

UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelim Bits 11-01-2025

Indo-Burmese Pangolin

Why in News?

Recently, scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kolkata have identified a new species of Indo-Burmese pangolin.

- **Pangolins** - They are the only mammals wholly-covered in scales and they use those scales to protect themselves from predators in the wild.
- **Indo-Burmese pangolin** - It is a distinct phylogenetic species of Asian pangolin, diverged from the Chinese pangolin around 3.4 million years ago, during the Pliocene Epoch.
 - **Scientific name** - Manis Indoburmanica.

***Phylogenetic species** is the smallest set of organisms that share an ancestor and can be distinguished from other such sets.*

- **Distinct species** - It has a genetic distance of 0.038 and a barcode gap of 3.8% which reinforced its status as a distinct species.
- It is influenced by geoclimatic changes in the Indo-Burma region.

***Genetic distance** is a measure of the genetic divergence between species or between populations within a species, whether the distance measures time from common ancestor or degree of differentiation.*

***Mitochondrial genomes** include mitochondrial DNA are inherited to offspring from their mother.*

- **Distribution** - Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar.
- **In India** - Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.
- It is home to 2 species,
 - **Indian Pangolin** - Found across the subcontinent.
 - **Chinese Pangolin** - Found across a larger area in south Asia.
- Bihar, West Bengal and Assam have both species in their States.
- **Threats** - Pangolins are among the most trafficked wild mammals globally due to poaching and habitat degradation.
- **Conservation Status** -It hasn't yet been concluded.



World Pangolin Day is observed every year on February 18.

Reference

[The Hindu| Scientists Discovered New Species of Indo-Burmese Pangolin](#)

Kurukop Echo Art

Why in News?

A recent study by the researchers in South Africa suggested a distinct echo attracted the ancient artists to one site, Kurukop.

Kurukop

- It is an *archaeological site*.
- **Located in** - Nama Karoo region of *South Africa*.
- **Geological formation** - Began to accumulate from about 300 million years ago, before the breakup of super continent Gondwanaland.
- **Historical formation** - It is an *eroded sandstone hill*, transformed by volcanic activity.
- **Signs of human evidence** - It is marked by *112 petroglyphs* and other signs of human presence, such as ostrich eggshell fragments and pottery, dating from c. 11 500 before present.
- **Petroglyphs** - It depicts images of Eland, elephants, zebra, ostriches, wildebeest, rhinoceros and animal-human hybrids.
- The depiction were made by *hunter-gatherer San and Khoe herder people* who visited Kurukop repeatedly.

Petroglyphs engraved on rocks, have an obvious visual attraction.

- **Kurukop echo** - This place *provides a distinctive echo* that ensured the hunter gatherers to repeatedly visit this place.
- **Echo Art** - Evidence shows that those people created rock art combined with performances like clapping, singing, dancing, which in this case was enhanced by echoes.

Echo refers to the repetition of sound caused by the reflection of sound.

- It also provides a reference point for a mythological story from the region that speaks about the relationship between echo, wind, mountain and breath.
- **Cultural relevance** - Petroglyph distribution data and Echo pattern, shows 60% of the petroglyphs created directly in the echo zone.
- This suggests that Kurukop people were most likely to create images in the area that echoed strongly.



Reference

[The Hindu| Kurukop Echoed Art](#)

Depersonalization and Derealization Disorder (DPDR)

Why in News?

Recently, an article described about the Depersonalization and Derealization Disorder (DPDR).

- **A mental health condition** - A state where individuals experience persistent *feelings of detachment from themselves* or their surroundings.

	Derealization	Depersonalization
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of feeling of detachment from environment, objects & people in it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feeling of detachment from themselves.
Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distortion of the distance from the size or shape of objects • A heightened awareness of surroundings. • Feeling as recent events happened in the distant past. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inability to recognize or describe emotions. • Feeling unconnected to body, mind and feelings. • Sense of body and limbs are distorted and head is wrapped in cotton.

- **Susceptible population** - It *affects 1 to 2% of the global population*, predominantly youngsters.



- **Symptoms** - Sensation of being in a dream or fog.
 - The world appears flat, colourless or artificial.
 - *Distortions in visual perception*, with objects appearing either blurred or unusually sharp.
 - Sounds that seem either amplified or muted.
 - An altered perception of time, which may seem to move too fast or too slow.
- The above symptoms can last for hours, days, weeks or even months.
- **Treatment** - It is *treatable* by addressing the root cause, whether it is anxiety, trauma or depression.

Reference

[The Hindu | Understanding Depersonalization Disorder](#)

One Liners 11-01-2025

Social Issues

Drug Trafficking and National Security Conference

- **Conducted in** - in New Delhi.
- **Organized by** - Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).
- **Aim** - To address the growing concern of drug trafficking and its impact on national security, with a *special focus on 8 states* and *Union Territories* of northern India.

Anti-Narcotics Measures in India

- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is implementing a 3-pronged strategy to achieve a *drug-free India by 2047*.
- **MANAS portal** - National Narcotics Helpline.
- **ANTF** - Anti-Narcotics Task Force of States and Union Territories.
- **NCORD** - Narcotics Coordination Mechanism.
- **PIT-NDPS Act** - Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.
- **Special NDPS courts** - For speedy trial of drug-related cases.
- **Policy** - Zero Tolerance Policy against drug trafficking.

Polity & Governance

National Financial Reporting Authority

- **Constituted in** - 2018 under Companies Act, 2013.
- **Functions and Duties** - Recommend accounting and auditing policies & standards to be adopted by companies for approval by the Central Government.
- Monitor and enforce compliance with auditing & accounting standards.

Environment

Cleanliness Measures at Mahakumbh 2025

- Under - Namami Gange mission.
- Over 28,000 toilets
 - *Fiber Reinforced Plastic (FRP) toilets.*
 - *Prefabricated steel toilets with soak pits*
- 20,000 community urinals.
- 37.75 lakh liner bags - For waste collection and disposal.

Miscellaneous

18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention

- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** - It is also known as Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day, is celebrated on January 9.
- **Commemoration day** - Of the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India in 1915.
- **1st celebrated in** - 2003.
- **Revised in** - 2015, to celebrate the event once every 2 years.
- **Importance** - To mark the contribution of overseas Indian Community towards the development of India.

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards

- **Award** - It is the highest honour conferred on overseas Indians.
- **2025 awardees** - It include, among others,
 - President of Trinidad & Tobago
 - Christine Carla Kangaloo in public affairs
 - Baroness Usha Kumari Prashar from the UK in politics
 - Dr Sharmila Ford from the U.S. in community service.

National Youth Day (12th January)

- **Commemoration** - On the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.
- **Declared in** - 1984.
- Since 1985 the event is celebrated in India every year.

Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue

- Indian PM to interact with 3000 young leaders selected through a merit-based, multi-level selection process from over 30 lakh participants.
- **Aligns with** - Indian PM's Independence Day call to engage 1 lakh youth in politics without political affiliations.
- **Importance** - It provides them a national platform to make their ideas for Viksit Bharat, a reality.

World Hindi Day 2025

- **Day** - It is celebrated every year on January 10.
- It is an important day that celebrates the promotion of the Hindi language at a global level.
- **2025 theme** - A Global Voice of Unity and Cultural Pride.

Khelo India ASMITA Women's League

- **Conducted by** - Sports Authority of India (SAI), in collaboration with National Sports Federations (NSFs).
- **Objectives** - To increase the participation of women in sports by organising leagues in various disciplines.
- To provide competition exposure to women athletes of different age categories across the country.
- **Event** - ASMITA Khelo India Women's Yogasana League 2024-25 sees over 7000 participations.