

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY**Kala Kumbh**

Ministry of Textiles is organising Kala Kumbh – Handicrafts Exhibitions for promotion of GI Crafts.

About:

- It is being organised with an objective to promote Geographical Indication (GI) crafts and heritage of India.
- The exhibitions sponsored by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) are being organized through the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).
- The exhibitions are planned in various major cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai.
- The exhibitions started on 14th February, 2020 and will continue till 23rd February 2020 at Bengaluru and Mumbai and will also be organized in Kolkata and Chennai in March 2020.

Related Info:

- The GI tag is used on handicrafts which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country).
- As on August 2019, 178 GI handicraft products were registered from all over India.

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**Bodo Language**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi acknowledged the signing of the Bodo Peace Accord among the Centre, Assam government and Bodo groups by writing these tweets in the Bodo language. The language is one of the key thrust areas in the Bodo Accord.

About:

- Estimated to have 1.5 million speakers (Census 2011), Bodo is listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- It is spoken in Assam, where the Bodo tribe constitutes about 5-6% of the population, and in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and West Bengal.
- While Bodo is officially written in the Devanagiri script, the language has a history of having been written in at least three different scripts — until in 1974, the Government recognised Devanagari as its official script.

Bodo Peace Accord 2020:

- The 2020 Accord makes Bodo the associate official language throughout Assam.
- The new Accord also promises to establish a separate directorate for Bodo medium schools, provincialise schools and colleges in the BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District) and establish a Cultural Complex-cum-Centre of Excellence named after the late social activist Bodofa Upendranath Brahma in Kokrajhar for protection and promotion of the language.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**Coal Sector**

Union Minister of Coal and Mines chaired “Chintan Shivir” – a two day brainstorming session organized to find a way forward for the coal sector – at Kevadia in Gujarat.

Key announcements made:

- India will stop importing thermal coal from Financial Year 2023-24.
- The Ministry of Coal will introduce a “Coal Minister's Award” soon to recognize and appreciate best practices in coal production, productivity, safety, sustainability etc. by the coal companies.
- Various ways and means were discussed to achieve 1 billion tonnes (BT) coal production target by Coal India Limited (CIL) by Financial Year 2023-24.
- CIL could generate 5 GW of solar power by FY 2023-24 and could diversify into coal gasification with a target of 50 Million Tonnes by 2030 enabling a sustainable energy mix for the country.
- The Minister has urged coal companies to achieve zero mortality rate by FY 2023-24.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**‘World’s Largest’ Subterranean Fish**

From deep dark Meghalaya cave, explorers bring to light ‘world’s largest’ subterranean fish — an almost-blind species that seems similar to the Golden Mahseer.

About:

- A paper published in November 2019 in the journal Cave and Karst Science describes Harries’s accidental discovery as “world’s largest known subterranean fish.” The fish is yet to be named.
- It is nearly five times the mean length (85mm/8.5 cm) for all known subterranean fish to date.
- The experts feel that the fish species is very similar to the Golden Mahseer. Unique characters that distinguishes it from the Golden Mahseer is the lack of pigmentation, a lack of eyes and its subterranean habitat – being locked in caves.

Related Info:

- Subterranean fauna refers to animal species that are adapted to live in underground environment.
- Subterranean ecosystems are considered extreme, high-stress environments characterised by darkness, truncated food webs and food scarcity.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETCYellow Rust

The Punjab Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department issued an advisory about Yellow Rust disease in wheat crops.

About:

- Yellow Rust disease appears as yellow stripes of powder or dust on leaves and leaf sheaths of the wheat crop. This yellow powder comes out on clothing or fingers when touched.
- The disease can spread rapidly under congenial conditions and affects crop development, and eventually the yield.
- Yield due to the disease can be affected by between 5 and 30 per cent. This occurs when the rust colonies in the leaves drain the carbohydrates from the plant and reduce the green leaf area.
- In India, it is a major disease in the Northern Hill Zone and the North-Western Plain Zone and spreads easily during the onset of cool weather and when wind conditions are favourable.
- Rain, dew and fog favour the disease's development.

Related Info:

- Last year, a new variety of wheat called HD-3226 or Pusa Yashasvi was released by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, which had higher levels of resistance against major rust fungi such as the yellow/stripe, brown/leaf and black/stem.

DEFENCE AND SECURITYManohar Parrikar Institute For Defence Studies And Analyses

The Government has decided to rename 'The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses' (IDSA) as 'Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses'.

About:

- The decision has been taken to honour the commitment and legacy of late Manohar Parrikar, the former Raksha Mantri and Padma Bhushan awardee.
- He was Raksha Mantri from November 9, 2014 –March 14, 2017. He implemented the long-standing One Rank One Pension (OROP) demand for the Armed Forces.
- He set up an expert committee under Lt Gen (Retd) DB Shekatkar for enhancing combat capability and rebalancing defence expenditure.

Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses' (IDSA):

- An autonomous body under Ministry of Defence, IDSA was established as a registered society in New Delhi in 1965, dedicated to objective research and policy relevant studies on all aspects of defence and security.
- Raksha Mantri chairs the Executive committee of the Institute's society

PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, EVENTS, AWARDS ETCMatribhasha Diwas

Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) will celebrate the Matribhasha Diwas across the country on 21st February with the theme 'Celebrating our Multilingual Heritage.'

About:

- Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) along with educational institutions and language institutions is celebrating the Matribhasha Diwas for the past three years to highlight the linguistic diversity of our country.
- International Mother Language Day (IMLD) is a worldwide annual observance held on 21st February by UNESCO to promote awareness of linguistic diversity. It was first announced by UNESCO in 1999 and was formally recognized by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2008.

International IP Index 2020

The International IP Index was released by Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) of the US Chambers of Commerce, a top American industry body.

Key findings:

- India has been ranked 40th out of 53 countries on the 2020 index. India was placed at 36th position among 50 countries in 2019.
- India's score, however, increased from 36.04 per cent (16.22 out of 45) in 2019 to 38.46 per cent (19.23 out of 50) in 2020, a 2.42 per cent jump in absolute score. However, India's relative score increased by 6.71 per cent.

- Since 2016, India has improved the speed of processing for patent and trademark applications, increased awareness of IP rights among Indian innovators and creators, and facilitated the registration and enforcement of those rights.
- Two new Index economies (Greece and the Dominican Republic) scored ahead of India. The Philippines, and Ukraine leapfrogged India.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: Forest Fires pose a threat not only to the forest wealth but also to the entire regime. In view of this statement discuss the various adverse impacts of Forest Fires.

Ans:

Fires are a major cause of forest degradation and have wide ranging adverse ecological, economic and social impacts including:

Effects of forest fire:

- Loss of valuable timber resources: Forest fires cause indispensable loss to timber and deteriorate its quality. Valuable timber species like teak, sal, chir, deodar, sheesam, rosewood etc. are adversely affected by fire. However, the adhesive impact of forest fire varies from species to species, depending upon its susceptibility.
- Impact of forest fire on eco- system: Forest fires pose threat not only to the forest wealth but also to the entire regime to fauna and flora seriously disturbing the bio-diversity and the ecology and environment of a region.
- Degradation of water catchments areas resulting into loss of water: After forest fire, the chemical and physical changes in upper layer of soil make it impervious and thus reduce water infiltration. The removal of litter also decreases water holding capacity of soil and most of the rainwater is washed away removing top fertile soil of the forest resulting into loss of soil fertility.
- Loss of wildlife habitat and depletion of wildlife: Wildfire along with killing wild animals also destroys their habitat and thus makes their survival at stake.
- Loss of natural vegetation and reduction of forest cover: As a result of fires, millions of hectares of the forest area turn to ashes and remains of no use. Among various degradation factors, forest fire is also one of the major factors for overall loss in forest cover. The wild fires also have adverse impact on forest tree growth.
- Global Warming: Greenhouse gases released during the combustion of vegetations lead to an increased warming of the earth or human induced global climate change.
- Microclimate change: The changed microclimate caused by removal of litter and duff, opening of the canopy by killing over storey shrubs and trees and darkening of the soil surface by residual soot and charcoal can increase insulation causing temperature increase. As a result the changed area becomes unhealthy for living of both wild habitats and local people.
- Health problems leading to diseases: The fires in the forest are source of smoke that cause air pollution and rise in the temperature leading to various health issues.
- Loss of livelihood: Forest fire also adversely affect livelihood resources, especially for tribals, who are directly dependent upon collection of non-timber forest products from forest areas for their livelihood.
- Carbon sequestration potential: Trees act as carbon sinks when they absorb carbon dioxide from atmosphere and build up the same in the form of wood. However, burning of the vegetation release hundreds of years of stored carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and thus results into permanent destruction of important sink of carbon dioxide
- Threat to Life and Property: Human life is at risk when fire crews fight fires either at the fire front or from conflict with animals, especially elephants. A forest fire that spreads outside the forest can consume buildings or infrastructure.
- Reducing Tourism Values: Smoke due to fires affects the visibility and air quality which adversely affect tourism industry.
- Taking into consideration the serious nature of the problem, there is urgent need to focus on key forest fire management elements like strategic fire centres, coordination among Ministries, funding, human resource development, fire research, fire management, and extension programmes.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

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| <p>1. With reference to the Indian economy, consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. A US-based think tank World Population Review in its report said that India emerged as the world's fifth largest economy by overtaking the UK and France in 2019.</p> | <p>2. In purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, India's GDP (PPP) is \$10.51 trillion, exceeding that of Japan and Germany. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> |
|--|---|

- (c) **Both 1 and 2**
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
2. With reference to the Yellow Rust disease, consider the following statements:
1. The disease can spread rapidly under congenial conditions and affects wheat crop development, and eventually the yield.
 2. Rain, dew and fog favour the disease's development.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) **Both 1 and 2**
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. With reference to the Bodo language, consider the following statements:
1. It is not listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
 2. The 2020 Accord makes Bodo the associate official language throughout Assam.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) **2 only**
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Recently, researchers found the 'world's largest' subterranean fish, from which of the following places?
- (a) **Meghalaya**
(b) Gujarat
(c) Tamil Nadu
(d) Odisha
5. With reference to the International IP Index 2020, consider the following statements:
1. It was released by World Economic Forum (WEF).
 2. India has been ranked 40th out of 53 countries on the 2020 index.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) **2 only**
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. With reference to the Coal sector, consider the following statements:
1. India will stop importing thermal coal from Financial Year 2023-24.
 2. The Ministry of Coal will introduce a "Coal Minister's Award" soon to recognize and appreciate best practices in coal production, productivity, safety, sustainability etc. by the coal companies.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) **Both 1 and 2**

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

7. With reference to the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses' (IDSA), consider the following statements:

1. The Government has recently decided to rename 'The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses' (IDSA) as 'Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses'.

2. Raksha Mantri chairs the Executive committee of the Institute's society.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) **Both 1 and 2**

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

8. With reference to the Kala Kumbh, consider the following statements:

1. 'It is being organised by Ministry of Textiles with an objective to promote Geographical Indication (GI) crafts and heritage of India.

2. The exhibitions sponsored by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) are being organized through the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) **Both 1 and 2**

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

9. With reference to the Matribhasha Diwas, consider the following statements:

1. Matribhasha Diwas will be celebrated across the country on 21st February with the theme 'Celebrating our Multilingual Heritage'.

2. International Mother Language Day (IMLD) is a worldwide annual observance held on 21st February by UNESCO to promote awareness of linguistic diversity.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) **Both 1 and 2**

(d) Neither 1 nor 2