and new facilities.
- The facilities provided under the program are **intended to support the efforts of the Department** as a **whole or a number of faculty members in the Department.**
- **Proposal towards individual R&D support** would **not be accepted** under this Scheme.

- **Types of Support under the FIST Programme**
  - **Level A (Academic-PGC): Up to ₹1.5 crore for 5 years** to establish research facilities in eligible active postgraduate colleges.
  - **Level B (Basic R&D Departments): Up to ₹3 crore for 5 years** to strengthen research facilities in eligible postgraduate S&T departments of universities and academic institutions.
  - **Level C (Contemporary R&D Departments): Up to ₹10 crore for 5 years** to support established S&T departments in acquiring advanced equipment and developing laboratories for internationally competitive research.
  - **FIST-SHAKTI: Institutional-level funding** to develop advanced, high-end technological facilities with active users from both the host institution and external organizations.

Seahorse Species

News: Scientists have identified a new seahorse species in Indian waters, resolving a long-standing confusion over the identity of spiny seahorses.

About Seahorse Species



Source – Mongabay

- **Seahorses** are **marine fish.**

- They belong to the **family Syngnathidae,** which also includes **pipefishes and seadragons.**
- They belong to the **genus Hippocampus.**
    - The name **Hippocampus is derived from two Greek words: hippos, meaning 'horse'**, and **kampos, meaning 'sea monster'.**
- **Habitat:** Seahorses inhabit **marine ecosystems, including seagrass beds, mangroves, coral reefs and estuaries.**
- **Key Features of Seahorses**
    - **Body Structure:** Seahorses have a **horse-shaped head, an upright body and a curled tail** that helps them grip marine vegetation.
    - **Body Covering:** They **lack scales and have bony plates** covering their bodies.
    - **Camouflage:** They **can change colour and adjust their body spines** to blend with their surroundings.
    - **Reproduction: Males carry eggs in a pouch** and **give birth to live young, not females.**
    - **Ecological Role:** They **act as predators in seagrass beds, mangroves, coral reefs and estuaries.**
- **Threats: Bottom trawling and accidental capture** in fishing nets threaten seahorses.
    - **Illegal trade** also puts pressure on their populations.
- **Taxonomic Classification:** The study **identified three separate species:**
    - **Hippocampus histrix**
        - **Distribution:** It is **distributed in the Pacific Ocean.**
        - **IUCN Status:** It is classified as **Vulnerable**.
    - **Hippocampus jayakari**
        - **Distribution:** It is found in the **Arabian region.**
        - **Key Feature:** It is a **poorly known species.**
        - Its **distribution boundary with Hippocampus amandavincentae** requires further investigation.
    - **Hippocampus amandavincentae**
        - **Distribution:** It is distributed in the **Indian Ocean,** with evidence of its presence in **Madagascar, Mozambique and the Seychelles.**
        - **Key Features:** It has a **shorter snout, five spines on its crown and stronger spines along its trunk and tail**.
            - Genetic analysis **revealed a 6–7% difference from the Pacific species.**
            - Its **population remains unknown.**

Blackbuck (Antilope cervicapra)

News: A recent report highlighted the blackbuck's dependence on grassland habitats and its importance as an indicator of grassland conservation.

About Blackbuck (Antilope cervicapra)



Source – Mongabay

- The **Blackbuck (Antilope cervicapra)** is a **medium-sized antelope.**
- It is the **sole living member** of its genus **Antilope.**
- **Recognition:** The blackbuck is the state **animal of Punjab, Haryana and Andhra Pradesh.**
- **Habitat:** It mainly lives in **open grasslands, dry scrub areas and thinly forested areas.**
- **Distribution:** It is mainly found in **India and Nepal.**
    - It is **extinct in the wild** in **Pakistan and Bangladesh.**
- **Key Features:**
    - **Physical Appearance: Males** have **dark coats and long, spiralling horns**, while **females** have **lighter coats and usually lack horns.**
    - **Speed and Vision:** It has **excellent eyesight and can run very fast** to escape predators.
    - **Social Behaviour:** It **lives in herds**, usually consisting of 5 to 50 individuals.
    - **Breeding Behaviour:** During the mating season, **males** establish **display territories called leks to attract females.**
    - **Grassland Indicator:** It is a **key indicator of the importance of grasslands** for supporting grassland species.
- **Threats: Habitat loss due to agriculture, infrastructure projects and invasive plants is a major threat.**
    - **Feral dogs** also kill blackbucks.
- **Conservation Status:**
    - **IUCN status : Least Concern.**
    - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I**

Akhand Prahar-II

News: The Indian Army conducted Akhand Prahar-II in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, to strengthen combat readiness and improve coordination among military units.

About Akhand Prahar-II



Source – ETV Bharat

- The **Akhand Prahar-II** is a **military exercise** aimed at **preparing the Indian Army for future combat scenarios.**
- **Conducted By:** The exercise was **jointly conducted by the Army's Black Mace Brigade and Battle Axe Division.**
- **Location:** The exercise was **conducted in Jaisalmer, in the desert region of Rajasthan.**
- **Origin:** The exercise followed the success of **Akhand Prahar-I,** during which the **Army demonstrated its combat readiness through joint military operations.**
- **Key Features**
    - **Combat Procedures and Modern Equipment:** The Army tested various combat procedures **using next-generation military equipment, modern assets, and force-multiplier assets to improve combat effectiveness.**
    - **Multi-Dimensional Operations:** The exercise assessed the **Army's ability to take swift and precise action under changing battlefield conditions.**
    - **Technology Integration:** It focused on **combining modern technology with conventional military capabilities** to improve operational precision and coordination among military units.

Abyei Region

News: South Sudanese officials reported that Sudanese military drone strikes on a market in the disputed Abyei region killed over 150 people, amid escalating cross-border violence.

About Abyei Region



Source: Britannica

- The **Abyei region** is a **disputed territory located along the border between Sudan and South Sudan**.
    - It **borders Sudan's Kordofan region,** which has become a major centre of fighting in the war.
- **Administered by: It is jointly administered by** and Sudan.
- **Strategic significance:** It is significant strategically because **it is an oil-bearing area located along the contested border between Sudan and South Sudan.**
- **Conflict:** South Sudan declared independence from Sudan in 2011. Since then, both countries have staked a claim to oil-rich Abyei.

Agri Welfare Portal

News: Union Agriculture Minister recently launched an upgraded agri welfare portal to provide farmers across the country with direct, easy access to government schemes, financial assistance and reliable agricultural information on their mobile phones.

About Agri Welfare Portal



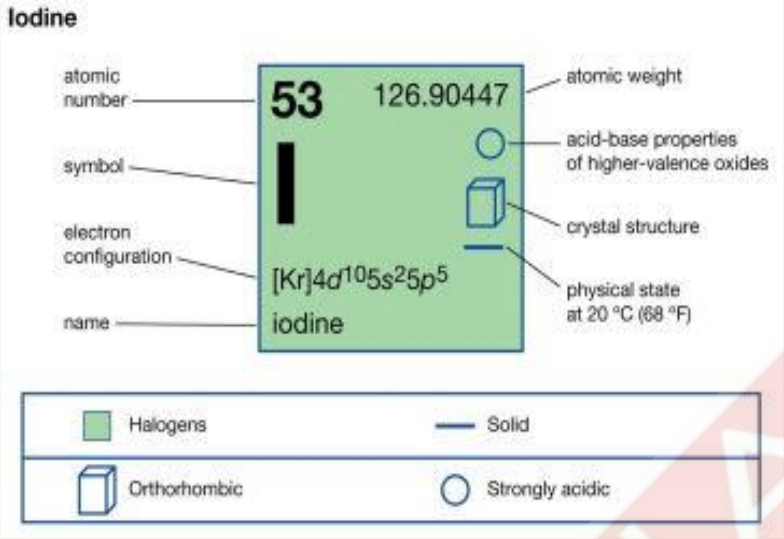
Source – SarkariTel

- The **Agri Welfare Portal** is a platform that will **provide farmers with all information about the government schemes.**
- **Nodal Ministry:** This portal has been launched by **Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.**
- **Aim:** It aims to **provide farmers across the country with direct, easy access to government schemes, financial assistance and reliable agricultural information on their mobile phones,** eliminating procedural hurdles and the role of intermediaries.
- **Features and benefits:**
    - **Single-Window Scheme Access:** It serve as a **single-window gateway to major government initiatives, including PM-KISAN, AgriStack and the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana,** making it easier for farmers to access relevant services and information through a common interface.
    - **All services in one place:** Information on the **Ministry's schemes, subsidies, rules and digital services will be available on a single portal,** reducing the time and effort farmers spend navigating multiple platforms.
    - **Greater transparency and fewer intermediaries: Online eligibility checks, direct application facilities and the transfer of financial assistance through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** will make processes more transparent and reduce the role of intermediaries.
    - **Designed for rural connectivity:** It is **lightweight and user-friendly,** enabling smooth operation on basic smartphones and in areas with weak internet connectivity.
    - **Timely and reliable agricultural information**: Farmers will be **able to access authentic information on weather conditions, scientific farming practices, the availability of seeds and fertilisers, and prevailing market prices for agricultural produce.**
    - **Accessible to persons with disabilities:** It **supports screen readers and simple navigation**, enabling visually impaired users and other persons with disabilities to access its services more easily.
    - It will **bring together Farmer Producer Organisations, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, agricultural scientists, researchers and startups,** creating a **common digital platform for the wider agricultural ecosystem.**
    - A **special training campaign will be conducted through Krishi Vigyan Kendras** across the country to help farmers make effective use of the portal and other digital tools.

Iodine

News: On World Iodine Deficiency Day, the Ministry of Health and FamilyWelfare advised citizens to choose iodised salt and use it in moderation.

About Iodine



Source – ResearchGate

- **Iodine** is an **essential micronutrient** required **for healthy thyroid function, brain development and overall growth.**
- **Properties:** Iodine is a chemical element with the **symbol I** and **atomic number 53.**
  - It belongs to **Group 17 (halogens) and Period 5 of the periodic table.**
  - It is a **lustrous, blue-black solid at room temperature and exists as a diatomicmolecule (I_2).**
  - On **heating,it sublimes directly into violet vapour** without first becoming liquid.
- **Uses:** Iodine **helps produce thyroid hormones**, which regulate **metabolism, growth and development.**
  - It is also used in **antiseptics, medical treatments and industrial processes.**
- **Deficiency:** Iodine deficiency is the most common **cause of preventable intellectual disability worldwide.**
  - It can **cause goitre, hypothyroidism, cretinism, miscarriage, stillbirth and impaired mental development.**
  - Severe **deficiency during pregnancy and earlyinfancy** can cause **irreversible developmental effects.**
- **Sources:** Iodine can be obtained from **iodised salt, seaweed, fish, shrimp and dairy products.**
- **Government Initiatives:**
  - The **Government launched the National Goitre ControlProgramme (NGCP) in1962.**
    - It was renamed the **National Iodine Deficiency DisordersControl Programme (NIDDCP) in 1992** to cover wider disorders across all States and Union Territories.
  - **India made salt iodisation mandatory for** direct human **consumption in 1992.**
  - The **Supreme Court mandated universal iodisation in 2011.**
  - **Jeevan Bindi, aniodine patch,** was introduced to **help one lakh tribal women in north-west Maharashtra.**
- **Global Efforts:** The **WHO and UNICEF have promoted universal salt iodisation since1993.**

SUVIKALP Initiative, PRISM Platform and SKOCHAwards

News: The Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) received the SKOCH Gold Award 2026 for its SUVIKALPInitiative on 26 September 2026.

About SUVIKALP Initiative



Source – PIB

- **SUVIKALP Initiative** is **an in-house Mine Repurposing Tool.**
- **Developed by:** It is developed by the **Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) under the Ministry of Coal.**
- **Aim:** It aims to **support scientific mine closure** and the **sustainable repurposing of post-mining land** through **structured and data-driven decision-making.**
- **Key Features**
    - **Project Selection:** SUVIKALP **evaluates and ranks mine repurposing projects** using technical, environmental, social and economic criteria to support structured, data-driven decision-making.
    - **Implementation:** The users can use the **Post-Mining Repurposing Implementation Strategy Model (PRISM)** which **explore implementation pathways after selecting a suitable project.**
        - **PRISM provides** project concepts, implementation approaches, case studies, sample Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), tender documents and information on agencies working in similar sectors.

- These initiatives **support environmental restoration, livelihood generation, community development and economic diversification**, moving beyond regulatory compliance towards productive use of closed mines.

About SKOCH Awards

- The **SKOCH Awards** were instituted in **2003 by SKOCH Consultancy Services.**
- **Award:** The SKOCH Awards **recognize individuals, projects and institutions** for their **extraordinary contributions to society and their efforts to make India a better nation.**
- **Nature:** The awards are **conferred by an independent organisation**.
- **Focus:** The awards recognize **excellence in governance, technology, innovation, digital, financial and social inclusion, and transformational initiatives that deliver public value.**

Gitchak nakana and Rakthamichthys anchi

News: Researchers have found two new subterranean fish species, Gitchak nakana and Rakthamichthys anchi, from wells in Assam.

About Gitchak nakana and Rakthamichthys anchi

- **Gitchak nakana and Rakthamichthys anchi** are **blind, subterranean fish species found in groundwater environments.**
- **Found in:** Both species **were discovered in wells in Goalpara district, Assam**, in areas **dominated by alluvial deposits.**

About Gitchak nakana



Source – Mongabay

- **Gitchak nakana** is a **blind freshwater fish (loach).**
- **Distribution:** It was discovered in **Goalpara, Assam.**
  - It marks the **first record of a groundwater-dwelling fish in Northeast India.**

- **Similar subterranean fishes** were previously known mainly from the **lateritic lowlands of the Western Ghats.**

- **Family:** It belonging to a **new genus within the family Cobitidae**.
- **Naming:** The name comes from the **Garo language**.
  - **Gitchak refers to its striking red colour,** while **nakana refers to a blind fish.**
- **Key Features:**
  - **Size:** It is a tiny fish measuring about **2 centimetres in length.**
  - **Appearance:** Its **transparent body** allows **its blood and internal organs to give it a blood-red appearance.**
  - **Skull Structure:** It has **no skull roof, leaving an opening covered only by skin.**
- **Threats:** People may **mistake it for a worm or a harmful creature and kill it**.
  - **Pollution, groundwater extraction and possible exploitation** also threaten such species.

About Rakthamichthys anchi



Source – Mongabay

- **Rakthamichthys anchi** is a newly described **phreatobiotic synbranchid eel** belonging to the **family Synbranchidae (swamp eel family).**
- It is the **second species of this genus** recorded **from Northeast India, after Rakthamichthys rongsaw of Meghalaya.**
- **Naming: 'Anchi' and 'Raktham' mean blood in Garo and Malayalam, respectively,** while '**ichthys' means fish in Greek**.
- **Distribution:** It is **endemic to India.**
  - It was **discovered in Goalpara district, Assam.**
- **Habitat:** It inhabits **groundwater aquifers in alluvial deposits**.
- **Key Features:**
  - **Size:** It is measures **approximately 310 mm in length.**
  - **Appearance:** It has a **slender, eel-like body** and **shares characteristics with Gitchak nakana.**

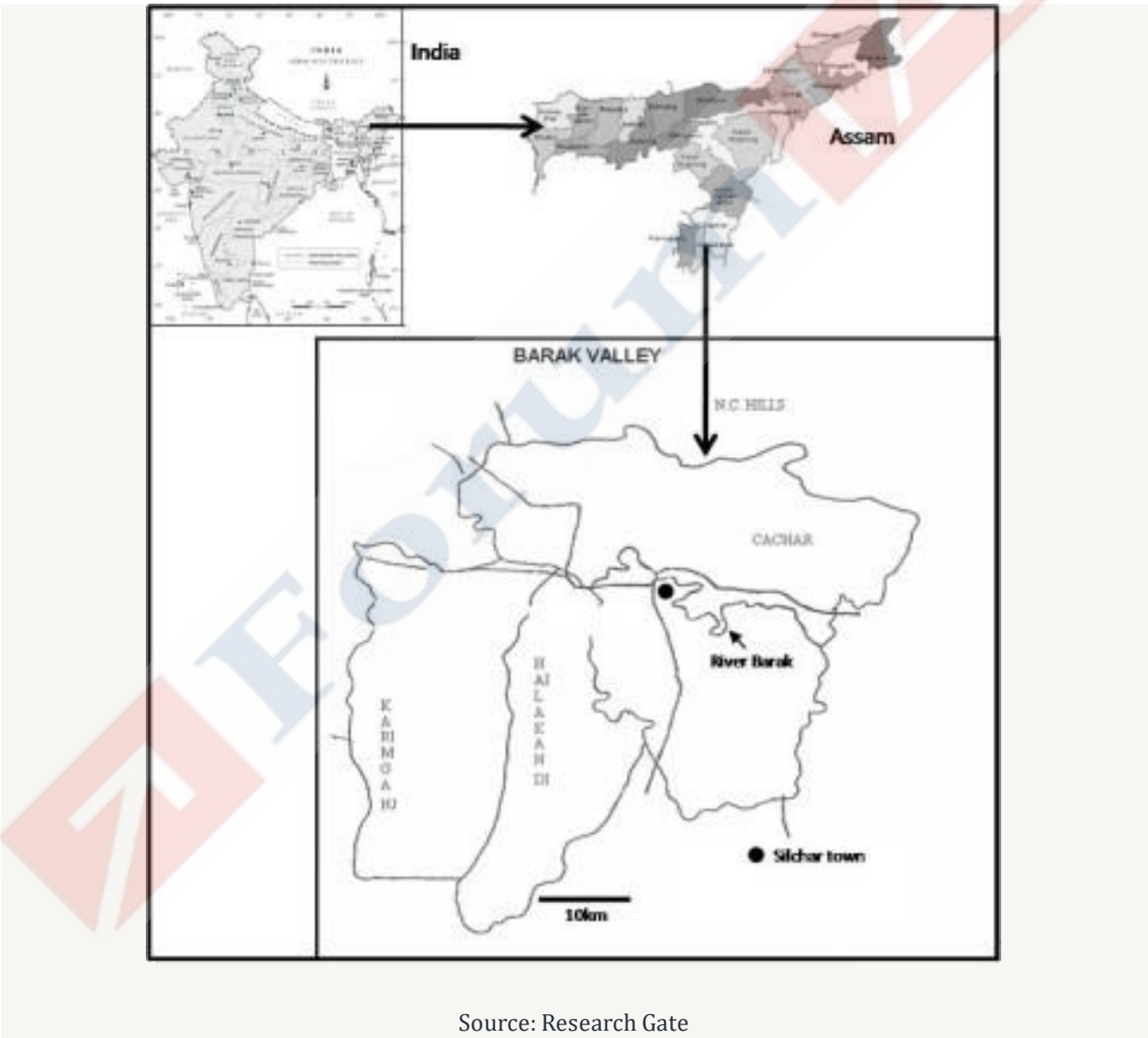
- **Adaptation:** These fishes have a **low metabolic rate** and can **survive for months without food after feeding.**
- **Phreatobiotic:** It **lives exclusively within the groundwater zone of aquifers**, particularly in underground, water-filled spaces.

- **Threats: Pollution, groundwater extraction and human killing** due to lack of awareness pose risks to this species.

Barak River

News: Two Bangladeshi nationals were arrested after allegedly jumping into the Barak River to evade police during an operation in Assam's Cachar district, raising border security concerns.

About Barak River



Source: Research Gate

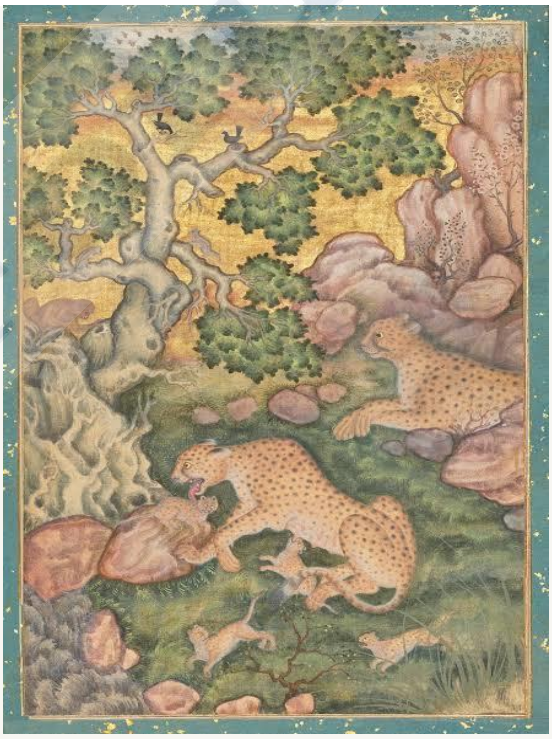
- The **Barak River** is a major **trans-boundary** river in **Northeast India and Bangladesh.**
  - It is the **second largest river system** in the **North-Eastern region of India.**
- **Origin:** It **rises in the Manipur Hills**, south of Mao in **Senapati district, Manipur.**

- **Course of the river:** It flows through the **hills of Manipur, along parts of the Manipur–Nagaland and Manipur–Mizoram boundaries**, and **across Assam before entering Bangladesh.**
    - There, it **splits into the Surma and Kushiyara rivers,** which merge into the **Meghna River system and eventually drain into the Bay of Bengal.**
- **States covered:** In India, its basin is spreads over **states of Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Assam, Tripura and Nagaland.**
    - It is bounded by the **Barail range separating it from the Brahmaputra basin on the north**, by the **Naga and Lushai hills on the east** and by **Mizo Hills** and territory of **Bangladesh** on the south and west.
    - In Assam, the **Barak Valley** is **named** after the Barak River.
- **Tributaries:** The key tributaries of the Barak River are **Jiri, Chiri, Modhura, Jatinga, Harang, Kalain, Gumra, Dhaleswari, Singla, Longai, Sonai, and Katakhal.**
- **Length:** The total length of the Barak River in India is **564 km** and **121-km stretch** of the river between **Lakhipur and Bhanga in Assam** was declared as **National Waterway 16** by the Government of India.
- **Dams situated on river:** There are **four major dams** situated on river and its basin namely **Khoupum Dam, Mawphlang Dam, Gumti Hydro Dam and Myntdu-Leshka Dam.**

Basawan

News: A Mughal painting of a cheetah family, created by Basawan around 1575 under Akbar, sold for nearly ₹120 crore in London.

About Basawan



Source: TOI

- **Basavan** was an **renowned Mughal painter.**
- He **flourished during 16th century.** He was a **leading painters in Emperor Akbar's court.**
- **Painting style:** His **work is largely associated with innovation and expressive figures.**
    - He was highly regarded for his skill as a **designer, colourist, and observer of human nature.**
- His work appears in numerous **significant manuscripts, including the *Akbar-nāmeh*, the *Razm-nāmeh* (a Persian version of the *Mahabharata*), and the *Tīmūr-nāmeh* (a chronicle of the Mughal ancestor Timur).**
- **Famous work:** One of his most celebrated work is **"A Family of Cheetahs in a Rocky Landscape"** which is a Mughal painting **created around 1575–80 during Emperor Akbar's reign.**
    - It was **painted on cloth** and **depicts a family of cheetahs in their natural surroundings,** reflecting the Mughal interest in wildlife and realistic animal studies.
    - His works **later became part of notable art collections,** including that of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan and Princess Catherine Aga Khan.
    - The painting has been **sold at Christie's in London for £10.245 million** from the private collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan.

AgriVoltaics World Conference 2026

News: The 7th AgriVoltaics World Conference commenced at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, bringing together global stakeholders in agriculture and renewable energy.

About AgriVoltaics World Conference 2026



Source – NOA

- The **AgriVoltaics World Conference** is a **global platform** for **scientific exchange and technology collaboration.**
- It promotes **discussions on combining agriculture with solar energy.**
- **Origin:** It was **first launched in 2020.**
    - The **2026 conference is its 7th edition.**

About AgriVoltaics World Conference 2026

- **2026 Theme:** The theme of the **7th edition is "Powering the Global South."**
- **Hosted by:** The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is hosting the 7th edition** of the conference with **support from Germany's BMUV.**
    - The conference is **organised in partnership with Conexio-PSE.**
- **Aim:** The conference aims to **promote international cooperation** and scale agrivoltaics solutions to **support farmer incomes, food security and clean energy development.**
- **Key Features:**
    - **Global Participation:** The conference has over 1,200 delegates, including 150+foreign participants.
    - **Scientific Discussions:** The programme includes a **dedicated India Focus Track** and **two scientific tracks** covering **crop productivity, climate resilience, technology deployment and policy frameworks.**
    - **Knowledge Resources: T**he conference **launched three resources:**
        - the India Agrivoltaics Alliance's Decision-MakingTool,
        - IWMI's Book of Abstracts and
        - MNRE's AgriPV Policy Handbook.
    - **Startup and Innovation Platform:** The **AgriVoltaics Pitch Hub** showcases technological solutions and **connects start-ups, investors and industry leaders.**
    - **Sustainable Agriculture:** Agrivoltaics **promotes the dual use of land for food production and clean energy**, while **supporting rural entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods.**

Key Facts about Poland

News: India and Poland announced four initiatives on trade, defence, counter-terrorism and disaster resilience during Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk's visit to India.

Key Facts about Poland



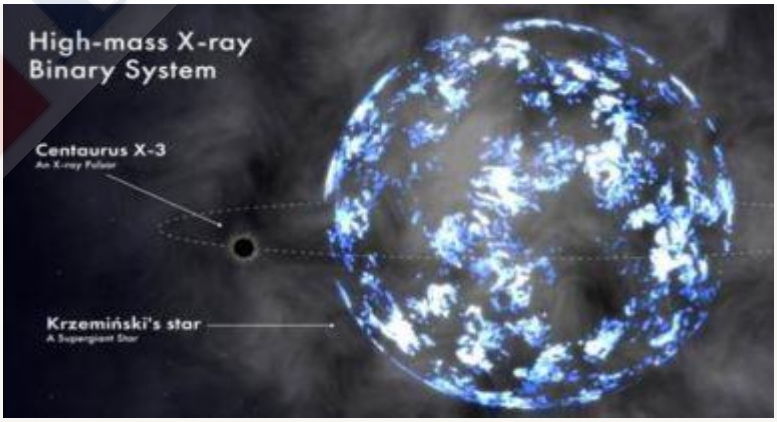
Source – Britannica

- **Poland** is a **country** located in the **physical centre of the European continent.**
- **Boundaries:** It is bordered **bordered by 7 nations:**
    - **Russia and Lithuania** in the northeast,
    - **Belarus andUkraine** in the east,
    - **Slovakia and the Czech Republic** in the south, and
    - **Germany** in the west.
    - **Water Bodies:** It is bordered by the **Baltic Sea in the north.**
- **Climate:** It has a **transitional maritime and continental climate**, with highly **variable weather and six distinct seasons.**
- **Key Features**
    - **Terrain:** Poland consists **mainly of lowlands within the North European Plain.**
    - **Mountain Ranges:** The **Carpathian and Sudeten Mountains** lie along Poland's southern border.
        - **Mount Rysy (2,501 metres), in the Carpathians**, is Poland's **highest peak.**
    - **Hydrology: Almost the entire** country **drains into the Baltic Sea.**
        - The **Vistula (Wisła), Oder (Odra) and Elbe are major rivers**.
        - It has **more than 1,300 lakes** throughout the country.
    - **Vegetation:** Poland **mainly lies in the mixed forest zone.**
        - The northeast has **patches of eastern European subtaiga,** while the **southeast has some forest-steppe vegetation.**
    - **Flora:** Poland's forests include **beech, fir, oak and spruce trees.**
        - The Polish **larch (Larix polonica) and Ojców birch (Betula oycoviensis)**are examples of **endemic species.**
    - **Fauna:** Poland's wildlife includes wild **boar, European bison(wisent), brown bears, wild horses, chamois, Eurasian lynxesand gray wolves**.

Centaurus X-3

News: Scientists found that Centaurus X-3 draws material through an accretion disk, a rare process in high-mass X-ray binaries.

About Centaurus X-3



Source – PIB

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- **Centaurus X-3** is **one of the brightest X-ray pulsars.**
- It is also one of the **most widely studied binary pulsars.**
- **Type:** It is a **high-mass X-ray binary (HMXB)** with a companion star **more than 10 times the Sun's mass.**
- **Location:** It lies **about 24,000 light-years from earth**, in the **constellation Centaurus.**
- **Key Features of Centaurus X-3**
    - **Binary System:** It contains a **highly magnetized neutron star and an O-star companion.**
    - The pulsar **rotates once every 4.84 seconds** and **completes an orbit in 2.087 days.**
    - It **gathers material through a disk, an unusual process in high-mass X-ray binaries,** where stellar wind capture is more common.
    - A **stream transfers matter from the disk towards the pulsar, which guides it towards its magnetic poles.**
    - **Secondary radiation** occurs when **surrounding structures absorb and re-emit radiation from the pulsar.**
        - Studying this radiation **helps scientists understand the system's physical properties, such as its orientation and magneticfield strength, and improve models of binary pulsars.**

About Pulsars

- **Pulsars** are **rapidly spinning, highly magnetized neutron stars.**
- **Formation:** They form when **massive stars collapse and explode as supernovae, leaving behind dense cores.**
- **Radiations:** They release **radiation from their magnetic poles,** creating powerful beams of light.
- **Regular Pulses:** Their **radiation** reaches observers at **regular intervals**, ranging from milliseconds to seconds.
- **Observation:** Scientists have mainly **observed pulsars at radio wavelengths.**

SIMBEX-2026

News: The 33rd edition of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX-2026) is being held at Visakhapatnam.

About SIMBEX-2026



Source: PIB

- It is a **Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise.**
- **Location:** It is **being held from 21 to 26 Oct 2026 at Visakhapatnam.**
- **Hosted by:** It is being hosted by India**.**
- **Edition:** This is the **33rd edition of the exercise**
    - The **first edition of the exercise** was conducted in **1994.**
- **Frequency:** It is conducted **annually.**
- **Aim:** It aims **to strengthen professional ties, mutual understanding and operational interoperability** between the two Navies.
- **Participants:** It is bilateral maritime engagement between the **Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).**
    - It involves participation of the **Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) ship RSS Supreme and Indian Navy ships INS Nilgiri and INS Kamorta.**
- **Phases of the exercise:** It will be conducted in two phases.
    - **Harbour Phase** which will include professional interactions, Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEEs), cross-deck visits, sporting engagements, and planning conferences.
    - **Sea Phase in the Bay of Bengal** will feature maritime operations and tactical exercises, including Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), anti-surface and anti-air warfare drills, seamanship evolutions, and tactical manoeuvres.
- **Other exercise with Singapore:**
    - **Bold Kurukshetra**
    - **Agni Warrior**

Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape in Chhattisgarh

News: Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape in Chhattisgarh has been added to UNESCO's World Heritage Tentative List.

About Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape in Chhattisgarh

- **Location:** Sirpur Village is **located in the Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh.**

- It is situated on the eastern banks of the **Mahanadi River**.

- **Architectural Features:**
  - It was an important **settlement between the 5th and 12th centuries.**
  - **Its remains include Hindu temples, Buddhist monasteries and Jain structures,** making it an important site for understanding the region's religious and cultural history.
    - The site has **22 Shiva temples, five Vaishnava temples, 10 Buddhist viharas and three Jain viharas.**
    - **The Lakshmana Temple (dedicated to Lord Vishnu)** is one of the **finest brick temples** in India, built around the **7th century**.
    - Apart from being a multi-religious urban centre, it was once a flourishing **capital of Dakshina Kosala** under the **Panduvanshi** and later, the **Somavamshi kings.**
    - It has remains of **palace complexes, market structures, residential quarters, brick and stone temples along with Viharas, stupas, meditation cells and water management systems.**
    - Its distinctive feature is the c**ombination of a riverine trade centre, a multi-faith religious landscape and an extensive archaeological urban complex** within a single site.
    - The town naturally forms **four thematic clusters** — Buddhist monastic, Hindu temple, civic–administrative and Riverine Sacred Landscape**.**
  - **Present-Day Landscape:** The area **includes around 300 houses and nearly 1,500 people.**
    - The **buffer zone is home to tribal communities** such as the **Gond and Baiga.**
    - **Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary, located within the property's buffer zone,** further highlights the coexistence of nature, historical heritage and traditional communities.