



Ornamental Fish Aquaculture

❖ Context

- As many as 82 islanders, 77 of them women, were selected and underwent intensive training under the programme.

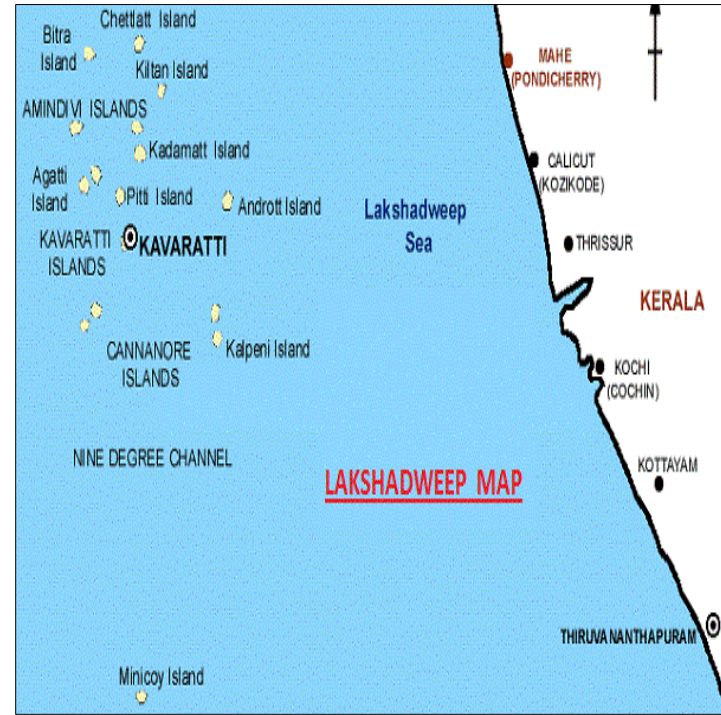
❖ Key Highlights:

- It is expected to help women in the Lakshadweep islands to take the first step towards **self-reliance through concerted activities**.
- Technical support will be provided by the **ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR)**.
- Helping the islanders, especially women, generate income is important considering that the islands have limited resources, mostly in the form of coconut and tuna fish.
- The support being extended by the NBFGR includes -
 - capacity building
 - hand-holding community aquaculture units maintained by local women to raise captive-bred marine ornamentals, including shrimps, to marketable size.
 - will monitor the units and provide technical inputs, till **the organisms reach the marketable size**.

- **Significance:** The experiment in community-based breeding and sale of ornamental fish has been turned into an environment-friendly one, **using coconut fronds and leaves as well as deploying solar panels**.

❖ About National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR)

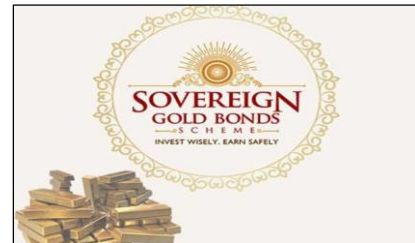
- The National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR) is a research institute based in **Lucknow, India**.
- It comes under the Ministry of **Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India**.
- It is responsible for the collection, preservation, and characterization of fish genetic resources in the country.
- Its mandate includes :
 - developing and implementing conservation strategies,
 - conducting research on fish genetics and biotechnology,
 - and providing technical support to the fisheries industry.



Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2022-23 (Series IV)

❖ Context

- Recently, The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** announced the **Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2022-23 – Series IV** will be open for subscription during **March 06 –10, 2023**.



❖ Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme (SGB)

- It was **launched in November 2015**.
- The scheme was implemented as an **alternative to purchasing metal gold** and mobilise the idle gold held by households and institutions into productive use in the long run.
- A sovereign gold bond scheme (SGB) is **issued to resident Indian entities** by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on behalf of the central government.
- The Gold Bonds are issued as Government of India Stock under the **Government Securities (GS) Act, 2006**.
- This is a **long-term form of market instrument**.
- Gold bonds are government securities denominated in grams of gold.
- They are **substitutes for holding physical gold**.
- Investors have to pay the **issue price in cash** and the bonds will be **redeemed in cash on maturity**.
- The bonds are held in the books of the RBI or in demat form eliminating risk of loss.
- Minimum investment in sovereign gold bonds is one gram with a maximum limit of subscription of 500 grams per person per financial year (April-March).
- The tenor of bonds is **8 years**, it can be redeemed after **5 years**.

- These **bonds are sold through banks**, designated post offices, Stock Holding Corporation of India (SHCIL) and recognised stock exchanges - National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).

❖ Advantages:

- These bonds offer a **superior alternative to holding gold in physical form**.
- The **risks and costs of storage** are eliminated.
- Investors are assured of the market value of gold at the time of maturity and periodical interest.
- It's free from issues like making charges and purity in the case of gold in jewellery form.
- It helps in **reducing the current account deficit (CAD)** by reducing the country's reliance on the import of gold.

❖ Disadvantages:

- This is a long term investment unlike physical gold which can be sold immediately.
- Sovereign gold bonds are listed on exchange but the trading volumes are not high, therefore it will be difficult to exit before maturity.



News in Between the Lines

Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs)



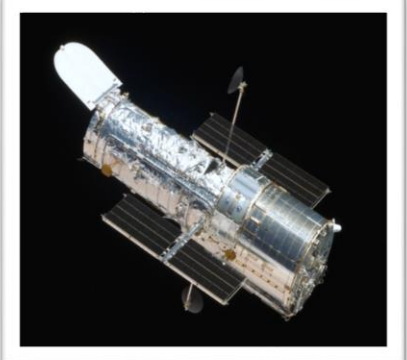
❖ Context

- Recently, The National Stock Exchange (NSE) issued a list of 15 designated Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs)

❖ Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs)

- Sebi defines QSBs as entities who, because of their size & scale of operations, can likely impact investors & the securities market, as well as governance & service standards.
- These stock brokers cater to the needs of a large number of investors.
- **Significance** : Due to their size, trading volumes, and amount of clients' funds handled by them, QSBs occupy a **significant position in the Indian securities market**.
 - The **failure of such stock brokers has the potential to cause disruption in the services** they provide to large numbers of investors, causing widespread impact in the securities market.
- **Designating QSB** :
 - A stock broker **will be designated as QSB on the basis of four parameters-**
 - Number of active clients, total available assets of clients, trading volumes, and end-of-day margin obligations.
 - All stock brokers with a total score greater than or equal to five on these four parameters are identified as QSBs.

Hubble Space Telescope



❖ Context

- Recently, **The Hubble Space Telescope**, known for recording awe-inspiring images of the cosmos while advancing the field of astronomy, is under threat.

❖ Key Highlights:

- A study, reveals an increase in the percentage of images recorded by the Hubble that are **spoiled by passing satellites**.

❖ Hubble Space Telescope:

- The Hubble Space Telescope is a **large telescope in space**.
- It was launched into orbit by space shuttle Discovery on **April 24, 1990**.
- Hubble **orbits about 535 kilometers (332 miles) above Earth**.
- The successor to Hubble is the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST).
- **Important Discoveries** :
 - Hubble takes sharp pictures of objects in the sky such as planets, stars and galaxies. Hubble has made more than one million observations.
 - These include detailed pictures of the birth and death of stars, galaxies billions of light years away, and comet pieces crashing into Jupiter's atmosphere.
 - Images taken by Hubble have helped scientists **estimate the age and size of the universe** and understand **how planets and galaxies form**.
 - An image called "**Hubble Ultra Deep Field**" shows the farthest galaxies ever seen.
 - Hubble has detected **black holes, dark energy and gamma-ray bursts**.

Pegasus



❖ Context

- In his recent lecture at Cambridge University, Congress leader alleged that the Israeli-made spyware Pegasus had been used to snoop on him.

❖ Key Highlights:

- Pegasus was developed by the **Israel-based cybersecurity company NSO Group**.
- It first made headlines in October 2019, when Facebook-owned platform WhatsApp said that journalists and human rights activists in India had been targets of surveillance by operators using the spyware.
- Pegasus had evolved its method by using '**zero-click attacks**', which do not require any action from the phone's user.
- Once spyware is installed in a phone, it begins contacting its operator's control servers to receive and execute operator commands.
- It send back the target's private data, including passwords, contact lists, calendar events, text messages, and live voice calls from popular mobile messaging apps.
- The operator **can even turn on the phone's camera and microphone** to capture activity in the phone's vicinity.

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The Greatest Pyramid



❖ Context

- Recently, a hidden corridor, 9 m long and roughly 2 m wide, has been unearthed by scientists close to the main entrance of the **4,500-year-old Great Pyramid of Giza**.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The discovery was originally made by the **ScanPyramids project in 2016** using a non-invasive technique called **cosmic-ray muon radiography**.
- This method uses the **penetrative power of cosmic subatomic particles called muons** to scan large structures.

❖ About The Greatest Pyramid:

- The Great Pyramid of Giza is the largest of the three pyramids in Giza, originally standing roughly 147 m above the Giza plateau.
- **Construction was started in circa 2550 BC**, during the reign of Khufu, often considered the greatest pharaoh of Egypt's old kingdom.
- It is estimated that the pyramid was built using 2.5 million stone blocks, each weighing between 2.5 and 15 tonnes.
- Building the Great Pyramid was a feat of engineering unmatched for thousands of years.
- There are two distinct tunnel systems inside the Great Pyramid-
 - The Descending Passage (described by Greeks like Herodotus).
 - The Ascending Passage (more hidden, opened by the Arabs as recently as the 9th century).

Yellowstone National Park (YNP)



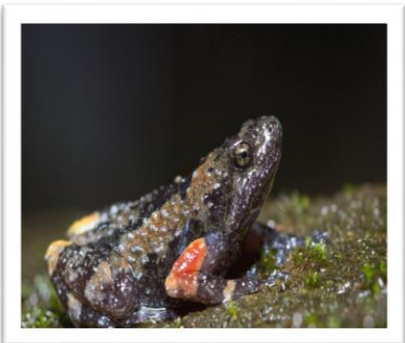
❖ Context

- Yellowstone National Park is celebrating its **151st anniversary**.

❖ Key Highlights:

- YNP is widely considered to be the **first national park in the world**.
- It is located in the northwest corner of Wyoming and extending into Montana and Idaho.
- It was established by the 42nd United States Congress with the **Yellowstone National Park Protection Act**.
- It spans an area of over 9,000 sq. km comprising lakes, canyons, rivers, iconic geothermal features such as the **Old Faithful geyser**, and mountain ranges.
- The area also represents the one point where the three major river basins (Snake-Columbia basin, Green-Colorado basin, and Missouri) of the western U.S. converge.
- It is home to grizzly bears, wolves, and free-ranging herds of the endangered bison & elk.

Jerdon's Narrow-Mouthed Frog (Uperodon Montanus)



❖ Context

- A new report published recently details the rediscovery of Jerdon's narrow-mouthed frog (*Uperodon montanus*) in the Western Ghats, India.

❖ Key Highlights:

- This species of frog had not been seen since its last observation by a British scientist in 1934.
- The report describes the rediscovery of 40 tadpoles of the species in the Western Ghats, in the same stages of development they were last identified 89 years ago.
- The frog is considered a montane species, restricted to higher altitude ranges of 800-1,700 meters.
- However, researchers have been campaigning for it to be put under the **'Endangered'** group of species to aid conservation.
- The finer details of habitat and ecosystem preference of the frog as described in the new report will bolster conservation efforts.
- **IUCN Status:** 'Near Threatened' in the International Union for Conservation of Nature **Red List of Threatened Species**.

City of Sisupalgarh

❖ Context

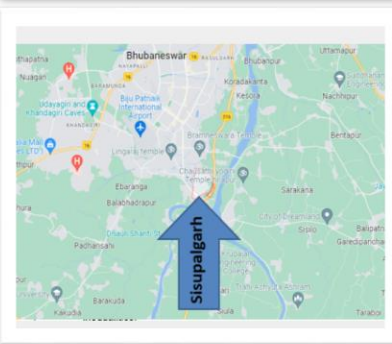
- Recently land mafias have damaged the rampart of ancient fortified city of Sisupalgarh.

❖ About the City of Sisupalgarh:

- Sisupalgarh is an ancient fortified city located about 5 km from Bhubaneswar, in the state of Odisha in eastern India.
- It is believed to be one of the largest and oldest urban settlements in eastern India, with evidence of habitation dating back to the 3rd century BCE.

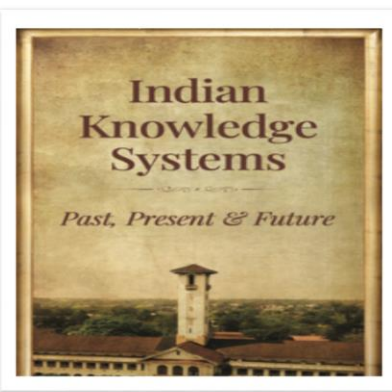
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- The city was named after the mythological king Sisupala, who is said to have ruled the region around 5000 years ago.
- The city was built on a raised platform, surrounded by a massive mud rampart & a moat.
- The rampart was about 9 meters high and 13 meters wide at the base.
- It enclosed an area of about 100 acres, making it one of the largest ancient cities in India.
- The city had four gates, located on the four cardinal directions, which were connected by a network of streets and alleys.
- The gates were designed in such a way that they could be easily defended.
- The city had a complex water management system, with wells, tanks, and channels to ensure a regular water supply for the residents.
- Archaeological excavations at the site have uncovered a range of artifacts, including pottery, coins, weapons, and jewelry, which suggest that the city was a major center of trade and commerce.
- The city was occupied for several centuries, and it underwent several phases of construction and expansion.
- However, it was eventually abandoned around the 4th century CE, possibly due to environmental changes or political instability in the region.

Dhara



❖ Context

- It is a unique and flagship initiative taken up by the Ministry of Culture under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, which has completed one year in February 2023.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The initiative aims to promote and revive multiple domains of Indian Knowledge Systems and has been successful in creating public awareness,
 - stakeholder participation,
 - and devising a framework for their promotion.
 - to create awareness about India's rich knowledge heritage,
 - incentivize local traditions and knowledge systems,
 - and encourage rigor and excellence in academic research in various domains of Indian Knowledge Systems.
- The initiative has emphasized the importance of empowering the youth to spearhead the national movement and encouraging the participation of the public in various forms of jana-bhagidari.

Woman Business and Law Index



❖ Context

- The World Bank recently released a report, 'Women, Business and the Law Index'.

❖ Key Highlights:

- It has been revealed that women across the globe are still facing significant legal inequalities.
- The report rates laws and regulations related to women in 190 countries, covering eight areas related to women's economic participation.
- It found that on average, women enjoy barely 77% of the legal rights that men do, with just 14 countries, all high-income economies, having laws that give women the same rights as men.
- At the current pace of reform, it could take 50 years on average to reach substantial legal gender equality everywhere in the areas measured by the report, and nearly 2.4 billion women of working age still do not have the same rights as men.
- The index particularly identifies that the reforms related to women's rights to inherit and own property have slowed down significantly.
- However, Sub-Saharan Africa made significant progress last year, accounting for over half of all reforms worldwide, with seven economies enacting 18 positive legal changes.

India - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2023



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