Prelim Bits 22-09-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Dugong Conservation Reserve

Tamil Nadu government has notified India's first Dugong Conservation Reserve.

- The Dugong Conservation Reserve has been notified in Palk Bay.
- The reserve was covering the coastal waters of Thanjavur and Pudukottai districts.
- The move was aimed at conserving the Dugongs - endangered species.
- Conservation of these Dugongs would improve the seagrass beds that are the breeding and feeding grounds for many fishes and marine fauna.
- **Related Links** - Dugong, Seagrasses

Dugongs are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 as their population was on the decline due to habitat loss.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/indias-first-dugong-reserve-notified-in-tn/article65920574.ece
2. https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2022/sep/21/indias-first-dugong-conservation-reserve-notified-in-tamil-nadu-says-government-2500524.html
3. https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/india-gets-its-first-dugong-conservation-reserve-in-tamil-nadu/article65918239.ece

Ambedkar Circuit

The Union Ministry of Tourism announced a special tourist train to cover the "Ambedkar Circuit".

- Ambedkar Circuit or Panchteerth was first proposed by the government in 2016.
- This tourist circuit is one of the 15 tourist circuits identified under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme in 2014-15.
- The Panchteerth would include
    1. Janma Bhoomi - Ambedkar's birthplace in Madhya Pradesh's Mhow;
    2. Shiksha Bhoomi - the place in London where he stayed while studying in the UK;
    3. Deeksha Bhoomi - the place in Nagpur where he embraced Buddhism;
    4. Mahaparinirvan Bhoomi - the place of his demise in Delhi; and
    5. Chaitya Bhoomi - the place of his cremation, in Mumbai.
- The idea behind the circuit is to attract tourists beyond the Dalit community, who mostly visit these places as a pilgrimage.
- **Related Links** - Swadesh Darshan Scheme

- **Similar Links** - Eco-Circuits Projects, Rural Circuit, Gandhi Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Tourism related facilities at Buddhist Sites

The Ministry of Tourism has reserved 3,000 special railway coaches with the Ministry of Railways for the promotion of the theme-based tourism circuits.

Reference

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-culture/how-ambedkar-circuit-is-good-tourism-and-good-politics-for-the-bjp-8165181/
2. https://theswaddle.com/union-tourism-ministry-announces-an-ambedkar-circuit-train/
3. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/govt-plans-tourism-circuit-connecting-ambedkar-sites/articleshow/94289047.cms

Typhloesus

The mystery of a bizarre creature Typhloesus dubbed the "alien goldfish", which has baffled fossil experts for decades, may have been solved.

- *Typhloesus wellsi* lived about 330m years ago and was discovered in the Bear Gulch Limestone fossil site in Montana in the late 1960s.
- Typhloesus is an ancient sea animal so strange that paleontologists have referred to it as an alien goldfish.
- This bloblike animal has defied taxonomic placement for nearly 50 years.
- Now, the scientists say that this animal is some sort of mollusc.
- A new structure is identified in the animal called radula - a tonguelike structure covered in teeth that snails and other mollusks use to scrape food into their mouths.
- The tooth-studded structure in Typhloesus was most likely attached to a retractable trunk.

Montana

- When those fossilized creatures were living in the Bear Gulch Limestone in Montana, this area was,
    1. Blanketed by a balmy bay and
    2. Home to sharks that sported swordlike spines, coelacanths and the oldest known ancestor to vampire squids.
- Local monsoons washed nutrients into the bay, sparking algal blooms that sapped oxygen from the water and kept scavengers at bay.
- Those conditions allowed myriad soft-bodied invertebrates to be preserved in incredible detail.
- Because many of these ancient sea creatures are delicately imprinted onto the limestone, most of their identities are easy to deduce.

Reference

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/science/alien-goldfish-bloblike-animal-paleontologists-fossils-8163275/

2. https://www.theguardian.com/science/2022/sep/21/typhloesus-wellsi-alien-goldfish-mystery-mollusc-scientists
3. https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rsbl.2022.0179

Nizam's Sword

Nizam's Sword is an item being set to return to India from the Glasgow Life museums.

- Nizam's tulwar (sword) is a 14th century ceremonial sword of Indo-Persian design possible from around 1350 CE.
- The sword is shaped like a snake. It has serrated edges and a damascene pattern, with gold etchings of an elephant and tigers.
- The sword was exhibited by Mahbub Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VI, Nizam of Hyderabad (1896-1911) at the 1903 Delhi or Imperial Durbar.

  Delhi Durbar is a ceremonial reception held to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra as Emperor and Empress of India.

- The sword was purchased in 1905 by General Sir Archibald Hunter, Commander-in-Chief, Bombay Command, from Maharaja Kishen Pershad Bahadur Yamin us-Sultanat (the Prime Minister of Hyderabad).

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/telangana/nizams-sword-set-to-return-to-india-after-a-century/article65918168.ece?homepage=true
2. https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/telangana/2022/aug/24/india-to-get-back-seven-stolen-artefacts-including-nizams-sword-from-uk-museum-2490754.html
3. https://www.siasat.com/india-gets-hold-of-7-stolen-valuable-artefacts-including-nizams-sword-2396996/

WHO Report on Non-communicable Diseases

In a report, the World Health Organization (WHO) says that there is one death from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) every 2 seconds, and the WHO recommends policies.

- **NCD** - Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, tend to be of long duration.
- They are the result of a combination of genetic, physiological, environmental and behavioural factors.
- **Key Facts** - These diseases, along with mental illnesses, kill 41 million people each year across all age groups.
- This is equivalent to 74% of all deaths globally, which surpasses the toll of infectious diseases.
- Each year, 17 million people die from a NCD before age 70; 86% of these premature deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.
- Of all NCD deaths, 77% are in low- income and middle-income countries (LMICs).

- With sufficient investment, however, 90% of these countries can meet the UN-mandated sustainable development goal to reduce premature deaths from NCDs by a third by 2030, according to the report.

Type of Non-Communicable Disease	Number of Deaths per year
Cardiovascular diseases	17.9 million
Cancers	9.3 million
Chronic respiratory diseases	4.1 million
Diabetes	2.0 million including kidney disease deaths caused by diabetes

- These four groups of diseases account for over 80% of all premature NCD deaths.
- In India, 66% of all deaths can be attributed to NCDs, with cardiovascular diseases accounting for 28% of these deaths and chronic respiratory diseases 12%, WHO wrote.
- In 2019, the report showed that India had one of the highest death rates from chronic respiratory diseases.
- **Risks** - Tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets all increase the risk of dying from an NCD.
- Detection, screening and treatment of NCDs, as well as palliative care, are key components of the response to NCDs.
- This is because prevention, treatment and care that can prevent or delay the class of diseases are out of bounds for millions of people.
- Thus, NCDs becomes an equity and development challenge as well.

Suggestions

- The WHO cited a new Roadmap for the Global Action Plan on the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2023-2030.
- This Roadmap suggested the following
    1. Accelerate the national response
    2. Evaluate progress and identify barriers to interventions in your country
    3. Scale up and implement the most feasible and appropriate interventions
    4. Work across government, with civil society, people living with NCDs and international organizations to identify the best interventions
    5. Accelerate implementation of these interventions for your country
    6. Align NCD action to ensure win-wins for other SDGs
    7. Gather and assess timely and accurate data on NCDs
    8. Monitor NCD measures to demonstrate where there has been success and where more eort is still required
- The report concluded that policies to reduce the burden of NCDs will also provide economic benefits for countries.
- Investing less than $1 per person per year can save 7 million lives by 2030 in some of 76 LMICs surveyed by the WHO.
- The report added that the economic and social benefits for these countries could be more than $230 billion.

Reference

1. https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/one-death-from-non-communicable-diseases-every-2-seconds-who-recommends-policies-85045
2. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases
3. https://www.nhp.gov.in/healthlyliving/ncd2019

