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Bon Bibi

- Bon Bibi is a deity of the Sunder ban forest, west Bengal.
- The followers of Bon Bibi are fishermen, crab-collectors and honey-gatherers who live in the mangroves with wild animals such as tigers and crocodiles to earn a livelihood.
- They believe that only Bon Bibi protects them when they enter the forest and survive in tiger dominated areas.
- People express their belief in Bon Bibi through Bon Bibir Palagaan, it is a centuries-old folk theatre and dramatic storytelling form that is enacted throughout the island.
- Traditionally, the performances are held near Bon Bibi temples or villages bordering the forests.

All India Tiger Estimation

- All India Tiger Estimation 2018 has entered the Guinness World Record for being the *world's largest camera trap wildlife survey.*
- The fourth iteration of the survey, conducted in 2018-19 was the most comprehensive to date, in terms of both resource and data amassed.
- According to the report of 2018, India now has an estimated 2967 tigers out of which 2461 individual tigers have been photo captured, about 83 % of the tiger population.
- With this number, India is home to nearly 75% of the global tiger population.
- India has already fulfilled its resolve of doubling tiger numbers, *made at St. Petersburg in 2010, much before the target year of 2022.*
- The All India Tiger Estimation done every four year once, It is

1. Steered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority
2. Technically supported by Wildlife Institute of India
3. *Implemented by State Forest Departments and partners.*

Snakebite Mortality in India

- Centre for Global Health Research (CGHR), Canada has recently released

a study titled *'Snakebite Mortality in India: A Nationally Representative Mortality Survey'.*

- The study found that India has recorded 1.2 million snakebite deaths in the 20-year period from 2000 to 2019 with an average of 58,000 deaths caused by snakebite annually.
- Around 70% of these deaths occurred in low altitude, rural areas of eight States namely Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- *Half of all the snakebite deaths occurred during the monsoon period from June to September.*
- The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes snakebite as a *top-priority neglected tropical disease.*
- Indian anti-venoms neutralize venom from only the following snakes such as

1. Spectacled Cobra (there are three other Indian cobra species),
2. Common Krait (there are seven other krait species),
3. Russell's Viper,
4. Saw-scaled viper,

- Whereas there are 12 other snake species causing fatal bites in the country.

Ypthima watsoni

- Recently, a team of wildlife researchers has rediscovered *'Ypthima watsoni' butterfly.*
- The species was last seen in the year 1958 in Manipur.
- The rediscovery was after 61 years near a *village called Phuldungsei in Jampui Hills under the North Tripura district.*
- It is a species of *Satyrinae butterfly and commonly known as 'Looped three-ring'.*
- It was distributed in *Assam, Myanmar and Thailand.*

Tetrastemma Freyae

- Recently, researchers have identified a new species of marine invertebrate i.e. 'Tetrastemma Freyae', found along the coast of Tamil Nadu.
- It feeds on dead and decaying material and helps to recycle nutrients in coastal and deep water sediments.

- It is associated with sediments and is predatory as it has a role in maintaining the food chain.
- *It uses its proboscis, similar to a butterfly which does to collect nectar.*
- It has neurotoxins in its proboscis which could lead to developing drugs.

Ophiocordyceps Nutans

- Recently, researchers have found Ophiocordyceps nutans (fungi) for the first time in central India, at the Kanger Valley National Park in Bastar, Chhattisgarh.
- *Earlier, these have been reported in India only from the Western Ghats.*
- Ophiocordyceps nutans host on a specific insect, Halyomorpha halys.
- Halyomorpha halys is commonly known as the stink bug and is a pest to forest trees and agricultural crops.
- The stink bug is known to damage the flower and fruits of soybean, green beans, apple, pear, etc.
- Studies have shown that these fungi can be used as a biological pest control agent against the stink bugs.
- *Exploring these fungi as a pesticide will help reduce the harmful effect of chemicals in fields.*
- In the Western Ghats, the local people use these fungi as an immune stimulator.
- *Scientists claim that it contains a component called 'cordycepin' which has anti-cancer properties.*

Kanger Valley National Park

- Kanger Valley got the status of a national park in 1982.
- It derives its name from the Kanger River, one of the very few perennial rivers of Bastar.
- The park is a typical *mixed humid deciduous type of forest*, in which the Sal, Saugaun, teak and bamboo trees are available in abundance.
- The most popular species in this area is the state bird of *Chattisgarh, Bastar Hill Myna* which is capable of emulating the human voices.
- The park is known for the presence of underground limestone caves.

Source: AIR, the Hindu

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