Prelim Bits 22-12-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to take security charge of the Parliament building from the Delhi Police.

- **Established -** CISF is an armed force of the Union established under an Act of Parliament, Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968.
- **Headquarters -** Headquartered in Delhi, it is headed by an Indian Police Service officer with the rank of Director-General.

CISF has the largest percentage of women in its force, in comparison to all other CAPFs.

- CISF was first inducted at the Fertilizer Corporation of India manufacturing plant in Trombay, Maharashtra, on November 1, 1969.
- **CAPF -** It is one of seven Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) under the MHA.
- The force is divided into nine sectors including Airport, North, North-East, East, West, South, Training, South-East, and Central.
- **Private undertakings -** Initially, its remit was restricted to protecting government-owned industries, but this was expanded to include joint ventures and private undertakings in 2009.
- **Compensatory cost force -** CISF also provides consultancy services to the private sector and is a compensatory cost force, which means that it bills its clients for the services it provides.

CISF is the only CAPF with a dedicated firefighting wing.

- CISF is involved in providing security cover to VIPs.

Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)

- CAPF is Central Armed Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- CAPF represents a set of seven security forces in India.

1. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
2. Assam Rifles (AR)
3. National Security Guard (NSG)
4. Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)

5. Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)
6. Border Security Force (BSF)
7. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

References

1. The Indian Express – CISF set to take over Parliament security
2. CISF – About CISF

Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita Bill, 2023 (BNSS)

Under new law, doctors face two years of imprisonment for death due to negligence.

- **Section 106 (1) -** Section 106 (1) of the BNS Bill, 2023 deals with causing death by negligence.
- This makes a differentiation between a doctor and any other person causing death by doing any rash or negligent act not amounting to culpable homicide.
- The amended Section 106 (1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill does not provide a blanket exemption to doctors in cases of death due to negligence.

> *A registered medical practitioner is person who possesses any medical qualification recognised under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019 and whose name has been entered in the National Medical Register or a State Medical Register under that Act.*

- Currently, under Section 304A of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, the punishment for causing death by negligence is two years imprisonment and fine or both.
- The BNSS increases the punishment for such acts to five years, however, specifies that doctors will still get the lower punishment of two years jail time if convicted.
- **Section 106 (2) -** It prescribes a more stringent punishment, a jail term of 10 years and a fine, for somebody who causes death of any person by rash and negligent driving of vehicle not amounting to culpable homicide.
- Section 106 (2) is also applicable to persons who escapes without reporting it to a police officer or a Magistrate soon after the incident.

> *The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill will replace the Indian Penal Code (IPC); the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita Bill will be in place of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), and the Bharatiya Sakshya Bill will replace the Indian Evidence Act (IEA).*

References

1. The Hindu – Doctors face not exempt for death due to negligence
2. The Hindu – Revamping the criminal justice system to fit the bill
3. The Print – Medical practitioners not exempt from death by negligence

Watsonx.ai

At the recent COP28, NASA and IBM announced that an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool called watsonx.ai would be available on the open-source AI platform Hugging Space.

- Watsonx.ai is built on a foundation model; it is trained on a broad set of uncategorized data allowing the model to apply information about one situation to another.
- The platform has a set of AI assistants to help one scale and accelerate the impact of artificial intelligence through trusted data across his/her business.
- In the case of watsonx.ai, NASA provides the datasets and IBM created the foundation model to interpret them.
- Watsonx.ai will help users monitor the Earth from space, measuring environmental changes that have already happened while also making predictions about the future.
- The model is also designed to be extremely simple to use.
- A user would merely need to select a location and a date, and the model will highlight changes in floodwater, reforestation efforts and other relevant factors.

  In India, AI-equipped peanut farmers have already witnessed a 30 per cent increase in yield.

- **watsonx.data -** It is a fit-for-purpose data store optimized for governed data and AI workloads.
- **watsonx.governance -** It is an end-to-end toolkit encompassing both data and AI governance.

References

1. The Indian Express – AI tool to forecast weather
2. Hindustan Times – What is watsonX?
3. IBM – watsonx.ai

Flying Squirrel

Missing for 42 years, flying squirrel resurfaces in Arunachal Pradesh.

- Flying Squirrel are one of the 50 species of gliding squirrels.
- **Habitat -** Northern flying squirrels (Glaucomys sabrinus) and southern flying squirrels (Glaucomys volans) are the flying squirrel species found in North America.
- The third type, Namdapha flying squirrel (Biswamoyopterus biswasi) is found in the temperate and tropical forests of India and other parts of Asia.
- It is a nocturnal species, meaning they are active at night.
- They have a special membrane between their front and back legs that allows them to glide through the air between trees.
- The Namdapha flying squirrel (Biswamoyopterus biswasi) was last described in 1981 based on a single individual found in the Namdapha Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh.

- **Diet -** Flying squirrels are omnivores.



References

1. The Hindu – Flying squirrel resurfaces in Arunachal
2. Britannica – Flying Squirrel
3. NWF – Flying Squirrel

Pappathi Chola

There is an urgent need to protect Pappathi Chola, a biodiversity hotspot.

- Pappathi Chola, known for its high butterfly population, derived its name from the Tamil word Pappathi meaning butterflies.
- While Pappathi means butterfly, Chola means shola land.
- Many butterflies reach the area during their migratory course from the rain shadow forests of Tamil Nadu back to the higher elevations of Munnar.
- Pappathi Chola is also regarded as a hub of balsams (Impatiens balsamina) and rare varieties of orchids.
- It is located right in the middle of the Chathurangappara hills and Mathikettan shola and last year; the region witnessed the blooming of Neelakurinji.
- The Pappathi Chola area is covered with eucalyptus trees.

Biodiversity Hotspots

- Biodiversity hotspots are regions that are exceptionally rich in biodiversity and contain numerous endemic species.
- According to Conservation International, a region must fulfill the following two criteria to qualify as a hotspot:
    1. The region should have at least 1500 species of vascular plants i.e., it should have a high degree of endemism.
    2. It must contain 30% (or less) of its original habitat, i.e. it must be threatened.
- Following the criteria must for an area to be declared as Biodiversity Hotspot, there are major four biodiversity hotspots in India:
    1. The Himalayas
    2. Indo-Burma Region
    3. The Western Ghats
    4. Sundaland
- The Western Ghats, located along the western coast, and the Eastern Himalayas are two prominent biodiversity hotspots in India.
- The Western Ghats are known for their diverse habitats and endemic species of plants, birds, and amphibians.
- The Eastern Himalayas, spanning across northeastern states, harbor a wide range of flora and fauna in alpine meadows, subtropical forests, and montane rainforests.

Impatiens balsamina

- It is commonly known as balsam, is a species of plant native to India and Myanmar.
- Different parts of the plant are used as traditional remedies for disease and skin afflictions.
- Juice from the leaves is used to treat warts and snakebite, and the flower is applied to burns.
- This species has been used as indigenous traditional medicine in Asia for rheumatism, fractures, and other ailments.

Reference

The Hindu – Pappathi Chola

Other Important News
Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya • The Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya, located in Teen Murti Marg, New Delhi, is a part of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. • The digital museum was a tribute to every Prime Minister of India since Independence, and a narrative record of how each one has contributed to the development of our nation. • It was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on April 14, 2022.
MAITRI – II Station in Antarctica • India aims to set up a new research station in Antarctica near the Maitri station in the eastern part of the icy continent by 2029. • The existing Indian research station, Maitri is very old, is imperative to build a new research station. • **Dakshin Gangotri**, India's 1st research station in Antarctica, was commissioned in 1983 had to be abandoned in 1989 after being submerged in snow.
Black Tigers • Black tigers are a rare color variant of the Bengal tiger. They are not a separate species or subspecies of tiger. • Their all-black color is due to ***pseudo-melanism***, a condition that causes thick stripes that make the tawny background barely visible. • Black tigers are only found in ***India's Similipal Tiger Reserve*** which also has the highest rate of black tiger sightings in the world. **Similipal Tiger Reserve** • It is a national park and tiger reserve located in the Mayurbhanj district of ***Odisha***, that gets its name from the red silk cotton tree, "Simul". • It has been designated as a tiger reserve in 1956 and brought it under ***Project Tiger in 1973***. • It is a part of the ***UNESCO world network of Biosphere Reserve***.
"Paat-Mitro" • The Ministry of Textiles launched "Paat-Mitro", a mobile application, developed by ***Jute Corporation of India Limited (JCI)*** during 'Jute Symposium' recently. • The app is to support jute farmers and provides information about agronomy and Minimum Support Prices, as well as the latest agricultural practices. • It also includes information about jute category standards and Jute-ICARE (Jute- Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise).

Competition Commission of India (CCI)

• Competition Commission of India has selected ***Ansuman Pattnaik*** as the new head of its investigation's unit recently.
• The Competition Commission of India (CCI) is a ***statutory body*** within the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
• It was established in 2003, but became fully functional in 2009.
• The CCI aims to establish a competitive environment in the Indian economy by engaging with all stakeholders, the government, and international jurisdiction.

Winter Solstice

• The Winter Solstice is a phenomenon when the ***Northern Hemisphere*** is tilted furthest away from the sun, resulting in the ***longest night and the shortest day*** of the year.
• It occurs annually on ***December 21 or 22***. It marks the 1st day of winter.

Caspian Sea

• The Caspian Sea is the world's largest inland body of water, located between ***Asia and Europe***, and is shared by Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan.
• The Caspian Sea is a landlocked sea and is also known as the ***Mazandaran Sea***.
• It lies to the east of the ***Caucasus Mountains*** and to the west of the vast steppe of Central Asia.
• Baku is the ***largest port on the Caspian Sea*** and the largest capital city on the southern shore of the ***Absheron peninsula***.

Volcanic eruption in Papua New Guinea

• India recently sent relief material worth $1 million for the people affected by a volcanic eruption in Papua New Guinea.
• A major volcanic eruption of ***Mount Ulawun*** in Papua New Guinea resulted in widespread damage and destruction in the island nation.
• Papua New Guinea sits on the ***Pacific "Ring of Fire",*** an arc of seismic faults around the Pacific Ocean where much of the world's earthquake and volcanic activities occur.

Sumatran 0rangutans (Pongo abelii)

• 3 trafficked Sumatran orangutans were sent back from Thailand to Indonesia recently as part of a joint effort between the countries to tackle the illegal wildlife trade.
• The Sumatran orangutan (Pongo abelii) is a species of orangutan that lives in the northern part of the ***Indonesian island of Sumatra.***
• They are the largest non-human primates in Asia and the largest arboreal primates.
• **Conservation Status**
  - **IUCN** - Critically Endangered
  - **CITES** - Appendix I

'Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation' (SVEEP)

• Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) is a program by the ***Election Commission of India***.
• It aims to educate voters, spread awareness, and promote voter literacy since 2009.



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