UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelim Bits 07-02-2025

Ban on Begging

Why in News?

Bhopal district collector recently issued orders to prohibit begging in the district, Madhya Pradesh after Indore.

- Bhopal has prohibited begging across all public places, including including registration of FIRs for receiving and giving alms.
- **Governing law -** The orders are under ***section 163*** of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.
- This law gives officials including the district magistrate, sub-divisional magistrate or any other executive magistrate, the power to issue an order in urgent cases of 'nuisance or apprehended danger'.
- The order can direct any person from abstaining from a certain act.
- It may apply to persons residing in a particular place or area, or the public generally frequenting or visiting a particular place or area.
- **Punishments -** The section punishes those disobeying an order announced by a public servant.
- If an order under the section is not obeyed, the person can be punished with simple imprisonment for a term ***up to 6 months***, fine up to Rs 2500, or both.
- If the disobedience of the order causes or tends to cause danger to human life, health or safety, imprisonment can be extended to ***1 year*** and the fine to Rs 5000.
- The act also says that an order under the section shall remain in force for not more than two months, provided the state government considers it necessary that the order remain in force for a period not exceeding ***6 months.***
- Orders under the section-erstwhile section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code are extended periodically if required by issuing fresh orders.
- **Begging related laws -** Bombay Prevention of Beggary Act, 1959, Bengal Vagrancy Act, 1943 and the Cochin Vagrancy Act, 1945.
- In 2018, the Delhi High Court struck down some sections of the Act as unconstitutional, decriminalising begging.
- There is ***no central Act on begging*** in the country but many states have enacted their own laws, most of them based on the 1959 Act.

Reference

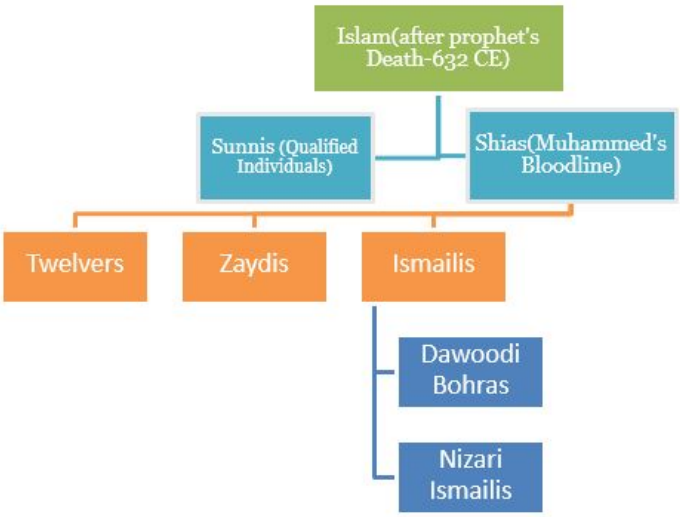
The Indian Express | Bhopal's new order criminalising begging

Lineage of Islam

Why in News?

Prince Karim al-Husseini, who was the Aga Khan IV, died in Lisbon recently at his 88.

Lineage of Islam



- All 3 trace the descent of Muhammad through a chain of Imams or religious teachers, but they differ in the specifics of what the line of descent comprises.
- Twelver Shias, the largest, comprising 90% of the total Shia population, follow a line of 12 divinely-ordained Imams, with the 12th Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, believed to be alive and in occultation.
- The Ismailis or Sevener Shias concur with the Twelvers till the 6th Imam, after which the two lines split.
- The Zaydis or Fiver Shias split from the other lines after the first 4 Imams.
- Nizaris trace the Prophet's hereditary descent all the way to the Aga Khans.
- The Dawoodi Bohras recognise direct descent only till the 18th Imam, and follow today a line of Dais who are representatives of the concealed Imam.
- Prince Karim was the eldest son of Prince Aly Khan and the grandson of Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah, or the Aga Khan III.
- **Aga Khan IV -** The Aga Khan is the Imam of the Nizari Ismaili Shias, and holds near-divine status among the community.
- The title of Aga Khan was bestowed on Hasan Ali Shah, the 46th Imam of Nizari Ismailis by the Iranian king Fath-Ali Shah Qajar in the 19th century.
- Following a deal with the Portuguese government in 2015, the Aga Khan IV declared Lisbon as the global seat of the Nizari Imamate.
- Today, the Nizari Ismailis are spread out across more than 30 countries, although most trace their origin to Persia or the Indian subcontinent.
- They are not a majority community in any location.

Reference

The Indian Express | Who was the Aga Khan IV?

Fort William

Why in News?

Recently, Fort William was renamed Vijay Durg.

- **Historical background** – It was built by the British in *1781* and named after ***King William III*** of England.
- **Located in** – Eastern bank of the river *Hoogly in Kolkata*, West Bengal.
- Robert Clive started the new structure in 1758 CE and the 1st phase of construction was completed by 1781 CE.
- **Area coverage** – Present day structure consists More than 170 acres and houses many colonial and modern-day structures together.
- **Composition** – It comprises the largest urban park of the city and is popularly referred to as the ***Lungs of Kolkata***.
- **Structure** – It was built in brick and mortar as an irregular octagon and designed as a *star-shaped fort*, including structures inspired by Georgian and Gothic styles.
- The walls and defenses of the fort were structured to defend against cannon firing (as per the need of the times) rather than explosive shelling.
- **Gates -** Chowringhee, Plassey, Calcutta, Water Gate, St. George and Treasury gates.
- The Granary Barracks inside the fort complex were built by Governor-General Warren Hastings (1772–1785 CE).
- In 1856 CE the Dalhousie Barrack (named after Lord Dalhousie, 1848-1856), a 4-storey building, was built as an army garrison to accommodate soldiers.
- The Kitchener's House, initially built as a blockhouse for the Fortress Assault Company in 1771 CE, was converted into an official residence for the Commander-in-Chief of the British Indian Army in 1784 CE.
- Fort William soon emerged as the official governing base for British India.



Sir Charles Eyre *was the* ***1st President and Governor-General*** *of Fort William in Bengal.*

- **Commanding center** – After Independence, it is the headquarters of the Eastern Command of the Indian Army.
- The Indian Army has gradually opened to allowing access to selected areas of the fort

complex to the general public.

- **Vijay Durg** – It is derived from the oldest fort along the Sindhudurg coast in Maharashtra and served as a naval base for the Marathas under Chhatrapati Shivaji.
- **Gulami Ki Mansikta Se Mukti** – It is an initiative termed as freedom from the mentality of slavery.
- It aims at removing vestiges of the colonial era and "Indianising" military traditions and customs.
- Additionally, Kitchener House inside Fort William has been renamed Manekshaw House, and South gate, formerly known as St. George's Gate, is now Shivaji Gate.

On the occasion of the 48th Vijay Diwas, 16th Dec 2019, it was announced that the Vijay Smarak in Fort William would be open to everyone on sundays and public holidays.

References

1. The Hindu| Fort William renamed Vijay Durg
2. Indian Culture| Fort William

Bryospilus Bharaticus

Why in News?

Recently, the researchers have discovered a new species of tniy crustacean in Western Ghats.

- It is a ***new species of water fleas*** (type of small crustacean).

Water fleas *are small aquatic animals belonging to crustacea group and are usually found in rivers, ponds, and pools.*

- **Discovered in** – Moss growths of *Korigad fort* and adjacent areas on Deccan Plateau near Pune in the Western Ghats.
- **Taxonomy**
  - **Scientific name** – The researchers named the organism as *Bryospilus (Indobryospilus) Bharaticus*.
  - **Genus** – Bryospilus, is a unique animal with characteristic adaptations suited for *living in semi-terrestrial environments*, such as water film found on mosses.
  - This discovery marks the ***1st time***, in this genus has been recorded in Tropical Asia.



Research Highlights

- The relatives of this species are found across various continents that were once part of the supercontinent Gondwanaland, which included South America, Australia, New Zealand, and Africa, along with India.
- The researchers suggest that ancestors of this species could have been present in the Indian subcontinent before the breakup of Gondwanaland, approximately 200 million years ago.
- The species' presence in a pristine environment with minimal human disturbance highlights the health of the habitat.

References

1. The Times of India| New Species of Tiny Crustacean
2. Pune News| Asian Representative of Bryospilus Genus

One Liners 07-02-2025

Geography

Seabed 2030 Project

• **Launched in** – *2017*.
• **Collaborative project** – Between IHO/IOC General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) and the Nippon Foundation.
• **Aim** – To *map the entire ocean floor by 2030*.

Polity & Governance

Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan

Currently, 77 tourist sites showcase India's rich military heritage.

• **Launched in** – *2025*, on January 15, Indian Army Day.
• **Nodal Ministry** – Ministry of Defence.
• **Objective** – To raise awareness by opening historically significant locations linked to the valor and sacrifices of the Indian Armed Forces to tourists.
• These places have *war memorials/museums* and some facilities for refreshment etc.
• **Tourism sites** – It spans across various states,
  - 11 – Jammu and Kashmir
  - 4 – Himachal Pradesh
  - 7 – Rajasthan & Sikkim
  - 5 – Gujarat & Ladakh
  - 1 – Arunachal Pradesh
  - 8 – Uttarakhand.

Shatavari –For Better Health

• **Launched by** – Ministry of Ayush and National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB).
• **Concept** – It is a nationwide *species-specific campaign.*
• **Objectives** – To spreading knowledge of the *health benefits of medicinal plants* across the country.
• **Key role** – It is known for its numerous health benefits, particularly in supporting women's health and enhancing immunity.

SMILE – Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise

• **Launched in** – *2022*.
• **Nodal Ministry** – Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
  - **Sub-schemes –** Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons.
  - Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging.
• **Focused on** – Extensively rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counseling, education, skill development, economic linkages etc.

'Pariksha Pe Charcha" 2025

• **Show features –** 8 episodes focusing on stress-free exams.
• **Initiative –** Aims at exam warriors, parents, and teachers**.**

Economy

Geo-Economic Fragmentation (GEF)

• It is a policy-driven reversal of global economic integration often guided by strategic considerations.
• **Composition** – This process encompasses different channels, including *trade, capital, and migration flows*.
• It replacing the globalization.

Delhi International Leather Expo (DILEX) 2025

• **Aim** – To enhance exports, create employment & strengthen India's global market presence.
• **Introducing Reforms** – To boost trade & industry, by reducing basic Customs Duty on wet blue leather & eliminating export duty on crust leather.
• **Custom financial assistance** – It includes customized credit cards for micro-enterprises & support for SC/ST women entrepreneurs.
• **Export Promotion Mission** – It will be launched with sectoral & BharatTradeNet (BTN) will be established to streamline international trade.
• Council for Leather Exports has set a target of $47 billion by 2030, with a special focus on footwear & leather exports.

Environment

Nematodes

In Goa, a symposium organized by Syngenta India, called for an effective nematode management.

• Nematodes are any of a major group of long cylinder-shaped worms that are ***parasites in animals or plants*** or live in soil or water.
• It is commonly called as *eelworms or threadworms*.
• **Habitat** – Found in almost every *terrestrial and aquatic habitat*.
• **Feed on** – Underground *plant tissues* such as roots, rhizomes, tubers and bulbs, making them invisible enemies.
• **Impact** – Attack plant roots, causing stunted growth, reducing yields, and increasing their vulnerability to diseases.
• **India** – A major crop losses due to plant parasitic nematodes are valued at ₹25,000 crore annually.

Science

Artificial Photosynthesis in Space

Chinese astronauts aboard Shenzhou-19 achieved the 1st demonstration of artificial photosynthesis in space.

• **Innovative approach** – It enables astronauts to *turn sunlight into vital rocket fuel*, namely oxygen and ethylene.
• **Usage** – The *drawer-shaped device*, the power of semiconductor catalysts, mimic the natural processes that plants use for survival.
• **Features** – It operates efficiently at room temperature and standard atmospheric pressure, requiring significantly less energy.
• It revolutionizes long-distance space travel, by making it feasible to *convert carbon dioxide into usable resources*.

China's Chang'e-7 Mission

• **Aim** – To search for water on the Moon's South Pole.
• **Agency –** Chinese Space Agency (CNSA).
• **Launch –** Planned to launch in 2026.
• **Components** – Orbiter, lander, lunar rover & a flying robotic detector.

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