Prelim Bits 07-03-2023 & 08-03-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Keeladi Museum

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu inaugurated the Keeladi museum in Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu.

- The museum is built on 2 acres at Keeladi at a cost of Rs. 18.43 crore.
- Keeladi museum is located 12 km southeast of Madurai city, in Sivaganga district.
- The museum has 6 blocks and is built in the Chettinad style of architecture.
- The museum is adorned with over 15,000 unique artefacts unearthed between the 4th and 8th phases of excavations since 2018.
- The information on every piece on display will be available in 2 languages, and accompanied by a catalogue in Braille.
- The museum is equipped with multimedia content, QR codes and holograms.
- The museum houses a replica of the excavation trench and a play area.

- **Keeladi** - The hamlet has a major urban habitation site, unlike many other archaeological sites in the State.
- Keeladi excavations began in 2015.
- It is a testimony to the regal life lived by ancient Tamils during the Sangam Age.
- **Excavations** - The first 3 seasons of excavations were carried out between 2014 and 2017 by the ASI.
- The Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology took over from the fourth season in 2018.
- The State archaeological department is about to begin the 9th phase of the excavations.

References

1. The Hindu - T.N. CM Stalin opens Keeladi museum
2. The Hindu - Keeladi museum: A bridge to a world of yore

Yaoshang Festival

The five-day-long Yaoshang festival, Manipur's version of Holi, has begun this year.

- The festival is celebrated every year on the full moon of Lamta month (February-March) of the Meitei lunar calendar.
- The festival is celebrated by the Meitei people who are predominantly Hindu.
- It is celebrated at the same time as Holi and known as 'Manipur's version of Holi'.
- The festival marks the rejuvenation of the spirit of life and commemorates the birthday

of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.
- On the first day 'Yaoshang' (a small thatch hut/straw hut) is constructed with bamboo and straws.
- The image of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the thatched hut is worshipped.
- Just after sunset the festival begins with ***Yaoshang Mei thaba***, also known as 'Burning of the Straw Hut'.
- Children visit neighbours to ask for monetary donations, called *nakatheng*.
- **Events** - During these 5 days sporting events happen during the day and traditional *'thabal chongba'* dance in the night.

Thabal chongba *(literally means 'the full moon dance') is a traditional dance of the Meitei, where boys and girls gathered in an open ground and dance in a circle.*

References

1. IE - Yaoshang festival begins in Manipur
2. North East Now - Manipur's biggest festival 'Yaoshang' kicks off

Interstellar Boundary Explorer

The NASA engineers successfully reset the Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX) spacecraft after it went into contingency mode for 3 weeks.

- NASA's Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX) was launched in October 2008 to study the outer edge of the heliosphere.
- The spacecraft is designed to map the boundary where winds from the Sun interact with winds from other stars.
- The solar system's boundary is studied by observing energetic neutral atoms or ENAs.
- ENAs are high-energy particles produced at the very edge of our solar system.
- **Major discovery** - The spacecraft fully mapped the heliosphere within a year after its launch.
- Its most famous discovery is uncovering a dense region of particles, the 'IBEX ribbon.'

Heliosphere

- The sun sends out a constant flow of solar material called the solar wind, which creates a bubble around the planets called the heliosphere.
- The end of heliosphere is called ***heliopause***.
- The heliosphere acts as a shield that protects the planets from interstellar radiation.
- NASA's Interstellar Mapping and Acceleration Probe (IMAP) mission set to be launched in 2025 will also explore heliosphere.

References

1. IE - IBEX spacecraft back to study edge of solar system after glitch
2. Space - NASA's IBEX spacecraft bounces back from glitch
3. NASA - Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX)

International Big Cat Alliance

India has proposed to launch a mega global alliance under its leadership to protect big cats.

- The proposed International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) will work towards the protection and conservation of the 7 major big cats.
- The 7 major big cats included are tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, puma, jaguar and cheetah.
- **Members** - Membership to the alliance will be open to 97 "range" countries, as well as other interested nations, organisations, etc.
- **Focus** - IBCA will focus on the rehabilitation and conservation of the seven big cats namely tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, pumas, jaguars and cheetahs.
- It provides a platform for spreading information on standardised practices, capacity building, resource pooling, research and development, awareness generation on big cat conservation.
- **Funding** - For the first 5 years, IBCA will be supported by India's "total grant assistance" of $100 million.
- After that the IBCA is expected to sustain itself through membership fees, and contributions from bilateral and multilateral institutions and the private sector.
- **Big cats in India** - India is the only country in the world to have tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards and cheetahs in the wild.
- India has all the big cats, except the pumas and jaguars.
- **Similar Initiative** - CITES Big Cat Task Force

References

1. IE - India to launch global alliance for big cats, invest $100 million
2. News9 - India's initiative to launch global big cat alliance

One Nation, One Challan Initiative

The Gujarat government is in the process of setting up of virtual traffic courts under the 'One Nation One Challan' initiative.

- One Nation, One Challan is an initiative of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to bring all related agencies, such as traffic police and the Regional Transport Office (RTO), on one platform.
- One Nation, One Challan enables seamless collection of challans as well as data transfer.
- **Process** - The integrated system involves detection of traffic violations through the CCTV network.
- Then the registration number of the erring vehicle is got from applications like VAHAN (detecting the vehicle's ownership details) and SARATHI (compilation of driving

licenses).
- An e-challan is then generated with the relevant penalty amount, and sent to the mobile number linked with the vehicle.
- The National Informatics Centre (NIC) is set to launch its own application e-challan.
- **Virtual Traffic Courts** - Traffic court is a specialized virtual court for handling traffic ticket cases.
- If someone doesn't pay the challan amount within 90 days, the challan will be automatically forwarded to a virtual court and proceedings will be initiated.
- Summons will be sent on the mobile phone of the offender.
- If the fine is still not paid, further legal proceedings will follow.
- **Advantages of virtual court** - Virtual courts eliminates the presence of litigants in the court.
- An accused can search their case on the virtual court's website.
- Upon successful payment of fine, the case will be shown as disposed of.
- The ministry is in the process of integration of all the states' RTO data and traffic police data with the support of National Informatics Centre (NIC) servers.

References

1. IE - What is the One Nation, One Challan initiative?

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