



08 July 2024

National and International News

<p><b>Vaquita</b></p> 	<p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>vaquita</b>, the <b>world's most endangered marine mammal</b>, is on the <b>brink of extinction</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>About Vaquita:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Scientific Name:</b> Phocoena sinus</li> <li><b>Endangered Status:</b> Vaquitas are the most endangered marine mammals in the world, with <b>less than 20 individuals remaining in the wild</b>.</li> <li><b>Distribution:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Smallest range among whales, dolphins, and porpoises.</b></li> <li><b>Exclusively found in the northern part of the Gulf of California.</b></li> <li>Typically sighted in shallow waters up to 50 meters deep.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Unique dorsal fins:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taller and wider than other porpoises.</li> <li>Distinctive dark ring around the eyes.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Behavior:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shy and elusive, tend to avoid boats and human activity.</li> <li>Communicate using <b>echolocation (sonar) by emitting high-frequency clicks</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Threats:</b> The primary threat is gillnets illegally set for <b>totoaba</b>, a large fish similar in size to vaquitas.</li> <li><b>Conservation Status:</b> Critically Endangered.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shree Jagannath Temple</b></p>	<p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <b>high-level committee, chaired by an Orissa High Court judge</b>, has expedited the <b>process of opening the Ratna Bhandar treasury of Shree Jagannath Temple</b> after 46 years.</li> </ul> <p><b>About Shree Jagannath Temple:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Location:</b> Puri, Odisha</li> <li><b>Dedication:</b> Lord Jagannath, a <b>form of the Hindu deity Vishnu</b></li> <li><b>Historical Significance:</b> Built during the reign of <b>King Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva</b> of the <b>Eastern Ganga dynasty in the 12th century</b>.</li> <li><b>Architecture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exemplifies <b>Kalinga architecture</b>, distinct to the Odisha region</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complex includes <b>shrines, gardens, and sacred tanks</b></li> <li>○ Main structure (sanctum sanctorum/garbhagriha) <b>houses idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra</b></li> <li>○ 20-foot-high chakra at the pinnacle visible from any part of the city</li> <li>● <b>Ratha Yatra:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Commemorates <b>Jagannath's annual visit to Gundicha Temple via Mausi Maa Temple</b></li> <li>○ Begins on the second day of the bright half of the lunar month of Ashadha (June–July) and lasts nine days</li> <li>○ Deities placed on three massive chariots during the festival</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Religious Significance:</b> One of the four sacred pilgrimage sites, known as the <b>Chaar Dhaams</b></li> <li>● <b>Recognition:</b> <b>UNESCO World Heritage Site</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>NIRMAN Scheme</b></p>	<p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The <b>Union Minister for Coal and Mines</b> recently launched the <b>NIRMAN portal</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>About NIRMAN Scheme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Scheme Name:</b> <b>Noble Initiative for Rewarding Mains Aspirants of the National Civil Services Examination (NIRMAN)</b></li> <li>● <b>Organizer:</b> Coal India Limited (CIL)</li> <li>● <b>Type:</b> Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme</li> <li>● <b>Objective:</b> Support meritorious candidates from CIL's operational districts</li> <li>● <b>Financial Assistance:</b> <b>₹1,00,000 to candidates</b> who cleared the preliminary round of UPSC Civil Services and Forest Service Examinations in 2024</li> <li>● <b>Eligibility:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Annual family income less than <b>₹8 lakhs</b></li> <li>○ Permanent residents of the <b>39 districts where CIL operates</b></li> <li>○ Includes <b>Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), female, and third-gender candidates</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>SEHER programme</b></p>	<p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform and Credit Bureau</b> have collaborated to launch the <b>SEHER programme</b>.</li> </ul> <p><b>About SEHER programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A <b>comprehensive credit education program</b> aimed at <b>enhancing financial literacy and business skills among women entrepreneurs</b>.</li> <li>● Expected to <b>enable women to access financial tools</b> necessary for business growth and job creation.</li> <li>● An <b>initiative of NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship</b></li> </ul>



Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

	<p><b>Platform (WEP) and TransUnion CIBIL.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports WEP's goal of improving financing access for women in India's 63 million MSMEs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kaziranga National Park</b></p>	<p><b>Why in the news?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A devastating flood in Assam's Kaziranga National Park has claimed the lives of 114 wild animals, while 95 others have recently been rescued.</li> </ul> <p><b>About Kaziranga National Park:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Location:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Situated in the north-eastern part of Assam, in the districts of Golaghat and Nagaon.</li> <li>○ It is the largest undisturbed area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>National Park Status:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Declared a National Park in 1974.</li> <li>○ First national park in Assam, covering 400 sq. km.</li> <li>○ Declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Flora:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dominated by dense, tall elephant grass mixed with small swamplands.</li> <li>○ Includes water lilies, water hyacinths, lotus, and Rattan Cane (climbing palm).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Fauna:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inhabited by the world's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses.</li> <li>○ Other mammals include tigers, elephants, panthers, bears, Eastern swamp deer, buffalo, Hoolock gibbon, capped langur, and Gangetic River dolphin.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Rivers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The river Difalu (tributary of the Brahmaputra) flows through the core/critical tiger habitat.</li> <li>○ Another tributary, Moradifalu, flows along its southern boundary.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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