

Hate Speech

❖ Context

- A recent religious conclave held in Haridwar witnessed **inflammatory and provocative speeches** by proponents of Hindutva, many of them leaders of religious organisations.
- Political parties and concerned citizens have termed these as '**hate speech**' and demanded legal action against those involved in the propagation of hate and violence.

❖ Key Highlights

- There is **no specific legal definition** of 'hate speech'
- In general, hate speech is considered a **limitation on free speech** that seeks to prevent or bar speech that exposes a person or a group or section of society to hate, violence, ridicule or indignity.
- **Provisions in law criminalise speeches, writings, actions, signs and representations** that foment violence and spread disharmony between communities and groups and these are understood to refer to 'hate speech'.

❖ Indian Laws With Respect to Hate Speech

- In the **267th Report of the Law Commission of India**, hate speech is stated as an incitement to hatred primarily against a group of persons defined in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief and the like.
- **Sections 153A and 153B of the IPC**: Punishes acts that cause enmity and hatred between two groups.
- **Section 295A of the IPC**: Deals with punishing acts which deliberately or with malicious intention outrage the religious feelings of a class of persons.
- **Sections 505(1) and 505(2)**: Make the publication and circulation of content which may cause ill-will or hatred between different groups an offence.
- **Section 8 of RPA Act 1951**: Prevents a person convicted of the illegal use of the freedom of speech from contesting an election.
- **Sections 123(3A) and 125 of the RPA**: Bars the promotion of animosity on the grounds of race, religion, community, caste, or language in reference to elections and include it under corrupt electoral practices.

Tiger Deaths in India in 2021

❖ Context

- As per data from **National Tiger Conservation Authority**, **126 tigers have died** across the country in 2021. This is the **highest number of annual deaths** recorded in a decade.

❖ Key Highlights

- Tiger deaths in the country this year have **gone up by 48 per cent** jump as compared to 2020.
- **India is home to a third of the global tiger population** and the estimated tiger population stood at 2,967 as per 2018 tiger census.
- The population of tigers has **increased by 33% since** the last census in 2014 when the total estimate was 2,226.
- Madhya Pradesh leads the states in tiger numbers as per 2018 figures. This year, the State also led in tiger deaths and saw 42 fatalities.
- **Tigers in states:**
 - Madhya Pradesh (526) > Karnataka(524) > Uttarakhand (442)

❖ Protection Status

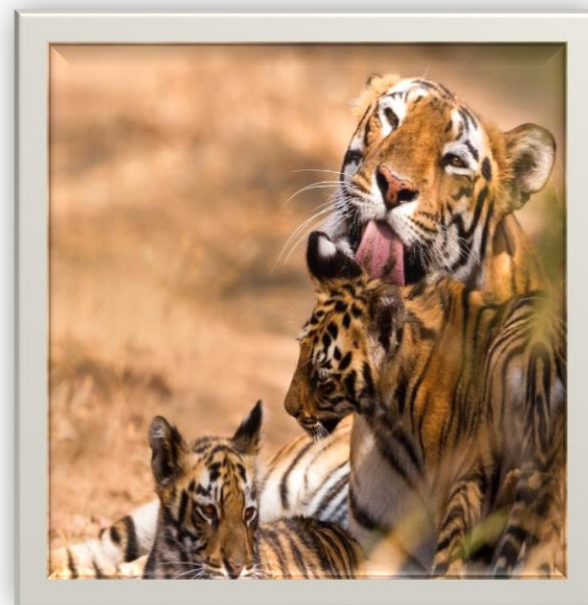
- IUCN -Endangered
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 - Schedule 1

❖ NTCA

- **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
- It was **established in 2005** following the **recommendations of the Tiger Task Force**.
- It was constituted under enabling provisions of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, as **amended in 2006**, for strengthening tiger conservation, as per powers and functions assigned to it.

❖ Project Tiger

- Project Tiger is an ongoing **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change providing central assistance to the tiger States for tiger conservation in designated tiger reserves.
- **The tiger reserves are constituted on a core/buffer strategy.**
- The **core areas have the legal status of a national park** or a sanctuary, whereas the **buffer or peripheral areas are a mix of forest and non-forest land**, managed as a multiple-use area.



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03 January, 2022

New IPO rules

❖ Context

- Recently, SEBI had released new rules related to IPO amid the **boom in IPO offerings** being witnessed in stock markets worldwide with companies raising record amount of capital.

❖ Key Highlights

- **In India alone**, capital worth over **₹1 trillion** has been mopped up through IPOs this year.
- Companies see bull markets as an opportunity to collect the necessary funds for their growth.
- The **owners** see it as an opportunity to **sell their stake** in the business **at an attractive price**.
- A lot of **companies** that raised funds through IPOs this year, such as Zomato, Paytm etc., are **loss-making**.
- This puts **investors** who have invested in these IPOs at the risk of **huge losses** if the **prices** of these shares witness a **sharp correction**. Paytm, for instance, has lost more than one-third of its value since it was listed for trading.
- SEBI believes that the **new regulations** will ensure that promoters of companies will have more skin in the game and **protect retail investors**
- However, some fear that the new rules may hinder the raising of fresh capital by companies to fuel growth.

❖ What does the new rules say

- The price band of an IPO should be set in such a way that the **ceiling price is at least 105% of the floor price**.
- Companies will not be allowed to use more than 35% of the money that they collect through IPOs to fund the purchase of other businesses, unless they offer sufficient details.
- **Promoters** with a stake of over 20% in a company **cannot sell more than half of their stake in an IPO**.
- **Anchor investors** will not be able to sell more than half their shares before **90 days** from the date of the IPO, against the current time stipulation of 30 days.

❖ IPO (Initial Public Offering)

- It is the sale of securities (held by promoters) by a private limited company for the first time to the public to raise funds for capital expenditure. It forms the **primary market** for shares
- Upon IPO, the company's shares are listed on stock exchange for trading between the investors. This forms the secondary market for shares

❖ Anchor Investors

- Anchor investors are **institutional investors** (mutual funds, pension funds, etc.) who are allotted shares just before an IPO opens for subscription. **All anchor investors are bound by a lock-in period** since they get a **confirmed allotment of a company's shares** unlike retail investors

Arctic warming

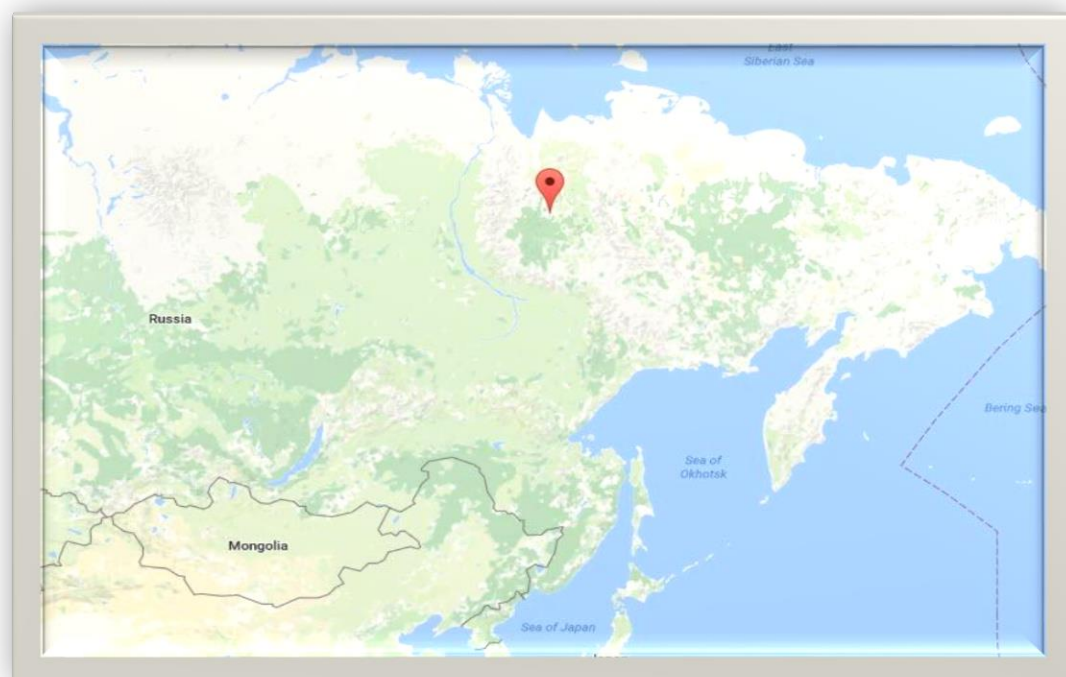
❖ Context

- **WMO has recently confirmed** that the temperature of **38 degree celsius** recorded in **June 2020** in the eastern Siberian town of **Verkhoyansk**, 115 km north of the **Arctic circle**, is the **highest ever recorded temperature** in the Arctic region.
- At that time most of the Arctic region, especially Siberia, was experiencing an **unprecedented heatwave**, with temperatures in the Siberian Arctic rising up to **10°C above normal**.
- The warming of Siberia is also causing **thawing of permafrost** leading to release of carbon dioxide trapped in soil for thousand of years
- The heat also drove plague of tree eating moths

❖ Key Highlights

❖ Arctic Amplification

- The **Arctic region** is **warming at more than twice the rate** as the rest of the world, mainly because of human-made greenhouse gas emissions.
- The increased rate of warming is because of a phenomenon known as Arctic amplification
- **Melting ice** hastens the process of warming by **exposing areas** that are **not good at reflecting** back heat into the atmosphere.
- This creates a **feedback loop** between melting ice and rising temperatures, amplifying the impact of warming.



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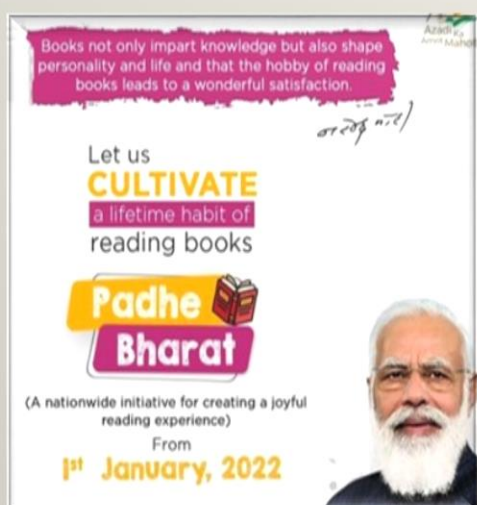
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News in Between the Lines

Padhe Bharat



❖ Context

- Education ministry launched 100-day reading campaign ‘**Padhe Bharat**’

❖ Key Highlights

- Children studying in **Balvatika to class 8** will be part of this campaign.
- The reading campaign **will be organised for 100 days (14 weeks) starting from January 1 to April 10, 2022.**
- This Campaign is in alignment with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.**
- The reading **campaign aims to have the participation of all stakeholders at national and state level** including children, teachers, parents, community, educational administrators etc.
- The campaign **will improve the learning levels of students as it develops creativity, critical thinking, vocabulary and the ability to express** both verbally and in writing.
- It has been **designed with the focus on making reading enjoyable** and builds lifelong association with the joy of reading.

White Rhinoceros



❖ Context

- Recently, **30 white rhinos** were transferred from **South Africa to Rwanda**, onboard a Boeing 747 chartered plane.

❖ About Rhinoceros

- **Second largest land mammal** after the elephant.
- Also known as the **square-lipped rhinoceros** due to their square (not pointed) upper lip.
- Two genetically different subspecies exist, **the northern and southern white rhino** and are found in two different regions in Africa.
- **IUCN Protection Status**
 - **Northern White Rhino:** Critically Endangered
 - **Southern White Rhino:** Near Threatened
- **Indian rhinoceros IUCN Status-** Vulnerable
- There is also a **Javan rhino**, which too, has one horn, and a **Sumatran rhino** which, like the **African rhinos**, has two horns. Both Javan and Sumatran Rhino are critically endangered in the IUCN Red list

Iran's new Space Launch



❖ Context

- Recently, Iran has **launched a rocket with a satellite** carrier bearing three devices into space.

❖ Key Highlights

- The Defense Ministry **identified the rocket as “Simorgh, or Phoenix”**, that sent up the three devices into space at **470 kilometers.**
- **Status of the objects is still unknown**, which suggests the rocket had failed in placing its payload into the correct orbit.

❖ Recent Missions By Iran

- **January 2019-** AUT-SAT microsatellite, was launched onboard the Simorgh rocket. It failed to reach orbit.
- **February 2020-** Launched its communication satellite called **Zafar 1**, onboard the Simorgh rocket from Imam Khomeini Space Center. Failed to put it in orbit.
- **April 2020-** Iran successfully launched **“Noor”**, a military satellite, into orbit.

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Punjab's new Sand Mining Policy



❖ Context

- The Punjab government has recently allowed landowners to dispose of ordinary earth extracted or removed during leveling of their agricultural fields upto 3 feet without any environmental clearance certificate

❖ Key Highlights

- Several individual farmers as well as panchayats who own large chunk of lands were already into illegal sand mining in their fields due to huge amount received by them
- Earlier, farmers were required to take environment clearance for mining their fields
- **According to soil experts, all the important nutrients of the soil are available up to 60 cm till the root zone layer of the crops, and the first 6 inches are the most important one.**
- Once this **upper layer or soil head**, the destruction is “forever”, and irreparable.

Bird flu scare in Kerala



❖ Context

- Recently, the state had to ordered mass culling of ducks in Alappuzha and Kottayam districts because of recurrence of bird flu

❖ Key Highlights

- Kerala had to fight with the avian influenza (**H5N1**) in Jan 2021 only.
- It is being believed that the sudden rise in cases again is due to the presence of **migratory birds**
- The area is adjacent to **Kumarakom Bird sanctuary** and **Vembanad lake**
- The presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza was confirmed in the sanctuary
- **Vembanad Lake** is the **India's second largest wetland ecosystem** where migratory birds like Siberian cranes, various herons, darters, bitterns, Brahminy kites, marsh harriers, teals, larks and flycatchers, flock at regular intervals
- There is **no vaccine** to prevent avian influenza and the virus outbreak has turned into an annual affair in the region
- The virus can also **transmit from birds to humans and humans to humans**

International Investment Position



❖ Context

- **RBI released** data relating to India's International Investment Position (IIP) at end-September 2021.

❖ Key Highlights

- The **International Monetary Fund describes** a nation's IIP as showing the value of financial assets of residents of an economy that are claims on non-residents, or are gold bullion held as reserve assets; and of the liabilities of residents to non-residents.
- **India's net IIP position as on Sep-21 is - 331.8 BN \$** i.e. Indian resident's liabilities towards non-residents are more than its assets.
- However, the ratio of international assets to international liabilities improved to 73.6% from 70.4% a year earlier.
- **Reserve assets accounted for 68.5% of the total assets**
- Reserve assets are currencies or other assets, such as gold, that can be readily transferable and are used to balance international transactions and payments.

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Dark Genome



❖ Context

- Scientists have identified **recently evolved portions of dark genome** coding for proteins associated with **schizophrenia and bipolar disorder**
- The researchers say that the **newly discovered proteins can be used as biological indicators** to distinguish the two conditions and identify patients more prone to psychosis

❖ Key Highlights

- **Only 1.5% of the entire human genome codes for 20,000 'known' proteins.** Rest of the genomic space is occupied by the '**Dark genome**' which does not code '**known**' proteins
- Dark genome is an informal term for unclassified or poorly understood genetic material

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