



12 September 2023

National and International News

<p>CMFRI’s research on India’s marine biodiversity displayed at UN meet</p>	<p>Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research findings of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) on India’s marine ecosystems were showcased at UN Meet. • United Nations meeting was held at Seoul, South Korea to discuss the Global Biodiversity Framework. <p>Key points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India emphasized its commitment to marine ecosystem conservation, particularly mangroves and coral reefs, the identification of marine protected areas, and the promotion of sustainable marine fishing. • India emphasized about the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) workshop, which is aimed to accelerate the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). • The report highlighted CMFRI’s research in developing a deep learning-enabled image recognition model for classifying underwater coral images as part of efforts to restore ocean ecosystems. • It also mentioned CMFRI’s attempts to map the spatial distribution of aquatic invasive species in the northern Indian Ocean region. <p>Did you know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOI is a global platform that seeks to build partnerships and enhance capacity to achieve global goals and targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity.
<p>Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)</p>	<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December 2022, the CBD Conference of the Parties, at its 15th meeting (COP 15), adopted a historic agreement to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on the path of recovery and ensure that people live in harmony with nature by 2050. • The GBF includes 4 outcome-oriented goals and 23 action-oriented targets, with the majority being highly relevant for the ocean.
<p>Genetic engineering gives mosquito control an upgrade</p>	<p>Did you know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientists now have access to the whole genome sequences of multiple mosquito species, allowing us to genetically manipulate them. • Gene-drive technology is one such approach, which has been used in outdoor trials in India, Brazil, and Panama



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Key points

- The fundamental idea behind genetic manipulation of mosquitoes is to **systematically control their populations by interfering with their reproduction.**
- Scientists worldwide have developed various genetic modification approaches. A major one in this endeavour is **gene-drive technology.**

Gene-drive technology

- This technology was conceived by **Austin Burt**, professor at Imperial College London, in a 2003 paper published in Royal Society Proceedings.
- In 2020 a genetically modified mosquito called OX5034 was released in counties in Florida and Texas.
- Genetically modified male OX5034 mosquitoes mated with female mosquitoes but the self-limiting gene prevented female offspring from surviving. Male mosquitoes would then disappear from the environment after around a dozen generations.

Mosquito-borne diseases

Malaria, Dengue/Dengue Hemorrhagic fever (DHF), Lymphatic Filariasis (Elephantiasis), Kala-azar/Visceral Leishmaniasis (VL), Japanese Encephalitis (JE), and Chikungunya.

Person in news: Jignesh Raval

Key points

- Jignesh Raval is one of the best tennis coaches in the country.
- The last two national women’s champions Zeel Desai and Vaidehi Chaudhari have come from his stable in Ahmedabad.
- Jignesh has had a rich experience grooming a lot of players with missionary zeal.

Did you know?

- Among the best tennis coaches in the country, Jignesh Raval gave up on a promising and rewarding career in the UK, USA and Canada and chose to be back home after fruitful stints in all those nations; he has used the experience to put a system in place in India.

India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor

In news:

- Beijing ‘welcomed’ India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor initiative but says it ‘should not become a geopolitical tool’.

India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the plan to build a rail and shipping corridor linking India with the Middle East and Europe.



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- The project aims to foster economic growth and political cooperation. It would help to boost trade, transport energy resources and improve digital connectivity.
- The rail and shipping corridor is part of the Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII)
- PGII is a collaborative effort by G7 nations to fund infrastructure projects in developing nations.
- This project is also called as a green and digital bridge across continents and civilizations.

Warner surpasses Tendulkar, becomes opener with most tons



Context

- Australian batter David Warner went past legendary Indian batter Sachin Tendulkar to become the **opener with the most number of centuries in international cricket.**
- The 36-year-old batter accomplished this milestone against South Africa in the second ODI, scoring his 46th hundred.

CBI does not require permission to probe pre-2014 cases too: SC

Context

A Constitution Bench held that a Supreme Court judgment of 2014 which declared invalid a legal provision mandating the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to take prior permission before investigating corruption cases against senior government officials has a retrospective effect.

Key points

- A five-judge Bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul said the provision in question, Section 6A of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, the statute that governs the CBI, was void from the very day of its insertion on September 11, 2003.
- The 106-page judgment held that Section 6A violated fundamental rights, and once a law is declared to be unconstitutional, being violative of Part-III (fundamental rights) of the Constitution, then it would be held to be void ab initio, still born, unenforceable and non est
- This means that senior government officials involved in corruption cases even before the date of the Supreme Court judgment invalidating the need for prior sanction would no longer be able to avail the protection of prior approval.



Launch of West Asia economic corridor is a historic step: PM



In news:

- Outcome of visit of Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman of Saudi Arabia

Key points

- They agreed to set up a joint task force to fast-track the West Coast refinery project.
- The corridor will help in the increase of economic growth, energy sector and digitisation
- Narendra Modi described Saudi Arabia as “one of the most important strategic partners of India”.

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