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All India Tiger Estimation-2022

Context: The detailed report of the All India Tiger Estimation-2022 was released on Global Tiger Day at Corbett Tiger Reserve.

Highlights of Report

- India is the only nation to have institutionalized and completed five cycles of Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of Tiger Reserves.
- There are 53 Tiger Reserves in India, covering an area of 75,796.83 sq. km, spread across 18 states.
- In the fifth cycle of MEE conducted in 2022, a total of 51 Tiger Reserves were independently evaluated.
- Ten Independent Regional Expert Committees (RECs) were constituted to evaluate the Tiger Reserves.
- The evaluation criteria were slightly refined compared to past cycles, with 33 criteria developed for the assessment.
- The Tiger Reserves were classified into four categories based on their percentage rating: Fair (50-59%), Good (60-74%), Very Good (75-89%), and Excellent ($\geq 90\%$).
- The overall mean score for the 51 Tiger Reserves in the fifth cycle of MEE was 78.01% (ranging between 50% to 94%).
- 12 Tiger Reserves achieved the "Excellent" category, 21 in "Very Good," 13 in "Good," and 5 in "Fair" category.
- The fifth cycle of MEE provided valuable insights into the operations of the Tiger Reserve Network in India and identified multiple strengths that need to be maintained and improved for higher excellence.
- The Tiger Reserves in the "**Excellent**" category are Periyar (Kerala), Satpura (Madhya Pradesh), Bandipur (Karnataka), Nagarhole (Karnataka), Kanha (Madhya Pradesh), Biligiri Ranganatha Swamy Temple (Karnataka), Annamalai (Tamil Nadu), Pench (Maharashtra), Bhadra (Karnataka), Kali (Dandeli-Anshi) (Karnataka), Similipal (Odisha), and Mudumalai (Tamil Nadu).

National Tiger Conservation Authority

- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is a statutory body established in 2005 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- It is responsible for implementing Project Tiger and overseeing conservation efforts in Tiger Reserves.
- NTCA collaborates with State Governments, conservation organizations, and local communities for effective tiger habitat management.
- The authority formulates policies, provides technical support, and monitors tiger conservation initiatives.
- Its main goal is to safeguard tiger populations, preserve their habitats, and address threats like poaching and habitat loss.

National Cooperative Consumers Federation of India (NCCF)

Context: Magicpin partners with NCCF to sell tomatoes at Rs. 70/kg via government-backed ONDC.

NCCF

- Established on October 16, 1965, as the apex body of consumer cooperatives in India.
- Aims to promote the consumer cooperative movement, encouraging self-reliance and mutual aid.
- Registered under the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002.
- Functions under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India.
- Headquarters located in New Delhi.
- Composition
 - ✓ NCCF's management is under the Board of Directors.
 - ✓ The General Body holds the ultimate authority in NCCF.
 - ✓ The Board of Directors has most of NCCF's powers, except those reserved for the General Body.
 - ✓ The current Board of Directors' sanctioned strength is 21.

Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)

- Open-source network for buyers and sellers to transact across e-commerce platforms.
- Facilitates local commerce in various segments like mobility, grocery, food delivery, etc.
- An initiative of DPIIT under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

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- Includes buyer-side apps for placing orders, seller-side apps for merchant listings, and logistics platforms for deliveries.
- Advantages:
 - ✓ The e-commerce system provides small retailers with a chance to offer their goods and services nationwide.
 - ✓ Merchants using ONDC can save data for credit history and reach more consumers.
 - ✓ ONDC aims to digitize the entire value chain, enhance logistics efficiencies, and benefit consumers.
 - ✓ The protocols under ONDC standardize operations like cataloguing, inventory management, and order fulfilment.

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)

Context: The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR & Adjoining Areas (CAQM) revised the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) for the entire National Capital Region, effective from October 1, 2023.

- The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is implemented in the Delhi-NCR region.
- It consists of emergency measures to prevent further deterioration of air quality.
- GRAP is activated when air quality reaches a certain threshold.
- The plan was first notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in January 2017.
- Implementation:
 - ✓ The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has formed a sub-committee to implement the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).
 - ✓ The sub-committee includes officials from CAQM, member secretaries of pollution control boards of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, the Central Pollution Control Board, a scientist from the IMD, an expert from IITM, and a Health Advisor.
 - ✓ This sub-committee is responsible for meeting regularly and issuing orders to activate the GRAP as needed.
 - ✓ In case of any conflict between directions issued by State governments and the CAQM, the orders and directions of the CAQM will take precedence.

Air Quality Stage	AQI Range	Actions Taken
Stage I	201-300	Enforce NGT / Hon'ble SC's order on over-aged diesel / petrol vehicles.
Stage II	301-400	Rigorous actions to combat air pollution at identified hotspots in the region.
Stage III	401-450	Impose strict restrictions on BS III petrol and BS IV diesel four-wheelers in certain areas, may suspend physical classes in schools for primary grade children up to Class 5.
Stage IV	> 450	Prohibit entry of four-wheelers registered outside Delhi, except for electric vehicles, CNG vehicles, and BS-VI diesel vehicles.

Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)

- The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) was formed on October 28, 2020, by the Government of India through an ordinance.
- It was created to address air quality issues in the National Capital Region (NCR) and neighboring areas.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is the nodal ministry responsible for CAQM.

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- CAQM consists of representatives from various organizations and experts in the field of air quality management.
- It has the power to issue orders and implement measures to combat air pollution and improve air quality.

Biosimilars

Context: Health Ministry to revamp biosimilar drug approval guidelines, making the process more robust and in line with global developments.

What is it?

- A biosimilar is a biologic medication that is similar to another biologic drug.
- Biosimilars and reference products have comparable safety, purity, and potency, but may differ in clinically inactive components.
- They are duplicates of existing biologic medications used to treat various diseases.
- Biosimilars are produced using the same amino acid starting materials and procedures as their reference medicines.
- Examples include Semglee (insulin glargine-yfgn), Amjevita (adalimumab-atto), and Inflectra (infliximab-dyyb).
- Biosimilars are prescribed medications and serve as lower-cost alternatives to their original biologic counterparts.

Biologics

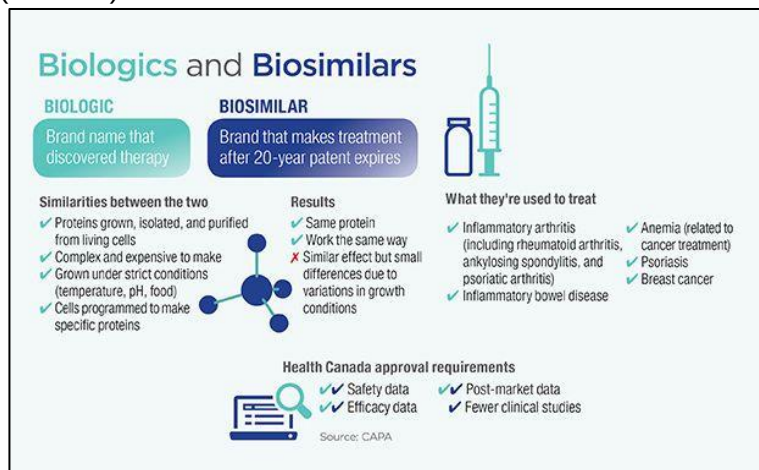
- Biologics, or biological products, are medicines made from living organisms.
- The manufacturing processes for biologics are intricate and involve living organisms.
- They include a wide range of products, such as vaccines, therapeutic proteins, monoclonal antibodies, and gene and cell therapies.

Regulation and Development Authorities for Biosimilars:

- Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)
- Department of Biotechnology (DBT)
- Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
- Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)
- National Control Laboratory Biosafety Committee

Acts and Guidelines to regulate biosimilars

- Drugs and Cosmetics Act (1940)
- Drugs and Cosmetics Rules (1945)
- Environment Protection Act (1986)
- Recombinant DNA Safety Guidelines (1990)
- Guidelines for preclinical and clinical data for rDNA vaccines, diagnostics, and other biologicals (1999)
- CDSCO guidance for Industry (2008)



NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Yuge Yugeen Bharat



About Yuge Yugeen Bharat:

- "Yuge Yugeen Bharat" is India's upcoming national museum, aiming to be the world's largest, covering 1.17 lakh sqm with 950 rooms in Delhi's North and South blocks.
- It will feature eight thematic segments, narrating India's history over 5,000 years, covering ancient knowledge to modern India, colonial rule, freedom struggle and future vision.
- The museum will celebrate India's cultural heritage while emphasizing progress and vision for the future, designed as a "forward-looking museum."
- The virtual walkthrough showcases historical periods like Mauryan to Gupta Empires, Vijayanagara Empire and Mughal Empire, displaying ancient artifacts from the existing National Museum.

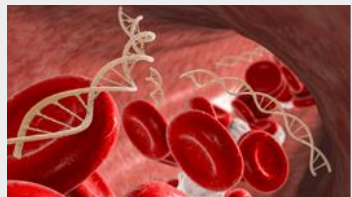
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	➤ The foundation of the current National Museum was laid by Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, on May 12, 1955, adding to India's cultural heritage. ➤ The existing National Museum building will be integrated into the Kartavya Path, extending from India Gate to Raisina Hill.
Dongria Kondh Tribe 	Dongria Kondh Tribe The Dongria Kondh Tribe is an indigenous community belonging to the Munda ethnic group, residing in the Niyamgiri hills of Odisha, India. Nomenclature: Their name is derived from "dongar," meaning 'hill,' and they refer to themselves as Jharnia, meaning 'protector of streams.' Beliefs: They worship Niyam Raja, the supreme god of the Niyamgiri jungle. Language: They use the Kui language, primarily spoken without a script. Lifestyle: Known for distinctive jewellery, tattoos, and hairstyles. Mining Dispute: Faced a dispute over mining rights with Vedanta Resources planning bauxite extraction through an open-cast mine, posing environmental and cultural threats. New challenge: Preventing diversion of community-owned forestland due to Forest Conservation (Amendment) Bill (FCA) of 2023. FCA 2023 aims to redefine 'forest,' raises concerns for livelihood and cultural identity. Surprising situation: 95% of Niyamgiri hill range not classified as 'forest' in govt. records. Potential exclusion of deemed forests impacts tribal and forest-dwelling communities. Geographical impact: About 66 lakh acres in Odisha, including tribal districts affected.
Cell-Free DNA 	About Cell -Free DNA: Cell-Free DNA (cfDNA) refers to small fragments of nucleic acids (DNA) that are found outside of cells and can be detected in body fluids such as blood, urine and cerebrospinal fluid. Background: Known since 1948, significance realized with accessible genome sequencing technologies. Applications in Human Diseases: Insights into normal development, cancer, autoimmune diseases, etc. Non-Invasive Prenatal Testing (NIPT): Screening fetuses for chromosomal abnormalities with high accuracy. Early Detection of Cancers: cfDNA used for early cancer detection, diagnosis, and treatment. Organ Transplantation Monitoring: cfDNA helps monitor acceptance and rejection of transplanted organs. Expanding Applications: Potential biomarker for neurological disorders, metabolic disorders, etc. Future Prospects: cfDNA genomics expected to enhance disease screening and early diagnosis.
Qila Rai Pithora 	About Qila Rai Pithora: Construction: The fort Lal Kot, later renamed Qila Rai Pithora, was constructed between 1052 and 1060 CE during the rule of Tomar monarch Anangpal Tomar. Founded by: Prithviraj Chauhan, also known as Rai Pithora, founded and extended the city after his ancestors seized Delhi from the Tomar Rajputs. Location: Situated in the Aravalli Hills, the fort provided strategic and military advantages to the Tomar dynasty. Capital of Sultanate: After the defeat of Chahamanas in 1192 CE, Qutbu'd-Din Aibak captured Qila Rai Pithora and made it the capital of the Sultanate. Associated with India's Resistance: Prithviraj Chauhan is known for his resistance against Muslim invaders and is credited with constructing temples near the Qutab Minar and Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque. Dynastic Rule: The fort witnessed the rule of various dynasties, including Khaljis, Tughlaqs, Sayyids, and Lodhis, showcasing Delhi's diverse dynastic history. Present Condition and Restoration Efforts: The fort is in a decrepit state and requires restoration efforts by the Delhi Development Authority and Archaeological Survey of India. Iconic Site: Qila Rai Pithora stands as an important archaeological site representing Delhi's early history and rich cultural heritage.

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Meri Mati Mera Desh



About 'Meeri Mati Mera Desh':

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announces 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign to honour martyred men and women.
- Under the campaign, 'Amrit Kalash Yatra' will carry soil in 7500 urns from every corner of the country to build 'Amrit Vatika' near the National War Memorial.
- By participating, the nation takes an oath to fulfill the 'five resolves' for the next 25 years of Amrit Kaal.
- Citizens encouraged to upload selfies on yuva.gov.in while taking the oath with the sacred soil.
- Recalls 'Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan' on the last Independence Day and encourages hoisting the Tricolour at every house.
- Hails efforts against drugs, spread awareness in Jammu and Kashmir through innovative means.
- Highlights collective cultural awakening, with more tourists visiting pilgrimage sites in India.
- Recently, the US returned several ancient artefacts made of terracotta, stone, metal and wood, enriching India's cultural heritage.

Place in News Herschel Island

Herschel Island, off the coast of Canada, is experiencing thawing permafrost due to global warming. This melting frozen layer poses concerns, including the potential re-emergence of ancient microorganisms, possible environmental disruptions like landslides and erosion, and the release of greenhouse gases contributing to climate change.

Historical Significance: Served as refuge for American whalers in 1890s-1900s.

Whaling Decline: Whaling market collapsed in 1907, leading to whalers' departure.

Inuvialuit Connection: Once inhabited by Thule Inuit tribes, later moved to mainland.

Climate Change Impact: Rising sea levels and thawing permafrost threaten the island.

Archaeological Loss: Thawing permafrost led to degradation and loss of records.



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