

31 August, 2022

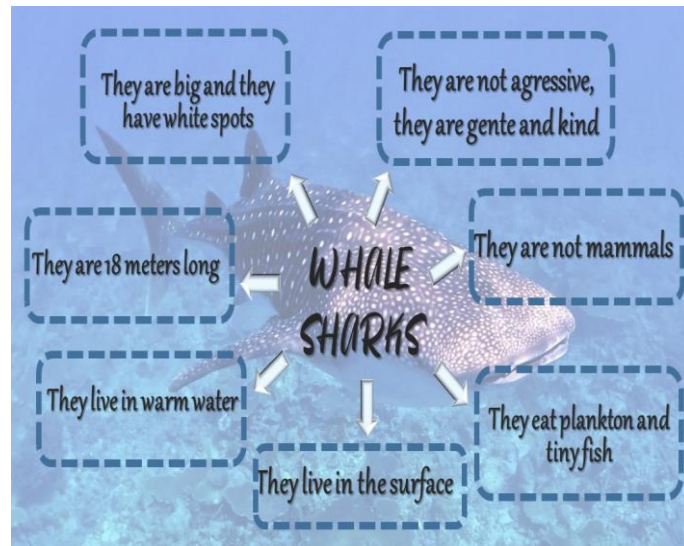
Whale Shark

❖ Context

- Non-profit **Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)** launched '**Save the Whale Shark Campaign**' along Karnataka, Kerala and Lakshadweep on **International Whale Shark Day** i.e. on **30th August, 2022**.

❖ About Whale Shark

- The whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) is the **largest fish on Earth** & a **keystone species** in marine ecosystems.
- It can grow to a length of approximately 18 metres and weigh as much as 21 tonnes.
- It is distributed widely across **tropical and warm temperate seas**.
- The whale shark is **distributed all along the Indian coast**. However, the largest whale shark aggregation is along the **Gujarat coast**.
- The fish is listed as a **Schedule I animal** under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.



- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has noted that whale shark populations are on the decline and its global status is notified as '**Endangered**'.

Paris Agreement for the Ocean

❖ Context

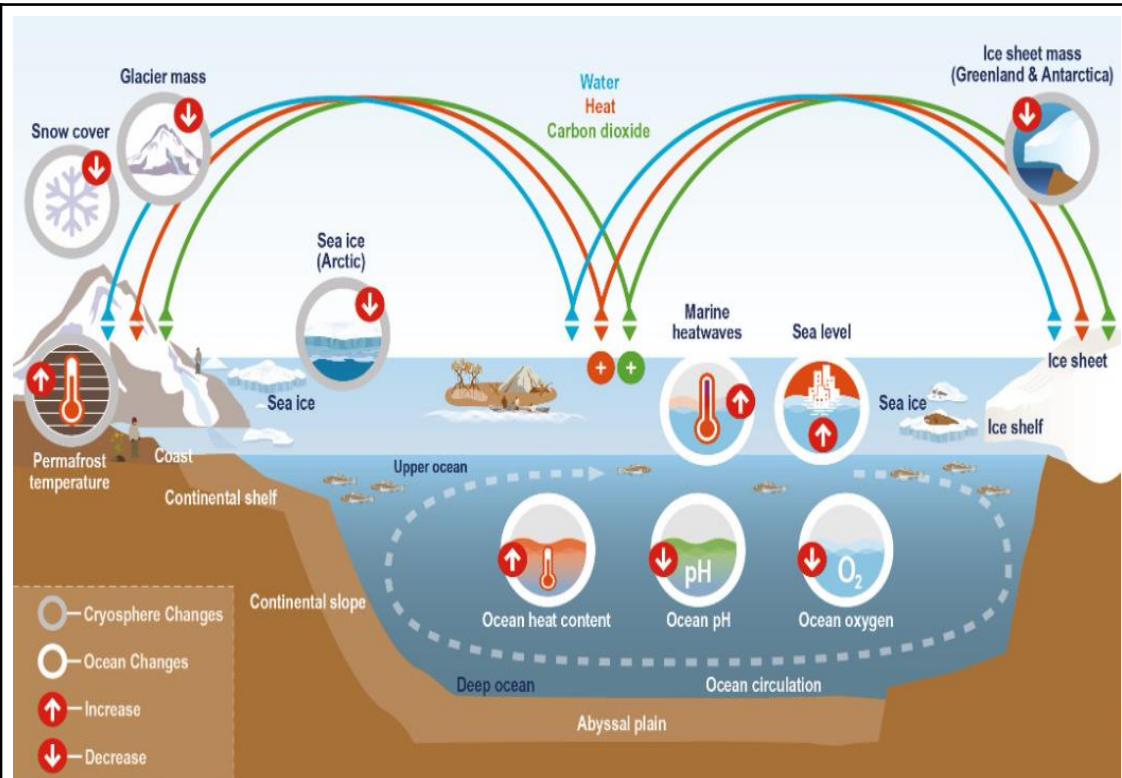
- Negotiations involving 168 countries, including the EU, to agree on a UN treaty to deal with **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction**, failed at the fifth session of UN Intergovernmental Conference (**IGC-5**).

❖ Key Highlights

- The proposed treaty concerns the ocean existing beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone known as **open seas or high seas**. It makes up nearly 70% of the ocean. The treaty was to be negotiated under the **United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea, 1982 (UNCLOS)**.
- A **High Ambition Coalition** was launched in February 2022 to achieve an ambitious outcome of the ongoing negotiations.
- It is a coalition of over **100 countries** including India, US, UK which put focus on the '**30X30**' goal - protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030.

❖ High Sea Alliance

- HAS is a partnership of 40 non-profits, including the IUCN, to build a strong common voice and constituency for conserving the high seas.



IPDMS 2.0 and Pharma Sahi Daam 2.0

❖ Context

- Two new apps were launched by **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** on its silver jubilee celebrations.



❖ IPDMS 2.0

- It is an integrated responsive cloud-based application developed by NPPA with technical support from **Centre for Advance Computing (C-DAC)**.
- It would also enable paperless functioning of NPPA by providing a **single window for submissions of various forms** as mandated under Drug Price Control Order (DPCO), 2013.

❖ Pharma Sahi Daam 2.0

- The App has features like speech recognition; search medicines brand/formulation wise; share feature along with consumer complaint handling system.

❖ National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority

- Working under the administrative control of the **Department of Pharmaceuticals**, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, it was set up as an **attached office in 1997** vide government resolution.
- It is an independent regulator for pricing of drugs and to ensure availability and accessibility of medicines at affordable prices.

Face to Face Centres

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Garba Nominated for UNESCO Intangible Heritage Tag



❖ Context

- Gujarat's famed traditional dance form Garba has been nominated by India for inclusion in the UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list.

❖ About UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List

- It aims to draw attention to the importance of safeguarding intangible heritage.
- This list has been classified into five broad domains in which intangible cultural heritage is manifested:

1. Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
2. Performing arts
3. Social practices, rituals and festive events
4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
5. Traditional craftsmanship



❖ 14 Intangible Culture Heritage Sites in India

1. Sanskrit Theatre of Kudiyaattam, Kerala
2. Mudiyaetu, a ritual theatre and dance drama from Kerala
3. Tradition of Vedic Mantras;
4. 'Ram Leela' (traditional performance of Ramayana)
5. Ramman (a religious festival and ritual theatre of Garhwal, Uttarakhand)
6. Kalbelia Folk Songs and Dances of Rajasthan
7. Chhau Dance (Classical dance of West Bengal & Odisha)
8. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh
9. Sankirtana (a ritual singing, drumming & dance of Manipur)
10. Traditional brass and copper craft of pottery amidst the laughs of Jandiala Guru, Punjab
11. Yoga
12. Nowruz
13. Kumbh Mela
14. Durga Puja (represents the collective worship of the Hindu goddess Durga)

Taiwan Strait

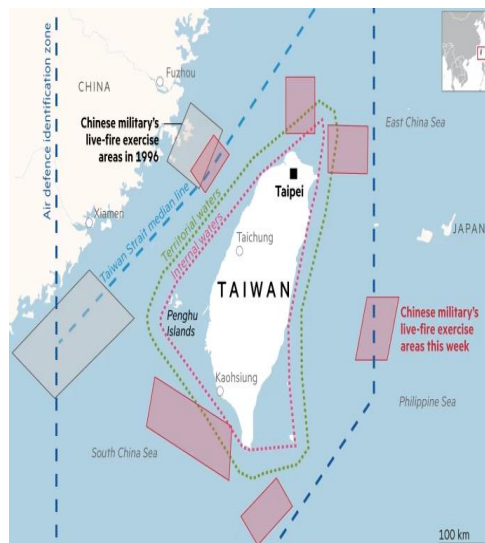
❖ Context

- India has for the first time referred to what it called **"the militarisation of the Taiwan Strait"**, marking a rare instance of New Delhi appearing to comment on China's actions towards Taiwan.



❖ Key Highlights

- The latest reference to Taiwan came amid a spat with China over the visit this month of a Chinese military tracking vessel Yuan Wang 5 to Hambantota in Sri Lanka.
- The **Taiwan Strait** is a 180- kilometer (110 mi; 97 nmi)-wide strait separating the island of Taiwan and continental Asia.
- The strait is part of the South China Sea & connects to the East China Sea to the north.
- The narrowest part is 130 km (81 mi; 70 nmi) wide.



- The Taiwan Strait is itself a subject of international dispute over its political status.
- As the People's Republic of China claims to enjoy "sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the Taiwan Strait" & regards the waterway as "internal territorial waters" instead of being international waters, this means that the Chinese government denies any foreign vessel having the freedom of navigation in the strait.

Nitipath

❖ Context

- Recently, one of India's most respected police officers highlighted a case for the government to launch a "Nitipath" scheme on the lines of Agnipath and the Short Service Commission for military officers.

❖ Key Highlights

- Officers can be filtered out after 10, 25 and 30 years of service. This would rectify the top-heavy structure, and create a culture of public service and performance.
- The government can recruit four times as many candidates at the entry level without being constrained by the number of apex level positions and career paths.

- Instead of 600-1,000 candidates appointed to the AIS, we can have 4,000 officers entering service every year.
- Only 25% of them will be retained after a performance review after the fourth year.
- **Significance:** This will bring a lot of young and energetic officers at the junior levels, give them strong incentives to perform, and give them work experience in government.

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Transgender's to Avail Ayushman Bharat

❖ Context

- The National Health Authority (NHA) under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Department of Social Justice and Empowerment recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide inclusive and composite health package for transgenders under Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY.



❖ Key Highlights

- This MoU will extend all healthcare benefits to transgender persons (holding a transgender certificate issued by the National Portal for transgender persons) across the country.
- MoSJE will fund Rs.5 lakh insurance cover per transgender beneficiary per annum.
- As a result, transgenders will be eligible to seek treatment in any AB PM-JAY empanelled hospitals across the country, where specific packages will be made available.

- The scheme would cover all transgenders not receiving such benefits from other centre/state sponsored schemes, as per the government release.
- India will be the first country in the world to provide free of cost facilities like cosmetic surgery to transgender community under government scheme.

News in Between the Lines

National Forensic Science Laboratory



❖ Context

- Recently, the Union Home and Cooperation Minister addressed the First convocation of National Forensic Science University (NFSU).

❖ About NFSU

- It was established by the Government of India in 2020 with the objective of fulfilling the acute shortage against the increasing demand for forensic experts in the country and around the world.
- The National Forensic Sciences University, with the status of an Institution of National Importance, is the world's first and only University dedicated to Forensic, behavioral, cybersecurity, digital forensics, and allied Sciences.
- Apart from Gujarat, its campuses have been opened in Bhopal, Goa, Tripura, Manipur and Guwahati.

Gibraltar



❖ Context

- Gibraltar becomes a British city after 180-year delay.

❖ Key Highlights

- The status granted by Queen Victoria in 1842, was overlooked due to administrative error.
- Gibraltar is a British Overseas Territory and headland, on Spain's south coast. It's dominated by the **Rock of Gibraltar**, a 426m-high **limestone ridge**. First settled by the Moors in the Middle Ages and later ruled by Spain, the outpost was ceded to the British in 1713.
- It overlooks the strategic **Strait of Gibraltar** which connects the Atlantic Ocean with the Mediterranean sea.



Ghatiana dvivarna sp nov



❖ Context

- A paper has been published describing a new crab species which was discovered in **Western Ghats in Karnataka a year ago**.

❖ Key Highlights

- The crab's name is derived from the Sanskrit word '**dvivarna**', which means bicolour, as the crustacean has a white body and claws and "red-violet" legs.
- The species was first sighted June 30, 2021, in **Anshi wildlife range, Kali Tiger Reserve in Karnataka**.

Face to Face Centres



Core Investment Companies (CIC)



❖ Context

- RBI has stated that the customers of the Core Investment Company would come under the Reserve Bank - **Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS), 2021.**

❖ About Core Investment Company (CIC)

- This is a **non-deposit taking Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)** which carries on the business of acquisition of shares and securities and holds **not less than 90% of its net assets** in the form of investment in equity shares, preference shares, bonds, debentures, debt or loans in group companies.
- Further **investments in equity shares** in group companies constitutes **not less than 60% of its net assets.**
- A **Systemically Important Core Investment Company (CIC-ND-SI)** is a CIC with asset **size of Rs 100 crore and above.** CICs having asset size of **below Rs 100 crore are exempted from registration and regulation from the Reserve Bank,** except if they wish to make overseas investments in the financial sector.
- They can **accept public funds** which include inter-corporate deposits, bank finance and all funds received whether directly or indirectly from outside sources such as funds raised by issue of Commercial Papers, debentures etc.
- However, they **cannot accept public deposits.**

Fraud Registry



❖ Context

- The Reserve Bank is considering setting up a fraud registry to create a database of fraudulent websites, phones & various modus operandi used for digital fraud.

❖ Key Highlights

- Such a database would help prevent **fraudsters** from repeating the offence as the websites or phone numbers would be **blacklisted.** Payment system participants would be provided access to this registry for **near-real time fraud monitoring.**

Edible coating



❖ Context

- Researchers at the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Guwahati** have developed an edible material that, coated on vegetables and fruits, substantially extended their shelf-life for nearly **two months.**

❖ Key Highlights

- The team used a **mix** of an extract of a marine microalga called **Dunaliella tertiolecta** and **chitosan** to produce it.
- The microalga is known for its **antioxidant properties** and has various bioactive compounds such as carotenoids and proteins.
- It is also used to produce **algal oil**, a non-animal source of omega-3 fatty acid and is considered a **good source of biofuel.** **Chitosan** is a carbohydrate which also has antimicrobial and antifungal properties and can be made into an edible film.

Zombie Ice



❖ Context

- A new study finds that **Greenland** has more than **120 trillion tons of zombie ice** that's going to **raise sea level globally by at least 10 inches.**

❖ Key Highlights

- Zombie or doomed ice is **ice that is still attached to thicker areas of ice but is no longer getting fed by the larger glaciers.**
- This is because the parent glaciers are getting less replenishing snow.
- According to the scientists, regardless of climate emission scenarios, the ice is going to melt and disappear.

Huaqiangbei



❖ Context

- Chinese authorities of Shenzhen shut down the market to curb a COVID outbreak.

❖ Key Highlights

- **Huaqiangbei is the world's largest wholesale electronics market located in Shenzhen in Guangdong province, China.**

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