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Mangrove Pitta Birds

First-ever census finds 179 mangrove pitta birds in two coastal Odisha districts.

- **Mangrove pitta birds** - They are a nearly threatened species found in few pockets of eastern India.
- The habitats of these beautiful birds are confined to mangrove forest areas in Odisha's Bhitarkanika and Sundarban in West Bengal.
- Mangrove pitta is a resident non-migratory bird that generally feeds on crustaceans, mollusks and insects.
- The breeding season of this species ranges from April to August in Bhitarkanika.
- **The census** - The census was carried out by point count method, either by walking in the forest or using country boats in the creeks.
- In this census, a total of 179 individual mangrove pitta birds were counted.
- The highest concentration of the birds has been found in the mangroves near the Mahipura river mouth inside the Bhitarkanika National Park.
- **Bhitarkanika National Park** - It is a suitable congenial breeding place for this bird species.
- Bhitarkanika National Park is located in Kendrapara district in Odisha.
- The national park is mostly a wetland and a mangrove forest.
- It was declared as a Ramsar Site in August 2002.



References

1. [The Hindu | First-ever census of mangrove pitta birds](#)
2. [The New Indian Express | Bhitarkanika home to 179 Mangrove Pitta birds](#)
3. [Odishatv | Country's first mangrove pitta bird census](#)

Yuva Portal

Union Minister of Science & Technology launched the Yuva Portal.

- The portal will help in connecting and identifying potential young Start-Ups.
- Unless the stakeholders' participation is broad-based, the Startups may not remain sustainable.
- **One Week-One Lab programme** - The programme is launched to highlight India's global excellence in technology, innovation and startups.
- Each of the 37 CSIR (Council of Scientific & Industrial Research) labs spread across the country is dedicated to a different exclusive area of work.
- It will offer the opportunity to the CSIR labs to showcase the work being done by them

so that others can avail of it.

- The CSIR laboratories are unique and specialise in the specific areas which span from genome to geology, food to fuel, minerals to materials, and so on.
- CSIR-NPL (National Physical Laboratory) is the custodian of Indian Standard Time (IST), generated using an atomic time scale consisting of Caesium atomic clocks and Hydrogen masers.
- **Astronomy lab** - It is set up in the district of Karnal in Haryana.
- The lab will provide level-playing field to all and even Divyangs (person with disability) can excel in various forms of skill, art and craft.

References

1. [PIB | YUVA PORTAL launched](#)
2. [Newsonair| Union Minister launches YUVA PORTAL](#)

Marketing and Logistics Development for Promotion of Tribal Products from North-Eastern Region (PTP-NER)

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India has introduced a new scheme, PTP-NER.

- The scheme is introduced for the benefit of Scheduled Tribes of North-eastern Region.
- The scheme has the vision to strengthen livelihood opportunities for tribal artisans through increased efficiency in procurement, logistics and marketing of tribal products from North Eastern States.
- The scheme will apply to the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim.
- The scheme helps tribal artisans to avail opportunities of enhancing income through the provision of backward and forward linkages.
- Under the scheme Tribal Artisan Melas (TAMs) will be organised at various districts of North-eastern Region.

Reference

1. [PIB | Ministry of Tribal Affairs introduces a new scheme](#)

Great Pacific Garbage Patch

Scientists have reported that the plastic trash has given rise to a previously unknown type of ocean community.

- **Anthropocene epoch** - The name for a new period in the history of the earth characterised by the influence of one species on the planet's geology, ecosystems, even its fate: Homo sapiens.
- Scientists are still figuring out when this epoch really began, some include the first nuclear weapon test and rapid industrialisation after the Second World War.
- Creation of plastic trash also adds to this epoch, abundant in urban refuse, rivers, and forests, from the slopes of the highest peaks to the depths of abyssal trenches.

Great Pacific Garbage Patch

- There are some water currents in the oceans that, driven by winds and the Coriolis force, form loops, called gyres.
- The North Pacific Subtropical Gyre (NPSG) is one such, located just north of the equator in the Pacific Ocean.
- It consists of the Kuroshio, North Pacific, California, and North Equatorial currents and moves in a clockwise direction.
- These currents flow adjacent to 51 Pacific Rim countries.
- Any trash that enters one of these currents, from any of these countries, could become part of the gyre.
- Inside this gyre, just north of Hawai'i, lies a long east-west strip where some of the debris in these currents has collected over the years.
- The eastern part of this is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.
- It is, per one estimate, 1.6 million sq. km big and more than 50 years old.
- The patch contains an estimated 45,000-1,29,000 metric tonnes of plastic, predominantly in the form of microplastics.
- The numerical density of plastics here is around 4 particles per cubic metre.
- Mass-wise, however, heavier, more visible objects that haven't yet broken down into smaller particles accounted for 92% in 2018.
- **Organic Community** - 98% of the debris in the garbage patch had invertebrate organisms.
- Pelagic species were also found on the debris.

Pelagic species are those that inhabit the water column (not near the bottom or the shore) of coasts, open oceans, and lakes.



References

1. [The Hindu | The Great Pacific Garbage Patch](#)
2. [National Geographic | Great Pacific Garbage Patch](#)
3. [CNN | The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is now so huge and permanent that a coastal ecosystem is thriving on it](#)

World Heritage Day 2023

Every year on April 18, people celebrate World Heritage Day, also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites.

- This day is dedicated to promote the importance of cultural heritage and raise awareness about the need to preserve historical sites and monuments across the globe.
- The day celebrates the unique and diverse cultural heritage across the world and encourages people to appreciate and safeguard it for future generations.
- **History and significance** - The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) proposed the idea of World Heritage Day in 1982.
- It was approved by UNESCO's General Conference in the following year.

- The first World Heritage Day was celebrated in 1983, and since then, it has become an important event for promoting awareness about cultural heritage.
- **Theme for World Heritage Day 2023** - The theme for World Heritage Day 2023 is "Heritage Changes".
- The theme for World Heritage Day 2023 is focused on the crucial issue of climate action and its relation to cultural heritage.

References

1. [The Economic Times | World Heritage Day 2023](#)
2. [India today | World Heritage Day 2023](#)

