



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 20-12-2023

KEYS

1. Answer: C

- Chhattisgarh's last remaining purebred wild buffalo within the boundaries of the Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve has reportedly turned partially blind after a confrontation with a hybrid wild buffalo.
- Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve is located in the **Dhamtari District of Chhattisgarh**.
- **Udanti and Sitanadi** are two wildlife sanctuaries combined together to form the **reserve**, covering a total area of 1842.54 sq.km.

Rivers:

- The Udanti River flows from west to east in the Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Sitanadi River originates from the middle of the Sitanadi Wildlife Sanctuary.

Vegetation:

- Mixed vegetation is present in the reserve. Dry deciduous forests, tropical and sub-tropical vegetation are also observed here, especially in the area around streams and waterways.

Flora:

- It contains various types of forest crops mixed with Sal forest.
- The ground is covered with maze of grass, plants, bushes and saplings.

Fauna:

- All the representative faunal species of Central India are found in the reserve.
- **The Asiatic Wild Buffalo** is the key **endangered species** found in the Core Area.
- Apart from the tiger, other endangered and rare species are the Indian Wolf, Leopard, Sloth Bear, and Mouse Deer.

2. Answer: A

- In a written reply in Rajya Sabha, the **Coal and Mines Minister** recently said the **District Mineral Foundation (DMF)** has been set up in **644 districts in 23 states**.

About District Mineral Foundation (DMF):

- DMF is a trust set up as a non-profit body under the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Amendment Act 2015**.
- **Purpose:** To work in the interest and benefits of persons and areas affected by mining-related operations in a manner as maybe prescribed by the **respective State Government**.
- **Funding:** It is funded through the contributions from the holders of major or minor mineral concessions in the district, as may be prescribed by **the Central or State Government**.

- **Jurisdiction:** The operation of DMFs falls under the jurisdiction of the relevant **State Government**.
- The **composition and functions** of the District Mineral Foundation shall be such as may be **prescribed by the State Government**.
- The fund for DMF is collected at the district level.

Key Facts about Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalvan Yojana (PMKKKY):

- The **Ministry of Mines** launched PMKKKY in 2015 for the **welfare of areas and people** affected by mining-related operations, using the funds generated by DMFs.

Objectives:

- To implement various developmental and welfare projects in mining-affected areas, complementing the existing ongoing schemes of the State and Central Government;
- To minimize/mitigate the adverse impacts, during and after mining, on the environment, health, and socio-economics of people in mining districts; and
- To ensure long-term sustainable livelihoods for the affected people in mining areas.
- The Central Government has notified the rates of contribution payable by miners to the DMFs.
- In case of all mining leases executed before 12th January, 2015 miners will have to contribute an amount equal to 30% of the royalty payable by them to the DMFs. If mining leases are granted after 12.01.2015, the rate of contribution would be 10% of the royalty payable.

Utilisation of Funds:

- At least 60% of PMKKKY funds to be utilized for High priority areas such as Drinking water supply, Health care, Education, Environment preservation etc.
- Up to 40% of the PMKKKY to be utilized for other priority areas such as- Physical infrastructure, Irrigation, Energy and Watershed Development etc.

3. Answer: D

- Prime Minister Monday recently inaugurated the **world's largest meditation centre**, Swarved Mahamandir, in Varanasi.
- There 20,000 people can sit together and meditate.
- It aims to illuminate humankind with its spiritual aura and engulf the world in a state of peaceful alertness.
- The temple is named after the Swarved, a spiritual literature written by **Sadguru Shri Sadafal Deoji Mahara**, the creator of **Vihangam Yoga** and an eternal yogi.

Features:

- It is a seven-floor superstructure.
- It has a beautiful design with 125-petal lotus domes.
- The ceiling and doors with intricate carvings are made of teakwood.

- The temple has 101 fountains.
- The pink sandstone decor surrounds the temple walls, and there is an exquisite garden with medicinal herbs.
- Verses of the Swarveda have been carved upon the walls of the Mahamandir.

4. Answer: A

- The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), the representative body of nearly 600 internet firms and start-ups, recently welcomed the introduction of the **Telecom Bill in Lok Sabha**.

About Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI):

- Established in **2004**, the IAMAI is a **not-for-profit** industry body registered under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
- It is the **country's only organization** representing the digital services industry, with over 500 Indian and multinational corporations as its members, which include established companies in diverse sectors of the digital ecosystem as well as start-ups.
- **Mandate: To expand and enhance the online and mobile value-added services sectors.**
- It is dedicated to presenting the **unified voice** of the businesses it represents to the government, investors, consumers, and other stakeholders.
- The association addresses the **issues, concerns, and challenges** of the Internet and Mobile economy and takes a leading role in its development.
- IAMAI represents varied sectors such as digital advertising, digital entertainment, traveltech, online gaming, digital payments, fintech, digital commerce, edtech, healthtech, agritech, big data, ML, AI & IoT, AR/VR, logistics-tech, and so on.
- The association's activities include promoting the inherent strengths of the digital economy, evaluating and recommending standards and practices to the industry, conducting research, creating platforms for its members, communicating on behalf of the industry, and creating a favorable business environment for the industry.;
- IAMAI has been advocating **free and fair competition, progressive laws** for the sector, and **supporting equitable access**, the best quality of **services to consumers**, and a safe and secure internet for users.

5. Answer: D

- The **World Bank's** latest **Migration and Development** Brief highlights India's significant position as the top remittance recipient, drawing attention to the evolving dynamics in the remittance landscape.
- It is prepared by the Migration and Remittances Unit, Development Economics (DEC), the premier research and data arm of the World Bank.
- The brief is produced **twice a year**. The brief aims to provide an update on key developments in the area of **migration and remittance flows** and related policies over the **past six months**.

- It also provides medium-term projections of remittance flows to developing countries.
- It also presents recent developments on the Global Compact on Migration (GCM).
- A special topic is included in each brief.

Key highlights of the recent report:

- The **top five remittance recipient** countries in 2023 are India (\$125 billion), Mexico (\$67 billion), China (\$50 billion), the Philippines (\$40 billion), and Egypt (\$24 billion).
- The **United States continued to be the largest source of remittances.**
- Remittances to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) grew by an estimated 3.8 per cent in 2023, reaching a total of USD669 billion.
- Resilient labour markets in advanced economies and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries played a pivotal role in supporting migrants' ability to send money home.
- Remittance flows to Europe and Central Asia also decreased by 1.4 percent after a significant gain in 2022.
- The report suggests a potential risk of a decline in real income for migrants in 2024 due to **global inflation and low growth prospects.**
- A special section of the report emphasizes the potential of leveraging remittances for development finance, particularly through diaspora bonds. The report says diaspora bonds can be structured to tap into diaspora savings held in foreign destinations, providing a stable source of funds.

6. Answer: B

- Yogmaya Temple is historically important monument believed to be standing at the site of an ancient temple that is said to have come up during the period of the Mahabharata.
- It is also known as the **Jogmaya Temple**, is an ancient Hindu shrine situated in the heart of **Mehrauli (Delhi)**, a few hundred meters away from the famous Qutub Minar.
- It was built by a noble in the court of **Mughal Emperor Akbar II** by the name of Lala Sidhu Mal between 1806 and 1837.
- The area was known as Yoginipura in ancient Jain texts and Prithviraj Chauhan himself was said to have patronised a Yogini temple here shortly before his city's destruction.
- It was a focal point of Akbar II's rule.
- The temple has a replica of the Goddess Yogmaya, also called the "Pure Goddess,
- The most famous festival celebrated only in this temple is the '**Phoolwalon ki Sair.**'

7. Answer: A

- Scientists have recently discovered that Chum salmon, a **migrating fish** have been spawning in the **Arctic waters.**

- It is a species of anadromous salmonid fish, which means they hatch in freshwater streams and rivers and then migrate out to the saltwater environment of the ocean to feed and grow.
- They do **not reside in fresh water** for an extended period.
- They are also known as dog salmon.
- **Distribution:** They are the most widely distributed of all the Pacific salmon.
- They are found throughout the North Pacific Ocean and range from the Arctic coast of Canada and throughout the northern coastal regions of North America and Asia.
- **Habitat:** They spend their early life growing and feeding in fresh water streams, estuaries, and associated wetlands.
- They spend the remainder of their life foraging in the ocean before returning to the streams and tributaries where they were born to spawn.

8. Answer: D

- According to forest department officials the Sultanpur National Park in Gurgaon has reported a **decrease of 20-30 per cent** in the number of **migratory birds this season**.
- Sultanpur National Park, formerly known as Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary, is located in the Gurgaon district in Haryana.
- It comprises mainly wetlands.
- This national park is a major habitat for aquatic birds, including migratory and resident birds.
- It was notified as a **Ramsar site**, a wetland of international importance, in **2021**.
- **Vegetation:** Tropical and dry deciduous. It also features seasonal aquatic vegetation and is dotted with artificial islands; the Park also includes open grasslands.
- Some of the resident and migratory species of birds found in the area are the Common hoopoe, Purple sunbird, Black francolin, Little cormorant, Indian Cormorant, Siberian Crane, Greater Flamingo, Common Teal, Common Greenshank, Ruff, etc.

9. Answer: C

- **NASA's** new satellite **TEMPO measure air pollution hourly** has shown significant progress and now the space agency officials are already thinking about ways to extend its life.
- **Tropospheric Emissions Monitoring of Pollution (TEMPO)** monitors major air pollutants across North America.
- Its monitoring range extends from Canada's oil sands to the Yucatán Peninsula and across the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.
- It is part of a **virtual constellation with South Korea's Geostationary Environment Monitoring Spectrometer (GEMS)** and **the European Space Agency's** upcoming satellite, aiming for **comprehensive air pollution monitoring over the Northern Hemisphere**.

- It will make important scientific observations, including that of ozone, nitrogen oxide, sulphur dioxide and formaldehyde levels. It is capable of measuring air quality over North America hourly during the daytime with a resolution of several square miles.
- It monitors the effects of everything from rush-hour traffic to pollution from forest fires and volcanoes.
- The present pollution-monitoring satellites are in **low Earth orbit (LEO)**, but this new monitoring instrument is hosted in **geostationary orbit**.
- It was designed for a 20-month operation.

10. Answer: C

- The union **Ministry of Mines** is to launch the **National Geoscience Data Repository (NGDR) Portal** on 19th December 2023 in a ceremony in New Delhi.
- It is a comprehensive **online platform for accessing, sharing, and analyzing geospatial information across India**.
- The NGDR initiative spearheaded by **the Geological Survey of India (GSI)** and **Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG-N)**.
- It represents a significant leap forward in democratizing critical geoscience data, empowering stakeholders across industries and academia with unprecedented access to invaluable resources.

Geological Survey of India

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) was set up in **1851** primarily to find coal deposits for the Railways.
- Over the years, GSI has not only grown into a repository of geo-science information required in various fields in the country but has also attained the status of a geo-scientific organisation of international repute.
- Its main functions relate to creating and updating of national geoscientific information and mineral resource assessment.
- GSI also emphasises on systematic documentation of all geological processes, both surface and subsurface, of India and its offshore areas. The organisation carries out this work through geological, geophysical, & geochemical surveys using the latest and most cost-effective techniques and methodologies.
- **GSI is an attached office of the Ministry of Mines.**
- **Headquarters:** Kolkata
- It has six regional offices located in Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Shillong and Kolkata and state unit offices in almost all states of the country.