Prelim Bits 31-01-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Haji Malang Dargah

Recently, Chief Minister of Maharashtra said that he was committed to the liberation of the Malanggad dargah which Hindus claim to be a temple.

- **Haji Malang Dargah** – A ***300-year-old shrine*** dedicated to ***Baba Abdur Rehman Malang, a Sufi saint*** who arrived in India from the Middle East in 12th century AD.

History of Malanggad Fort
• **Location** – It is built on *3 small parts of the hill* located in Kalyan in *Maharashtra's Thane district*. • **Constructed by** – *King Naladev of the Maurya* Dynasty in the *7th century.* • Some say that King Naladev married off his daughter to Sufi saint. • **Shift of control** – It later fell into the hands of the *Marathas in the 17th century* before being *conquered by the British*.

- **Controversy** – Over identity of the *sacred site* atop Malanggad.
- **Muslim community** – It is the final resting place of Baba Abdur Rehman Malang.
- **Hindu community** – It is ***Machindranath Samadhi,*** an incarnation of Navanath as per Nath Sampraday tradition.
- **Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency** – 1882 data corroborate the *existence of Haji Abd-ul-Rahman's tomb* in Malanggad but there is *no mention of Machindranath's tomb* in these records.
- **Supreme Court of India –** In ***1968***, SC referred to the *site as a dargah*.
- **Name change** – In ***1996***, local Hindus with backing of a politica party succeeded in officially changing the name ***from Haji Malang to Malanggad***.
- **Syncretic tradition** – Despite this, it still continues to be a *shared space* where, traditionally, both a Hindu vahivatdar (priest) and a Muslim mutavalli (caretaker) officiated at religious ceremonies.

> ***Sufism*** *is a way of life that outwardly rejected the religion and emphasized love and devotion to God and compassion towards all fellow human beings. The 4 main Sufi orders practiced in India are Chisti, Qadiriyya, Suhrawardiyya and Naqshbandi order.*

Reference

India Today| Efforts to liberate Haji Malang Dargah

Kalpasar Project

Local fishers of Gujarat's Baruch district suffer from lack of fish catch due to Bhadbhut barrages and others dams across River Narmada.

- It is known as 'The ***Gulf of Khambhat Development Project'***.
- **Mission** – To make a sustainable water state where there is 'water for all, water forever and more crops per drop'.
- **Vision** – To ***store Gujarat's 25% average annual surface water*** by 30 km long dam across the Gulf of Khambhat.
- It will be the *world's largest fresh water reservoir in sea*.
- **Benefits** – It will improve irrigation facility including rejuvenation of rivers and will help in reduction of soil salinity.

Bhadbhut barrage

- **Foundation stone in** – ***2017***, ***part of Kalpasar project***.
- **Location** – About *25 km before Narmada River merges with sea*.
- **Aim** – To *stop the ingress of salinity along the Narmada* River during high tide, *prevent floods* as well as to meet the water requirement of industrial units
- **Benefits** – It will create water reservoir and will provide water supply for drinking, agriculture and industrial purposes.
- It will prevent erosion of cultivable land.
- **Challenges** – ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute's 2021 annual report states that
    - Cut off of the flow of sea water in Narmada River has *affected the availability of hilsa fish* in the estuary and thereby *reduced the income of fishermen*.

Background
• **Narmada River** – It is the *5th largest river in India* and is also one of the only few *westward-flowing ones*. • **Gujarat's Bharuch district** – A spot where *Narmada River meets the Saline water Gulf of Khambhat* forming an estuary. • **Gulf of Khambhat** - An *inlet of the Arabian Sea*, and it marks the *highest tidal waves of India* (11 metres). • **Dams on Narmada River** – *Indira Sagar, Omkareshwar, Maheshwar and especially Sardar Sarovar Dam (SSD).* • **Sardar Sarovar Dam** – It is a *gravity dam* built across river Narmada in Gujarat and *Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan* are 4 Indian states that receive water and electricity from the dam.

References

1. Down To Earth| Limitations of Bhadbhut Barrage
2. Kalpasar| Gulf of khambhat Development Project

Economic Survey

Recently, the Ministry of Finance released a report titled "Indian Economy – A Review" as Economic Survey was not be released at this time.

> *The report 'Indian Economy – A Review' gives the top highlights in the Indian economy from the past 10 years.*

- **ES** – A comprehensive ***annual report*** which displays the *performance of the Indian economy* in the past fiscal year.
- **Prepared by** – Department of Economic Affairs, ministry of Finance.
- **Presented in** – Parliament, normally on 31st January, a day before the presentation of the Budget.

> *The 1st Economic Survey of India was presented in 1950-51 as a part of the Union Budget. However, since 1964, it has been decoupled from the Budget presentation.*

- **ES in 2024** – Since the Lok Sabha elections are due in April, only interim budget will be presented before it.
- Thus, a complete budget and the Economic Survey will be presented only in July 2024, after the results are declared.
- **Presented by** – The Chief Economic Advisor (CEA).
- **Features** – It summarises the performance of government's initiatives and provides an outlook of the prospects of the Indian economy in the short to medium term.
    - **Part A** – Major economic developments in the year as well as a broad review of the economy.
    - **Part B** – It covers specific topics such as social security, poverty, education, healthcare and human development.
- **Importance** – It helps the government in *analysing the performance* of various sectors, *identifying the major impediments* to economic growth and in *formulating economic strategies* for the coming year.

	Economic Survey	Union Budget
Content	It deals with *economic policies* and demonstrates forthcoming economic plans.	It deals with yearly *expenditures and income.*
Presented on	*31st January* on non-election years.	*1st February* on non-election years.
Presented by	Chief Economic Advisor	Union Finance Minister

References

1. The Indian Express| Delaying of Economic Survey in 2024
2. Business Standard| Basis of Economic Survey

Communities & Crisis in Meghalaya

Recently, Meghalaya has released an official state anthem on its statehood day that has led to a controversy over the state's Jaintia tribe.

> *Meghalaya celebrates its statehood day every year on January 21st and 2024 marks its 52nd statehood day. It got its statehood status in 1972.*

- **Boundaries** – It is surrounded by ***Assam*** to the north and northeast and by ***Bangladesh*** to the south and southwest.
- **Communities in Meghalaya** – ***Garo, Khasi and Jainitia*** are 3 major matrilineal communities while other communities are Khynriam, War, Bhoi and Lyngnam.
- **Population** – State's total population is 29.7 lakh (Census 2011).
    - Garos are around 8.21 lakh.
    - Jaintias, Khasis along with tribes War, Bhoi and Lyngngam make a total of about 14.1 lakh.
- **3 Autonomous District Councils** – Khasi Hills, the Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council are created under the provisions of the 6th ***Schedule*** of the Indian Constitution.
- It is for the *administration of tribal areas in certain states*.

- **Crisis** – *The 2-minute-long anthem* features segments in ***3 languages namely English, Garo and Khasi***.
- It led to controversy as it had ***left out the Jaintia or Pnar language.***
- **Government's response** – It has followed the Meghalaya State Language Act and has used languages that are recognised by the act.
- **Meghalaya State Language Act of 2005**
    - **State's official language** – English
    - **Associate Official Language** – Khasi and Garo

> *U Kiang Nangbah is an Jaintia freedom fighter who led an uprising against the British in the Jaintia Hills in the 19th century after the annexation of the Jaintia Kingdom.*

Reference

The Indian Express| Controversy over Meghalaya's State Anthem

Corruption Perceptions Index 2023

India slipped on the corruption perceptions index (CPI) for 2023 to 93 as against 85 it scored for 2022.

- **Released by** – Transparency International.
- **Rankings** – It ranks ***180 countries and territories*** by their *perceived levels of public sector corruption* according to experts and business people.
- **Scale** – 0 to 100
  - **0** – Highly corrupt
  - **100** – Very clean.

Key Findings of the 2023 Report

- Over *two-thirds of countries score below 50* out of 100, which strongly indicates that they have serious corruption problems.
- **Global average** – It is stuck at *only 43*, while the vast majority of countries have made no progress or declined in the last decade.
- *23 countries fell to their lowest* scores to date this year.
- **Top positions** – It includes countries like *New Zealand (3) and Singapore (5)* with continued high score.
- **Bottom positions** – It includes fragile states with authoritarian regimes, including *North Korea and Myanmar*.
- **Asia Pacific region** – For 5 years in a row, the average CPI score for the region *stagnates stubbornly at 45* out of a possible 100.
- 71% of the countries have a CPI score below the regional average and the global average.
- **In South Asia** – Both Pakistan and Sri Lanka grapple with their respective debt burdens and ensuing political instability.
- **India** – Its overall *score was 39 while in 2022, it was 40*.
- It shows score fluctuations small enough that no firm conclusions can be drawn on any significant change.
- **Reason for weak scores** – *Lack of delivery by elected officials* on anti-corruption agendas, *crackdowns on organised civil society* and *attacks on freedoms* of press, assembly and association.

References

1. The Hindu| Key findings of Corruption Perception Index 2023
2. Transparency| Corruption Perception Index

Other Important Topics
Ratle Hydro Electric Project

Govt diverts Chenab River water to expedite hydroelectric project in Jammu and Kashmir.

• The Ratle Hydroelectric Project is an 850 MW hydroelectric power project under construction on the ***Chenab River*** in the Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir.

• The project is scheduled to open in ***2026***.

Women participation in workforce

The latest results of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), released by the Labour Bureau had shown considerable increase in the women participation.

• In 2017-18, the participation rate was 23.3% and in 2022-23, it was 37%.

• The survey is being taken to assess the spread of women employee-friendly practices in the country like creche facilities for children and equal pay for equal work.

Computerization of Agriculture & Rural Development Banks (ARDBs)

Union Home Minister launched the computerization scheme for the Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RCSs) and Agriculture and Rural Development Banks (ARDBs) of the states in New Delhi recently.

• Agricultural and Rural Development Banks (ARDBs) are banks that play a significant role in improving land productivity.

• In the 1960s and 1970s, ARDBs helped develop minor irrigation and farm mechanization.

• **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** is an ***apex development bank*** that supports and promotes agriculture and rural development.

C-BOT

The director general of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) launched C-Bot recently.

• C-Bot is a coral monitoring and surveillance robot ***underwater unmanned vehicle*** indigenously developed by the NIO.

• The underwater vehicle will help in studying temperature, humidity and climate and will help collect samples and take photos, study growing biology in extreme environment.

EV batteries

A new study has found that Coal can inject some extra life into chargeable batteries for electric vehicles (EV) without burning.

• An Electric Vehicle Battery (EVB) is a rechargeable battery that powers the electric motors of a hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) or battery electric vehicle (BEV).

• EV batteries are also known as ***traction batteries***.

• EV batteries store electricity for transmission to an alternating or continuous current engine.

Sheen-e She

• The mascot and logo of Khelo India Winter Games, 2024 were launched recently.

• In keeping with the tradition and bio-diversity of the region, the mascot of the Khelo India Winter Games 2024 is a ***snow leopard***.

• It has been named ***'Sheen-e She' or Shan in Ladakh region***.

Best marching contingents and tableaux awards

The Ministry of Defence announced the winners of the 2024 Republic Day Parade marching contingents and tableaux awards recently.

• The government selects one marching contingent and one tableau as the best each year.

• An Expert Committee of the Ministry of Defence makes the selection.

• In addition to the committee's selection, a popular choice award is also given to the marching contingents and tableaux based on public votes.

Best Marching Contingent among the 3 services	Indian Air Force
Best Marching Contingent among CAPF/other auxiliary forces	CRPF
Best 3 Tableaux (States/UTs)	**1st** - Gujarat (Clean-Green energy efficient Gujarat) **2nd** - Odisha's tableau, themed "Woman Empowerment in Viksit Bharat" **3rd** - Culture Ministry's tableau themed '***Bharat: Mother of Democracy***'

Agasthyagama edge

Scientists discover new kangaroo lizard species, a diminutive dragon from Western Ghats, Kerala recently.

• Agasthyagama edge or the northern kangaroo lizard, which belongs to the ***Agamidae family***, is known to have a maximum snout-vent length of 4.3 cm.

• The species is the 2nd one of the *Agasthyagama* genus after ***A. beddomii or Indian kangaroo lizard*** that has been previously reported from Sivagiri hills in Tamil Nadu.

• The lizard may resemble the *mythical fire-breathing creatures* of legends.

• **Habitat –** These lizards do not climb trees like other lizards & they are mostly terrestrial and found in areas with dense leaf litter cover.

Rotational Monarchy of Malaysia

Malaysia welcomes new king Sultan Ibrahim in unique rotating monarchy recently.

• 9 of Malaysia's 13 states practices a unique rotational form of monarchy, in which the heads of the country's ***9 royal families*** take turns to be king for a ***5-year reign*** through a ***secret ballot.***

• It is headed by a traditional ethnic ***Malay ruler, mostly known as the sultan***, in one of the ***world's largest monarchy systems***.

• The order of rotation among the sultans was originally determined by seniority, based on how long they had been ruling.

Members of 16th Finance Commission

• The Government has appointed 4 members of the newly-constituted ***16th Finance Commission*** recently.

- Former Expenditure Secretary - Ajay Narayan Jha,
- SBI Group Chief Economic Advisor - Soumya Kanti Ghosh,
- 2 other members - Annie George Mathew and Niranjan Rajadhyaksha have been appointed as members.



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