

Kakoijana Reserve Forest

❖ Context

- Villagers of the neighbouring forest have opposed State government's move to upgrade the forest to wildlife sanctuary

❖ Key Highlights

- Villagers have demanded that the reserve forest may **instead** be converted into a **community forest resource** under Forest Rights Act, 2006, to ensure community co-managed system of participation for sustainable conservation
- The villagers pointed out that the **conservation efforts** of the locals had helped the authorities concerned to **restore the forest canopy** from less than 5% to **more than 70%**.
- This in turn helped increase the **golden langur** population from less than **100 to more than 600** over almost three decades
- **Kakoijana Reserve Forest (17.24 sq km , Bongaigaon district, Assam)** is one of the better-known homes of the golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*) found **only in Assam and Bhutan**

❖ Community Forest Resource Rights

- According to **Section 2(a)** of the Forest Rights Act, Community Forest Resource is the **customary common forest land** within the **traditional or customary boundaries** of the village or seasonal use of landscape in the case of pastoral communities, including reserved forests, protected forests and protected areas such as sanctuaries and national parks to which **the community had traditional access**.
- **Section 5 of the Act** empowers the holders of forest rights, the **Gram Sabha, and village level institutions** to **protect forests, water catchment areas, biodiversity** and ensure that the habitat of forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers is preserved from any form of destructive practices affecting their cultural and natural heritage.

- The community forest resource area may **include forest of any category** i.e. revenue forest, classified and unclassified forest, deemed forest, reserve forest, protected forest, sanctuary and national parks etc.
- The Act provides certain individual rights such as **Rights of Self-cultivation and Habitation and community rights** such as grazing, fishing, and access to water bodies in forests, **community right to intellectual property** and **traditional knowledge** etc.

❖ Golden Langur

- Golden langur is found in an **area of approximately 30,000 square kms**, bounded on the south by the **Brahmaputra River**, on the east by the **Manas River**, on the west by the **Sankosh River**, in Assam, and on the north by the **Black Mountains** of Bhutan.
- It is listed as among the world's 25 most **endangered** primates, under **Schedule-I** of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 & **Appendix I** of CITES



Sattras

❖ Context

- Assam government carried out eviction to clear sattras land of 'encroachers'

❖ Key Highlights

- Sattras are **influential monastic institutions** created as part of the **16th century neo-Vaishnavite reformist** movement started by saint-reformer **Srimanta Sankaradeva**.
- They are associated with **Ekasarana tradition**
- It **reduced focus on vedic ritualism** and focused on devotion (**bhakti**) to Krishna in the form of congregational listening (**sravan**) and singing his name and deeds (**kirtan**).
- They grew rapidly in the 17th century mainly due to the **patronage** extended to them by **Koch and Ahom** kingdoms
- The artistic creations emanating from this movement led to the engendering of new forms of literature, music (**Borgeets** or songs celestial), theater (**Ankia Naat**) and dance (**Sattriya dance**).
- The **central religious text** of this religion is **Bhagavat of Sankardeva**,. This book is supplemented by the two books of songs for congregational singing: **Kirtan Ghoxa** by Sankardeva and **Naam Ghoxa** by Madhabdev. These books are written in the **Assamese language**.
- The religion is also called **Mahapuruxiya** because it is based on the worship of the Mahapurux or Mahapurush (Sanskrit: Maha: Supreme and purush: Being), an epithet of the supreme spiritual personality in the Bhagavata
- Monks, called **bhakats**, live in **satras** under a **satradhikar or Mahanta**. In some orders of the religion, the bhakats are celibate (**kewalia bhakat**).

Face to Face Centres



❖ Structure of Sattra

- The Satra is generally a four-sided enclosed area with four gateways (*karapat*).
- Centrally placed in this enclosure is a rectangular prayer-hall (*Namghar* or *kirtanghar*) aligned in the east-west direction.
- On its eastern side there is *Manikut* (jewel-house), the *sanctum sanctorum*, in which the *asana*, a wooden tetrahedral structure with four carved lions, is placed containing the main object of worship (usually a copy of the **Bhagavat Purana** in manuscript or an idol).
- The namghar is surrounded by four straight rows of huts, called *hati*, in which monks (*bhakats*) reside. The *adhipara* and other high officers of the Satra reside in the eastern *hatis*.



Post Devolution Revenue Deficit (PDRD)

❖ Context

- Recently, the **Ministry of Finance** has released the monthly **Post Devolution Revenue Deficit (PDRD) Grant** of 9, 871 crore rupees to 17 States.

❖ Key Highlights

- This was the **11th installment of the PDRD** grant released to the States.
- The **Fifteenth Finance Commission** has **recommended** a total Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grant of 1,18,452 crore rupees to 17 States in the financial year 2021-22.

❖ Transfers to States

- The Finance Commission Grants are primarily **divided into four sub-heads-**
 - Grants for rural local bodies
 - Grants for urban local bodies
 - Assistance to SDRF
 - Post devolution revenue deficit grants
- In addition to the four main grants, Center also transfers a **considerable sum to states and vulnerable groups** from its own resources-
 - Assistance to states from NDRF
 - Central pool of resources for north-eastern region and Sikkim
 - Externally aided project grants
 - Externally aided project loans
 - Schemes for north-east council
 - Schemes under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution

❖ About PDRD

- The Center provides the **Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grant** to the States under **Article 275** of the Constitution.
- The grants are released as per the recommendations of the **Finance Commission** in monthly installments **to meet the gap in Revenue Accounts of the States post-devolution.**
- The 15th Finance Commission has recommended PDRD grants amounting to about Rs. **3 trillion over the five-year period ending FY26.**
- The **number of states** qualifying for the revenue deficit grants **decreased from 17 in FY22**, the first year of the award period **to 6 in FY26**, the last year.
- The eligibility of States to receive this grant and the quantum of grant was **decided by the Commission based on the gap between assessment of revenue and expenditure of the State.**

❖ Article 275

- The parliament shall provide **grants – in – aid** to states.
- These grants are **paid out from the consolidated fund of India.**
- The central government has **all rights to fix different amounts for different states.**

J&K Delimitation Commission

❖ Context

- Recently, in its interim report, the **Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Delimitation Commission** has proposed significant changes to the electoral map of J&K.

❖ Key Highlights

- As per the report:-
 - The J&K Delimitation Commission has changed the complexion of most of the **90 Assembly seats.**
 - Of the 90 Assembly seats, **28 new Assembly constituencies** have been reconfigured or renamed.
 - **19 Assembly segments** have been deleted.
 - All the five **Lok Sabha seats will be redrawn.**
 - The **Shri Mata Vaishno Devi constituency** has been identified as the **smallest** of all with just 73,648 votes in the Jammu region. The Commission has reserved **nine seats for the STs and seven for the SCs.**

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❖ About delimitation

- Delimitation is **redrawing of boundaries** of an assembly or Lok Sabha constituency.
- It is done to **reflect the demographic changes** in a state, Union Territory or at the national level.
- Delimitation is also **responsible for reserving a designated number of seats** in a state assembly or the Lok Sabha for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities.

❖ About Delimitation Commission

- **Article 82-** the Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after every Census.
- **Article 170-** States also get divided into territorial constituencies as per Delimitation Act after every Census.
- **Appointment-** Appointed by the President of India and works in collaboration with the Election Commission of India.
- **Members-** Serving or retired SC judge, Chief Election Commissioner or an Election commissioner nominated by CEC and Election commissioner of the respective states.
- At the national level, **four Delimitation Commissions** have been constituted till date (1952, 1963, 1972 and 2002)

MAP OF UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND UT OF LADAKH

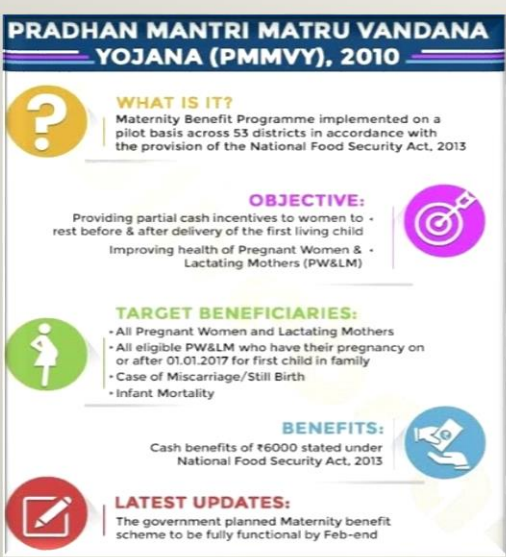


❖ Delimitation commission for J&K

- The Delimitation Commission was constituted to the Union Territory in **March 2021**.
- It was **headed by Justice (retired) Ranjana Desai**.
- It has five MPs from J&K as associate members.
- Till 2019, Delimitation exercises in J&K have been **different from those in the rest of the country**.
- While Delimitation of Lok Sabha seats in J&K was governed by Constitution of India, delimitation of state's Assembly seats was governed by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution.
- Assembly seats in the newly-created Union Territory would be as per the provisions of the Indian Constitution.

News in Between the Lines

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana



❖ Context

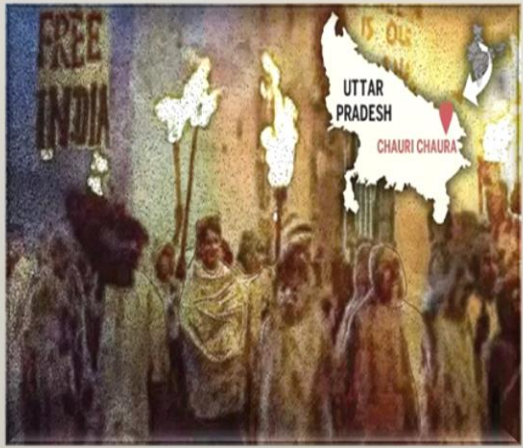
- Recently, Govt. has said **PMMVY will cover the second child only when it is a girl**.
 - To **discourage pre-birth sex selection and promote the girl child**.
- This announcement met with **sharp criticism from activists** who have demanded that it be universalised.
- The Government also clarified that **Aadhaar of Husbands is not mandatory** under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, PMMVY, to facilitate the inclusion of single mothers and abandoned mothers.

❖ About PMMVY

- It was **Launched in 2017**. PMMVY is a **Centrally Sponsored DBT scheme**.
- It is being **implemented in all the districts** of the country in accordance with the provision of the **National Food Security Act, 2013**.
- It Provides the **cash incentive of ₹ 5000/-** (in three installments) being provided directly in the bank/post office account of Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers.
 - Provides this cash for the birth of the first child to **partially compensate a woman for loss of wages**.
 - It also aims to **improve the nutritional well-being** of the mother and the child.
 - Regular employment with the Central Government or the State Governments or PSUs or those who are in receipt of similar benefits are excluded.
- It is combined with another scheme, **Janani Suraksha Yojana**, under which nearly ₹1,000 is given for an institutional birth, so that a woman **gets a total of ₹6,000**.



Chauri Chaura incident



❖ Context

- Recently, the Prime Minister paid tribute to the **heroes of freedom struggle** on completion of the hundred years of **Chauri Chaura incident**.

❖ About the Incident

- On February 4, 1922, the volunteers of the **Non – Cooperation movement** proceeded to a local police station. They held a procession. The **police fired at the procession**. In retaliation, the volunteers **set the police station on fire**. Some policemen tried to escape the fire. They were caught and beaten to death.
- This is referred to as the Chauri Chaura incident.

❖ Non Cooperation Movement

- The movement was fought from 1920 to 1922. The movement **boycotted foreign goods**. It mainly included machine made clothes. Also, the people **refused to assist rulers who misrule the country**. Education and administrative institutions and council elections were boycotted

❖ Response of Gandhi

- He **condemned the crime** of the policemen's killing.
- A Chauri Chaura Support Fund was set up to demonstrate "genuine sympathy" and seek atonement.
- Gandhi bent the Congress Working Committee to his will, and on **12th February, 1922, the satyagraha (movement) was formally suspended**.

Lata Mangeshkar



❖ Context

- India's nightingale, Lata Mangeshkar passed away on February 6, 2022.

❖ About Lata Mangeshkar

- Lata Mangeshkar (born as **Hema Mangeshkar; 28 September 1929 – 6 February 2022**) was an Indian **playback singer and occasional music composer**.
- She is considered as one of the greatest and most influential singers in the country.
- Her career spanned for seven decades, in which she gained titles like Nightingale of India, Queen of Melody and Voice of the Millennium, because of her contribution to Indian music industry.
- She recorded songs in over thirty-six Indian languages and a few foreign languages, though primarily in Hindi, Bengali, Marathi.

❖ Awards

- She was the **recipient of three National Film Awards**.
- In 1987 the **Dadasaheb Phalke Award** was bestowed on her by the Government of India.
- In 2001, in recognition of her contributions to the nation, she was awarded the **Bharat Ratna**, India's highest civilian honour and is only the **second female singer**, after M. S. Subbulakshmi, to receive this honour.
- **France conferred on her its highest civilian award**, Officer of the National Order of the Legion of Honour, in 2007. She was recognised in **Guinness Book of World Records in 1974**, for singing maximum number of songs in the world.

Paray Shikshalaya



❖ Context

- The West Bengal government on Monday (February 7) launched '**Paray Shikshalaya**' – an **open-air classroom** in the neighbourhood programme – for students from **class 1 to 7**.

❖ Key Highlights

- The aim of this initiative is to encourage students who **dropped out of schools** during the Covid-19 pandemic to continue their education.
- Schools which do not have open-air spaces conducted the classes in **neighbourhood parks and grounds**. Students are being called in batches.
- Local councillors and MLAs helped set up infrastructure in such parks like putting up makeshift shades and chairs, besides making **mid-day meal arrangements** for the students.

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Parvatmala



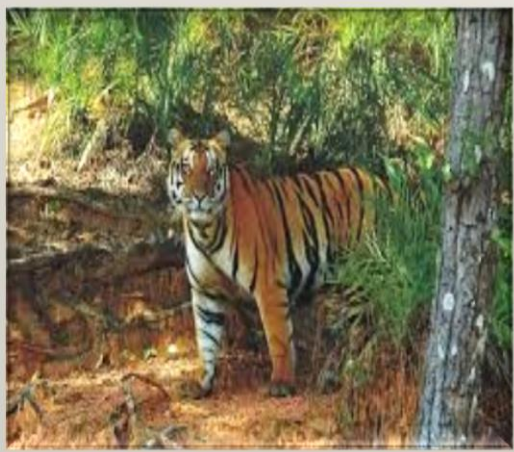
❖ Context

- Union Finance Minister while presenting Union Budget for 2022-23 announced **National Ropeways Development Programme** – “Parvatmala” -- will be taken up on PPP mode

❖ Key Highlights

- MORTH has initiated a study which suggested that MORTH may take National Ropeway Development Programme named “Parvatmala”, similar to the “Bharatmala” programme.
- In February 2021, the **Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961** was amended, which enabled the Ministry to also look after the **development of Ropeways and Alternate Mobility Solutions**.
- It will be a preferred **ecologically sustainable alternative** in place of conventional roads in difficult hilly areas
- The idea is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism and also to cover congested urban areas, where conventional mass transit systems are not feasible.
- Contracts for **8 ropeway projects for a length of 60 km** would be awarded in 2022-23.
- The scheme is being presently started in regions like **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir and the other North Eastern states**.

Satkosia Tiger Reserve



❖ Context

- Satkosia Tiger Reserve (STR), Angul dist., Odisha has started making efforts afresh to re-establish it as a tiger habitat

❖ Key Highlights

- At present, the STR has about 200 sq km area, which does not have any human presence. The State and Forest department are attempting to relocate inhabitants of three villages from its core area **to create a 500 sq km area** of inviolate zone for tigers.
- At the time of declaring **Satkosia as a tiger reserve (2007, 964 sq km)**, it had about **12 tigers**. The STR is left with **only one tigress** which has been missing for the past two months.
- To revive tiger population in the STR, **India’s first inter-State tiger relocation programme** was launched by way of import of a pair of tiger and tigress from **Kanha Tiger Reserve and Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve in 2018**.
- But, the **programme had failed** primarily due to hostility of local communities and their intensive use of the tiger reserve resources for livelihoods.
- While the tiger died in a poacher’s trap, villagers opposed the tigress' presence after it strayed into human habitation. The tigress was finally sent back to Madhya Pradesh.

Dholes



❖ Context

- Recently, a new study has reported the presence of **dholes or Asiatic wild dogs (Cuon alpinus)** in the **high mountains of Central Asia** nearly 30 years after their presence was last recorded.

❖ Key Highlights

- The animals have been discovered in the **Bek-Tosot Conservancy** in the Osh region of southern Kyrgyzstan. It is a **native species to Central, South, East Asia, and Southeast Asia**. It is also called as **Asian wild dog, Asiatic wild dog, Indian wild dog, whistling dog, red-dog, and mountain wolf**.
- It play an important role as **apex predators** in forest ecosystems.
- **India supports the highest number** of dholes in the world, still do not have targeted management plans for scientific monitoring of the species.
 - Populations found in three landscapes - **Western Ghats, Central India and Northeast India**.
- **Threats-** Habitat loss, loss of prey, competition with other species, persecution due to livestock predation and disease transfer from domestic dogs.

• Conservation Status:-

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

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