Prelim Bits 27-01-2019

Mugger Crocodile

- The Gujarat Forest Department has started evacuating mugger crocodile from two ponds on the Sardar Sarovar Dam premises on the Narmada.
- This evacuation is to facilitate a seaplane service at the Statue of Unity.
- The mugger/marsh crocodile is a species native to freshwater habitats from southern Iran and Pakistan to the Indian subcontinent and Sri Lanka.
- It is already extinct in Bhutan and Myanmar.
- So the mugger has been listed as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List since 1982.
- In India, it is protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 mainly to prevent their trade.
- The transfer of these reptiles in such large numbers is against the principles of the Act.
- Crocodiles need space on land to nest and also to come out of the waters during winters.
- So releasing them into the dam reservoir would mean that the female crocodiles may not be able to nest if the slope of the dam is more than about 40 degrees.
- It might also disturbe the ecological balance.

Assam Rifles

- All women marching contingent of the Assam Rifles took part for the first time in the Republic Day Parade.
- The Assam Rifles came into being in 1835, as a militia called the ‘Cachar Levy’.
- Other names are ‘Sentinels of the North-East’, ‘Friends of the Hill People’.
- The Post-Independence role of the Assam Rifles continued to evolve ranging from conventional combat role to peacekeeping role
- Important Role played by Assam Rifles,

1. Sino-India War 1962,
2. Operated in foreign land as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka in 1987 (Op Pawan) in the North-Eastern areas of India in the face of growing tribal unrest and insurgency wherein the maintenance of law and

order,

- Assam Rifle is majorly involved in countering insurgency and reassuring the people of the region.

Elephanta Caves

- An event that showcased the rich handloom and textile tradition of India was held at Elephanta Caves.
- It was organized by the Ministry of Textiles.
- Elephanta Caves is a UNESCO World Heritage site constructed about the mid 5^{th} centuries AD.
- The Caves are located on Elephanta Island near Mumbai.
- It contains a collection of rock art linked to the cult of Shiva.
- Sadashiva sculpture dominates the entrance to one of the caves.
- It represents three aspects of Shiva: the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer.

Source: PIB, The Hindu

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