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Sustainability Index and Flourishing Index

- Sustainability index and Flourishing Index report is commissioned by the WHO, UNICEF and the Lancet assess the capacity of 180 countries on the issue.
- India ranked 77th on a sustainability index that takes into account per capita carbon emissions and ability of children in a nation to live healthy lives.
- Under the Sustainability Index, the authors noted that promoting today's national conditions for children to survive and thrive must not come at the cost of eroding future global conditions for children's ability to flourish.
- The Sustainability Index ranks countries on excess carbon emissions compared with the 2030 target.
- This provides a convenient and available proxy for a country's contribution to sustainability in future.
- It secures 131st spot on a Flourishing Index that measures the best chance at survival and well-being for children.
- Flourishing is the geometric mean of Surviving and Thriving.
- For Surviving, the authors selected maternal survival, survival in children younger than 5 years old, suicide, access to maternal and child health services, basic hygiene and sanitation, and lack of extreme poverty.
- For Thriving, the domains were educational achievement, growth and nutrition, reproductive freedom, and protection from violence.
- According to the report world's survival depended on children being able to flourish, but no country is doing enough to give them a sustainable future.
- Norway leads the table for survival, health, education and nutrition rates - followed by South Korea and the Netherlands. Central African Republic, Chad and Somalia come at the bottom.

Biojet Fuel

- IAF's An-32 aircraft using a 10% blend of Indian biojet fuel took off from Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpoche airport recently.
- This was the first time that this mix was used in both engines of an

aircraft.

- Biojet fuel is prepared from “non-edible tree borne oil”, and is procured from various tribal areas of India.
- This fuel is made from Jatropha oil sourced from Chattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP, Dehradun.
- The technology to produce this fuel was developed by CSIR-IIP in 2013, but it could not be tested and certified for commercial use immediately.
- According to official sources the aircraft was flight tested and its performance was validated at Chandigarh Air Base prior to undertaking the operational flight to Leh.
- Leh is at an altitude of 10,682 ft above mean sea level, and is among the world’s highest and most difficult operational airfields.
- Even during clear weather, operating an aircraft at Leh is a challenge, given the reduced power output of the engines in the rarefied atmosphere, turbulent winds, and proximity of the mountains.
- Evaluating the performance of biojet fuel under conditions prevalent in Leh was considered extremely important from an operational perspective.
- The use of biofuel in an Indian Air Force transport aircraft, saying such innovations would bring down carbon emissions and lower the nation’s oil import bill.

Public libraries Act

- The Public Library act is a legislation, which gives local administration powers to establish public libraries with the assistance from the state and the central governments.
- As of now, 19 states have enacted their own Public Libraries Act with Tamil Nadu (formerly Madras) being the first one to implement it way back in 1948.
- Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat, Odisha and Haryana are among others that have enacted their own legislation.
- The Punjab Library Association is making efforts since 1948 to get a Punjab Public Library Act enacted.
- Public libraries Act mandates that 70 per cent financial assistance for opening a public library will come from Centre and the remaining is borne by the state government.
- This Act can thus help in opening more and more libraries, as has been done in South India where people have libraries even in their homes.
- It can inculcate reading habits among youngsters as well as adults.

Cave Fish

- Scientists have discovered a new cave fish in Meghalaya which is similar in anatomy to an endangered masher species.
- It is "by far the largest known subterranean fish in the world.
- The biggest specimen they found was longer than 40 cm.
- All previous discoveries of cave fish from India have been of small fish, and this is the largest of the cave fish discovered in the country, and probably from anywhere in the world.
- Widely consumed in India, mahseer live mostly in "fast-flowing streams and rivers and also large reservoirs.
- The new species is similar to the golden mahseer, its unusual underground home in Meghalaya's Jaintia Hills.

Malai Mahadeshwara Tiger Reserve

- MM Hills wildlife sanctuary is spread over 906.18 sq km is contiguous to

1. Bandipur and Biligiri Ranganatha Temple (BRT) Tiger Reserve (584 sq km) on one side,
2. Satyamangalam Tiger Reserve (1,412 sq km) in Tamil Nadu on the other,
3. Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary (1,027 sq km) also borders it.

- The sanctuary will be renamed as Malai Mahadeshwara Hill Tiger Reserve (MMH TR) with a core area of 670.95 sq km spread across Malai Mahadeshwara Reserve Forest, Hanur Reserve Forest and Yediyarahalli Reserve Forest.
- The sanctuary presently has about 20 tigers as evident in photographs from camera traps and wildlife experts vouch for its potential to rival the Bandipur-Nagarahole-Wayanad-Mudumalai landscape in the years ahead.
- The forests has an abundance of prey species like gaur, sambar, chital, four-horned antelope, wild boar, etc., according to authorities who say that studies have proved that the prey density was 5.05 animals per sq km.
- Being part of Mysore Elephant Reserve, these forests also support nearly 300 elephants.
- This is a unique geographical zone that acts as a bridge between the Western and Eastern Ghats.
- Decks have been cleared to notify the Malai Mahadeshwara Wildlife Sanctuary as a tiger reserve.
- The approval from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is expected any time now.

- Once notified, Chamarajanagar district will have the rare distinction in the country of harbouring three tiger reserves.
- Also, with this, Karnataka will have six tiger reserves, the others being Nagarahole, Bhadra, and Anshi-Dandeli, apart from Bandipur and BRT Tiger Reserves.

Namdapha National Park

- Namdapha National Park is a 1,985 Sq,Km large protected area in Arunachal Pradesh of Northeast India.
- With more than 1,000 floral and about 1,400 faunal species, it is a biodiversity hotspot in the Eastern Himalayas.
- It is India's easternmost tiger reserve,
- The national park harbors the northernmost lowland evergreen rainforests in the world at 27°N latitude.
- It also harbors extensive dipterocarp forests, comprising the northwestern parts of the Mizoram-Manipur-Kachin rain forests ecoregion.
- It is the fourth largest national park in India.

Pakke Reserve

- Pakke Tiger Reserve, also known as Pakhui Tiger Reserve, is a Project Tiger reserve in the East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh in northeastern India.
- The 862 sq.Km reserve is protected by the Department of Environment and Forest of Arunachal Pradesh.
- This Tiger Reserve has won India Biodiversity Award 2016 in the category of 'Conservation of threatened species' for its Hornbill Nest Adoption Programme.
- The main perennial streams in the area are the Nameri, Khari and Upper Dikorai. West of Kameng River are Sessa Orchid Sanctuary and Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Arunachal government has cleared plans to build a 692.7 km highway through the 862 sq km Pakke Tiger Reserve (PTR) in East Kameng district.
- Named the East-West Industrial Corridor, the highway aims to connect Bhairabhunda in West Kameng district and Manmao in Changlang district along Arunachal Pradesh's border with Assam.

Source: The Hindu, Indian Express



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