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Operation Olivia

- Every year, the Indian Coast Guard conducts “Operation Olivia”, to protect turtles as they arrive to nest in Odisha
- Odisha has also formulated laws for protecting Olive Ridley turtles, and the Orissa Marine Fisheries Act empowers the Coast Guard as one of its enforcement agencies.
- Studies have found three main factors that damage Olive Ridley turtles and their eggs
    a. heavy predation of eggs by dogs and wild animals,
    b. indiscriminate fishing with trawlers and gill nets &
    c. beach soil erosion
- Dense fishing activity along the coasts of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal, especially trawlers, mechanised fishing boats and gill-netters pose a severe threat to turtles.
- It is estimated that only one in a thousand survive to adulthood.
- So Operation Olivia was initiated in the early 1980s and it helps protect Olive Ridley turtles.
- It involves round-the-clock surveillance from November till May using fast patrol vessels, air cushion vessels, interceptor craft etc.
- Other activities include enforcing the use of turtle excluder devices (TED) by trawlers in the waters adjoining nesting areas, prohibiting the use of gill nets and curtailing turtle poaching.
- All five species of sea turtles found in India are included in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and in the Appendix I of the CITES.

Arribadas

- The Olive Ridley has one of the most extraordinary nesting habits in the natural world, including mass nesting called arribadas.
- The 480-km-long Odisha coast has three arribada beaches at Gahirmatha, the mouth of the Devi river, and in Rushikulya, where about 1 lakh nests are found annually.
- They gather along the coast for breeding and nesting from November to December

- More recently, a new mass nesting site has been discovered in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, with more than 5,000 nests reported in a season.

Tulu

- Tulu speakers have been requesting the governments to give Tulu the official language status and include it in the eighth schedule to the Constitution (Presently, there are 22 official languages).
- Tulu is a Dravidian language spoken mainly in regions of Karnataka (Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts) and Kerala (Kasaragod district). This region is informally known as Tulu Nadu.
- Robert Caldwell (1814-1891), in his book, A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South-Indian Family of Languages, called Tulu as one of the most highly developed languages of the Dravidian family.
- Tulu is not an official language in the country. But the Karnataka government introduced Tulu as a language in schools a few years ago.
- To know more about the Tulu issue, click here.

River Devika National Project

- The River Devika Project in Jammu & Kashmir is being compared with the pioneer "NamamiGange" project of the Central Government.
- Under the Centrally funded Rs.190 crore National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) Devika project,
    1. Bathing "ghats" (places) on the river's banks will be developed,
    2. Encroachments will be removed,
    3. Natural water bodies will be restored and
    4. Catchment areas will be developed.
- The project includes the construction of three sewage treatment plants of 8 MLD, 4 MLD and 1.6 MLD capacities, sewerage network, protection structures, small hydropower plants and three solar power plants.
- On completion of the project, the rivers will see reduction in pollution and improvement in water quality.

Devika River

- The Devika river originates from the hilly Suddha Mahadev temple in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It flows down towards western Punjab (now in Pakistan) where it merges with the Ravi river.
- The Devika river holds great religious significance as it is revered by Hindus as the sister of river Ganga.
- In 2019, the Devika Bridge in Udhampur was inaugurated. This Bridge takes

care of traffic congestion and also ensures smooth passage of Army convoys and vehicles.

GDP as a Measure of Economic Growth

- Ever since India revised the way it calculates its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2015, there's been a debate raging not just about how India calculates its GDP but also about GDP as a measure itself.
- The International Monetary Fund states that the GDP measures the monetary value of final goods and services i.e., those that are bought by the final user - produced in a country in a given period of time.
- **Debate** - For a while now, GDP's dominance has been questioned.
- GDP fails to capture the welfare loss. GDP often doesn't adequately account for all the welfare gains as well.
- As far as the broader question of people's wellbeing is concerned, GDP is inadequate. But GDP is not designed for this purpose.
- There are suggestions to find alternative measures to GDP as it is a simple measure, and berating it by judging it based on social or moral norms would be completely missing the point of using GDP.
- **Alternatives to GDP** - GDP per capita, median income, inequality (Gini coefficient), net domestic product (NDP), well-being (using Maryland's Genuine Progress Indicator), etc.,

Epstein - Barr virus (EBV)

- Scientists have recently found that the cancer-causing virus Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) affects the glial cells.
- Glial cells are the non-neural cells in the central nervous system.
- The EBV can cause cancers like head and neck cancer, B-cell (a type of white blood cells) cancer, stomach cancer, Burkett's lymphoma, Hodgkin's lymphoma, post-transplant lymphoid disorders, and so on.
- More than 95% of the adult population is positive for EBV.
- However, the infection is mostly asymptomatic, and very little is known about the factors which trigger the development of such disease.
- It was the detection of the virus in patients with neurodegenerative diseases that triggered the search for the mechanism of propagation of the virus.
- The detection is done using the phenomenon of Raman Scattering that provides information on the structure of any material based on the vibrations produced in them.
- Similarly, the light falling on the virus generates vibrations in the biomolecules, depending on the make of the virus.
- Using RS, the light that is scattered by the virus can be captured and analyzed to understand its structure and behaviour.

- Interestingly, every virus has a different biomolecular composition and thus generates a unique Raman Spectrum that serves as a fingerprint to its identity.

New Atlantic Charter

- US President has signed a “New Atlantic Charter” with the British Prime Minister.
- The charter promises to work closely with all democratic partners in resolving contemporary global problems.
- Eighty years ago, the Atlantic Charter provided the basis for the construction of a new global order after the Second World War.
- The current declaration is a reprise of the Atlantic Charter and is based on the conviction that the West needs to reboot itself to cope with the rise of authoritarian powers like China, the devastating Covid-19 pandemic, and the expansive threat of climate change.

Source: PIB, The Hindu, The Indian Express

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