

The Achievers IAS Academy

Patliputra colony, Near: Tennis Court; Patna. Contact: 8434931877, 7250667974

1. Ethanol production in Bihar



- Three proposals for setting up ethanol production units at Madhubani, Motihari and Gopalganj have been approved in the first stage. Investment proposals are expected to invest around 650 crores in Bihar.
- The state cabinet approved the new ethanol production incentive policy after the Center changed the rules to make ethanol directly without sugar. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had sent the proposal to the then Central Government in the year 2007 itself.
- Bihar is the first state in the country to introduce a separate ethanol policy. Recently, while issuing the new policy, Industries Minister Shahnawaz Hussain had talked about making Bihar an ethanol hub. Among the proposals approved by the State Investment Promotion Board for the first phase, the most prominent is in Madhubani district of Mithilanchal region.
- **Biggest offer in Madhubani Lohut**
- Ethanol, once known for sugar production, will now also contain ethanol. There used to be a sugar mill in Madhubani's Lohut. Now the proposal of Sonasati Organics to set up an ethanol unit has been approved. Apart from ethanol, the company will also make sugar and electricity. An investment of about 400 crores is proposed in this.
- Ethanol production units have also been approved at Motihari and Gopalganj. There will be investment of more than 250 crores in them. Tirhut Udyog Private Limited has proposed to set up an ethanol plant at Motihari at a cost of 120 crores. At the same time, Bharat Sugar Mill in Gopalganj will also start ethanol production. The company has made an investment proposal of 133 crores to the state government.
- **Why is ethanol important for the country?**
- Ethanol is a type of alcohol mixed with petrol and can be used as fuel in vehicles. Ethanol is produced mainly from the sugarcane crop, but it can also be prepared from many other crops with sweetness. The use of ethanol produces 35 percent less carbon monoxide. Not only this, it also reduces carbon monoxide emissions and sulfur dioxide. In addition, ethanol also reduces hydrocarbon emissions. Ethanol contains 35 percent oxygen.

2. Khelo India State Centre of Excellence for Rowing discipline.



- Union Minister for Sports & Youth Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju inaugurated Khelo India State Centre of Excellence for Rowing discipline at the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council Water Sports Academy in Srinagar on 10th April 2021.
- At present, the Khelo India State Centre of Excellence at J&K Sports Council Water Sports Academy in Srinagar will focus in the sports discipline of Rowing. They will be provided a first-time grant of Rs 145.16 lakhs and an annual recurring grant of Rs 96.17 lakhs.
- This is one of the two KISCEs from Jammu & Kashmir itself, with the Maulana Azad Stadium for Fencing discipline in Jammu being the other.
- There are currently 24 KISCEs across 23 States and Union Territories and each of them focuses on Olympics sports discipline. This is an ongoing endeavour to scale-up existing centres from the States and Union Territories to the world standard level keeping in mind the big picture of getting India excelled at the Olympics.

3. Online Dispute Resolution.



- Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) has the potential to decentralize, diversify, democratize, and disentangle the justice delivery

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mechanism, Supreme Court Justice DY Chandrachud said. He was addressing the release event of a handbook on ODR, developed by Agami and Omidyar India, in association with NITI Aayog and with the support of ICICI Bank, Ashoka Innovators for the Public, Trilegal, Dalberg, Dvara and NIPFP.

- Despite resistance and insistence on moving back to physical hearings post the pandemic, Justice Chandrachud emphasized that ODR is the need of the hour.
- the ODR handbook notes that traditional litigation in India can be time consuming, expensive and onerous. Although the judiciary is working towards solving these issues, ODR can provide a helping hand in this situation—by limiting the kinds of disputes that often come to courts in the first place.
- ODR can be beneficial for the expansion of the economy, for businesses looking for quick and efficient resolution, and even for individuals to whom traditional means of dispute resolution seem too onerous and inaccessible,
- NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant added, “The ODR handbook is the outcome of a collaborative work by several contributors. It intends to facilitate the process to adopt ODR in India and highlight actionable processes for businesses that wish to adopt ODR.
- Covid-19 has instilled an urgent need for ODR, with the likelihood of a spurt in disputes before courts—most notably in lending, credit, property, commerce, and retail. For instance, Udaan, India’s largest B2B platform for businesses and shopowners, resolved over 1800 disputes in one month using an ODR service provider. Each dispute took an average of 126 minutes. In the coming months, ODR could be the mechanism that helps businesses with achieving expedient resolution. The ODR handbook enables businesses to do so.

4. Lilavati Awards 2020.



- Union Minister of Education Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' presented the AICTE Lilavati Awards 2020 on women empowerment to the winners.
- All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has established the Lilavati Award.
- Based on the theme 'Women Empowerment', AICTE finalized the winners from a total of 456 entries who competed across 6 sub themes, which include, Women's Health, Self-Defense, Sanitation

and Hygiene, Literacy, Women Entrepreneurship, and Legal Awareness.

- The program will ensure the participation of women and enable them to hold higher positions in educational institutions.
- Important Info :
- The Leelavati Award is an award for outstanding contribution to public outreach in mathematics. It is named after the 12th-century mathematical treatise "Lilavati" devoted to arithmetic and algebra written by the Indian mathematician Bhāskara II, also known as Bhaskara Achārya. In the book the author posed, in verse form, a series of problems in (elementary) arithmetic to one Leelavati (perhaps his daughter) and followed them up with hints to solutions. This work appears to have been the main source of learning arithmetic and algebra in medieval India.

5. Dolphin in Odisha's Chilika lake.



- The population of dolphins in Chilika, India’s largest brackish water lake, and along the Odisha coast has doubled this year compared with last year.
- The wildlife wing of the State Forest and Environment Department released the final data on the dolphin census conducted in January and February this year, indicating a spectacular growth in numbers.
- Divided into 41 units, wildlife activists, academicians, Forest Department officials, NGO members, boat operators and researchers from the Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai, participated in the estimation exercise.
- Three species were recorded during the census, with 544 Irrawaddy, bottle-nose and humpback dolphins sighted this year, compared with 233 last year.
- Wildlife activists are elated over the sizeable growth in the population of endangered Irrawaddy dolphins, which are mostly found in Chilika lake, jumping from 146 in 2020 to 162 this year. Apart from Chilika, 39 Irrawaddy dolphins were sighted in the Rajnagar mangrove division, though their number has come down from 60 in 2020.
- The highest growth has been noticed in the case of humpback dolphins. Only two humpbacks were sighted in the Rajnagar mangrove in 2020. In 2021, however, this population grew astronomically to 281.
- These humpback dolphins were not part of any riverine systems, so they cannot be identified as residential mammals. They were spotted

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travelling along the Odisha coast and the number is likely to fluctuate in the next census,

- The number of bottle-nose dolphins grew from 23 in 2020 to 54 this year.

➤ **SOURCE**

- The rise in the Irrawaddy [dolphin] population in Chilika can be attributed to the eviction of illegal fish enclosures. After thousands of hectares of Chilika water were made encroachment-free, Irrawaddy dolphins found unobstructed area for movement. Moreover, due to the COVID-19 lockdown last year, there were comparatively fewer tourist boats on Chilika lake, which made it conducive for dolphins to move from one part [of the lake] to another," said Susanta Nanda, Chief Executive of Chilika

6. Umangot, considered the cleanest river of India.



- Stiff resistance from at least 12 villages in Meghalaya has cast a cloud on a 210 MW hydroelectric project on Umngot, considered India's cleanest river.
- The villages are near the border with Bangladesh in East Khasi Hills district but the dam is proposed upstream in the adjoining West Jaintia Hills district.
- "Everyone is against the mega-dam project as their livelihood is dependent on the river," Alan West Kharkongor, president of the Meghalaya Rural Tourism Forum, said.
- The project documents say people of 13 villages along the Umngot are likely to lose 296 hectares of land due to submergence if the dam comes up.
- The Umngot river attracts many tourists to Dawki bordering Bangladesh. The water of the river is so clear that boats seem to rest on a crystal glass surface besides casting their shadows on the river bed.

7. Begging.



- The Supreme Court has asked the Centre and four States to file their response within three weeks on a plea seeking a direction to repeal the provisions criminalising begging.
- A Bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and R. Subhash Reddy noted in its order on Friday that though a notice was issued to Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Bihar on the plea on February 10 this year, only Bihar had so far filed its response.
- The plea filed by Meerut resident Vishal Pathak has referred to the August 2018 verdict of the Delhi High Court which had decriminalised begging in the national capital and said provisions of the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959, which treats begging as an offence cannot sustain constitutional scrutiny.
- The provisions of the statutes criminalising the act of begging put people in a situation to make an unreasonable choice between committing a crime or not committing one and starving, which goes against the very spirit of the Constitution and violates Article 21 i.e. Right to Life,"
- Referring to the Census 2011, the plea has said the total number of beggars in India is 4,13,670 and the number has increased from the last census.
- It said the government had the mandate to provide social security to everyone and ensure that all had basic facilities, as embedded in the Directives Principles of State Policy in the Constitution.
- However, the presence of beggars is evidence that the state has failed to provide these basic facilities to all its citizens, thus criminalizing the act of beggars irrespective of working on its failure and investigating begging people. Is against attitude
- The petition has sought directions to declare as "illegal and void" all provisions, except some sections, of the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959, Punjab Prevention of Beggary Act, 1971, Haryana Prevention of Begging Act, 1971 and Bihar Prevention of Begging Act 1951.
- It has also sought to declare all other similar Acts prevailing in any part of the country as illegal.

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8. Iran nuclear programme



- Iran announced it has started up advanced uranium enrichment centrifuges in a breach of its undertakings under a troubled 2015 nuclear deal, days after the start of talks on rescuing the accord.
- President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated the three cascades of 164 IR-6 centrifuges, 30 IR-5 and another 30 IR-6 devices at Iran's Natanz uranium enrichment plant in a ceremony broadcast by state television.
- Iran's latest move to step up uranium enrichment follows an opening round of talks in Vienna Tuesday with representatives of the remaining parties to the nuclear deal on bringing the U.S. back into it.
- Former President Donald Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018 but his successor Joe Biden has said he is ready to return, arguing the deal had been successful in dramatically scaling back Iran's nuclear activities.
- The Vienna talks are focused not only on lifting crippling economic sanctions Trump reimposed, but also on bringing Iran back into compliance after it responded by suspending several of its own commitments.
- Iran has demanded that the United States first lift all sanctions imposed by Trump, which include a sweeping unilateral ban on its oil exports, before it falls back in line with obligations it suspended.

9. Indus and Ganges river dolphins are two different species .

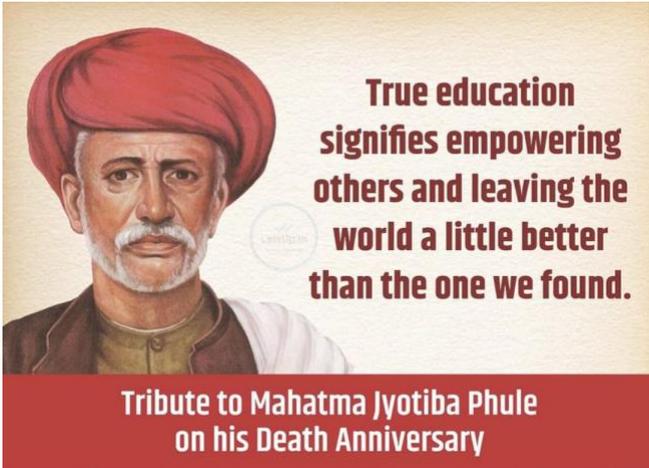


- Detailed analysis of South Asian river dolphins has revealed that the Indus and Ganges River dolphins are not one, but two separate species.
- Currently, they are classified as two subspecies under *Platanista gangetica* and this needs a revision. The study estimates that Indus and Ganges river dolphins may have diverged around 550,000 years ago.
- The international team studied body growth, skull morphology, tooth counts, colouration and genetic makeup and published the findings last month in *Marine Mammal Science*.
- One of the authors of the paper Ravindra K. Sinha from Patna University explains: "The Ganges dolphin is a Schedule I animal under the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, and has been included in Annexure – I of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), so you cannot transfer any tissue or sample to foreign countries without getting CITES permission from the Competent Authority of Government of India." Another reason was that finding dead animals were uncommon because they either float downstream or sink, and museum collections worldwide contain only a few specimens and most of them are damaged.
- **Conservation status**
- The Indus and Ganges River dolphins are both classified as 'Endangered' species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Dr. Sinha who has been studying Ganges dolphins for almost four decades explains that physical barriers such as dams and barrages created across the river reduced the gene flow to a great extent making the species vulnerable; He adds that river flow is also declining very fast as river water is being diverted through the barrages and this has affected the dolphin habitats. "Previously fishermen used to hunt dolphins and use their oil as bait, but though that practice of directed killing has stopped and they are not being hunted intentionally they end up as accidental catches. Also, before the 1990s, we had oar boats and country boats; but now mechanised boats are also causing accidental injury to the dolphins.
- **Sources of pollution**
- Being a part of the Ganga Action Plan, Dr. Sinha monitored a large stretch of the river and noted that both point and non-point sources of pollution are affecting the dolphin habitat. "Recently we saw the Chinese river dolphin go extinct. Though the Indian government has given legal protection to the dolphin, more ground action and close work with local communities are needed to help them survive," adds Dr. Sinha.

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10. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule



- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has paid tribute to the great social reformer, thinker, philosopher and writer Mahatma Jyotiba Phule on his birth anniversary.
- Jotirao Govindrao Phule (11 April 1827 – 28 November 1890) was an Indian social activist, thinker, anti-caste social reformer and writer from Maharashtra.
- His work extended to many fields, including eradication of untouchability and the caste system and for his efforts in educating women and exploited caste people. He and his wife, Savitribai Phule, were pioneers of women's education in India.
- Phule started his first school for girls in 1848 in Pune at Tatyasaheb Bhide's residence or Bhidewada.
- He, along with his followers, formed the Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Truth Seekers) to attain equal rights for people from exploited castes.
- People from all religions and castes could become a part of this association which worked for the upliftment of the oppressed classes.
- Phule is regarded as an important figure in the social reform movement in Maharashtra. He was bestowed with honorific Mahātmā (Sanskrit: "great-souled", "venerable") title by Maharashtrian social activist Vithalrao Krishnaji Vandeekar in 1888.