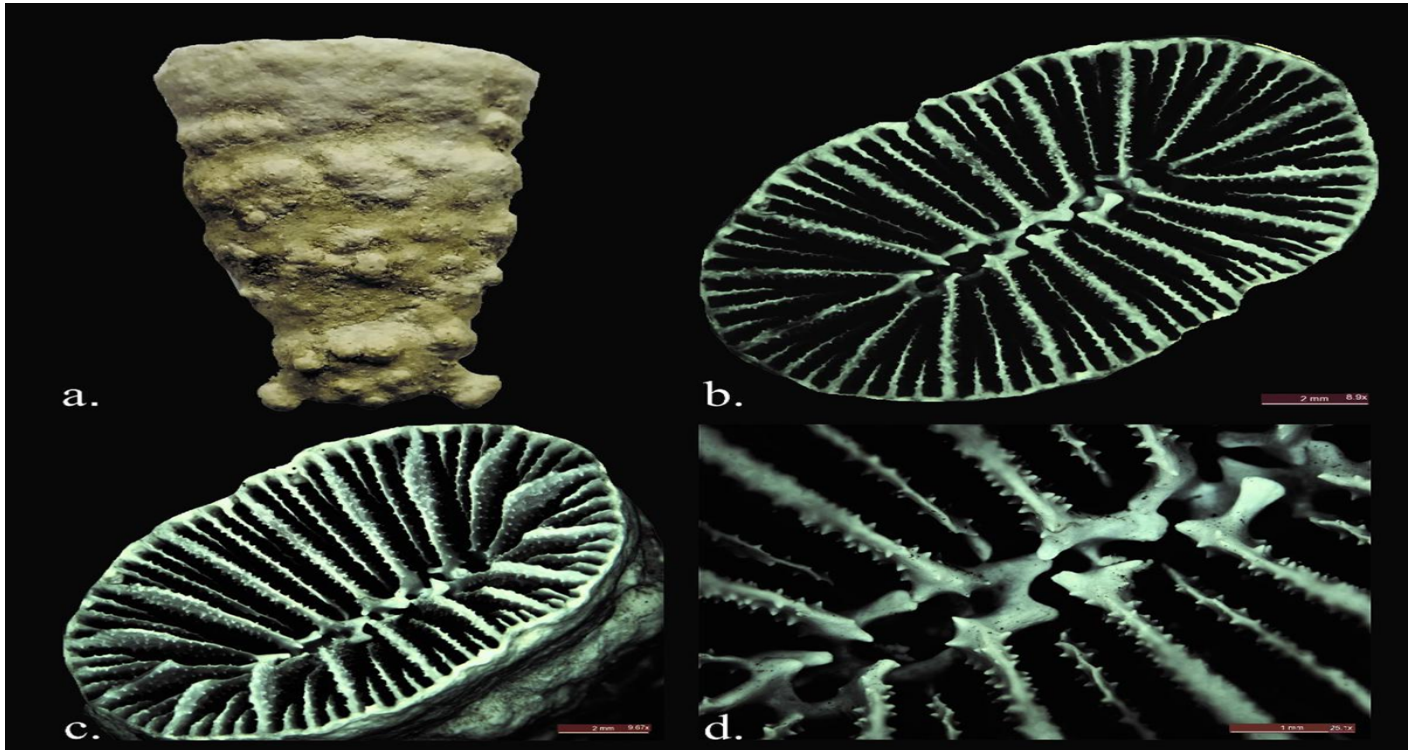


Four new corals recorded from Indian waters

(GS Paper 3, Environment)

Why in news?

- Scientists have recorded **four species of azooxanthellate corals for the first time from Indian waters.**
- These new corals were found from the waters of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



Details:

- All the four groups of corals are from the same family Flabellidae under the Genus Truncatoflabellum (Scleractinian: Flabellidae)
- Truncatoflabellum crissum, T. incrustatum, T. aculeatum, and T. irregulare under the family Flabellidae were previously found from Japan to the Philippines and Australian waters while only T. crassum was reported within the range of Indo-West Pacific distribution including the Gulf of Aden and the Persian Gulf.
- Azooxanthellate corals are a group of hard corals and the four new records are not only solitary but have a highly compressed skeletal structure.

Azooxanthellate corals:

- Azooxanthellate corals are a **group of corals that do not contain zooxanthellae and derive nourishment** not from the sun but **from capturing different forms of plankton.**
- These groups of corals are deep-sea representatives, with the majority of species reporting from between 200 m to 1000 m. Their occurrences are also reported from shallow coastal waters.
- Zooxanthellate corals, meanwhile, are restricted to shallow waters.

Non-reef-building:

- The most studies of hard corals in India have been concentrated on reef-building corals while much is not known about non-reef-building corals. These new records enhance knowledge about non-reef-building, solitary corals.

Significance of coral reefs:

- The coral reefs are one of the most productive, sustainable and pristine ecosystems of the world's oceans, especially in shallow coastal waters.

- These habitats contribute several services associated with human needs and existence. Hard corals are the prime and intrinsic part of the coral reef ecosystem.

Corals in India:

- There are about 570 species of hard corals found in India and almost 90% of them are found in the waters surrounding Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- The pristine and oldest ecosystem of corals share less than 1% of the earth's surface but they provide a home to nearly 25% of marine life.

Way Forward:

- The presently reported four species of solitary stony corals enhance the national database of biological resources of India and also define the expansion of scope to explore these unexplored and non-reef building corals.

Interpol's Red Corner Notice **(GS Paper 2, International Organisation)**

Why in news?

- Recently, Interpol, issued a Red Corner Notice against Satinderjeet Singh alias Goldy Brar, a gangster living in Canada. He has claimed responsibility for the murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala in Punjab's Mansa district.
- The request for notice was made by the Punjab Police and forwarded by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

What is a Red Corner Notice?

- It is an international document against wanted persons, requesting law enforcement agencies around the world to locate and temporarily detain a suspect until their extradition, surrender, or other legal action.
- It is **not an international arrest warrant**.

What is Interpol?

- Interpol, or **International Criminal Police Organisation**, is an inter-governmental body with 194 member countries.
- It is **headquartered in Lyon, France**, and has offices in several countries around the world. Founded in 1923, it facilitates global police cooperation to fight international crime.

What does a Red Corner Notice contain?

There are primarily two types of information in a Red Corner Notice:

- Information to identify the wanted person, such as their name, date of birth, nationality, photographs, etc.
- Information about the crime that they are wanted for. These crimes typically include murder, rape, child abuse or armed robbery.

What steps are taken before issuing a Red Corner Notice?

- A **specialised task force reviews every Red Corner Notice request** to ensure its compliance with the Interpol's rules. The team considers the information available at the time of publication.
- In case new and relevant information is brought to the notice of the General Secretariat, the task force re-examines the case.

What is the significance of a Red Corner Notice?

- Red Corner Notices help in alerting police worldwide about international wanted fugitives. They can thus help expedite extradition process and support the justice system.
- Notably, the subjects of a Red Corner Notice are wanted by a member country or an international tribunal, not the Interpol.
- Each member country is free to decide the degree of legal value it wants to give to the Red Notice.

What are some other Interpol notices?

Interpol issues eight different types of international notices, most of them colour-coded. They include the Red Notice, Green Notice, Yellow Notice, Orange Notice, Blue Notice, Purple Notice, Black Notice, and an INTERPOL–United Nations Security Council Special Notice.

- a) **Red Notice:** It is issued to seek the location and arrest of wanted persons for prosecution or sentencing.
- b) **Yellow Notice:** To help locate missing persons or to help identify persons who are unable to identify themselves.
- c) **Blue Notice:** To collect additional information about a person’s identity, location, or activities in connection with a crime.
- d) **Black Notice:** To seek information on unidentified bodies.
- e) **Green Notice:** To issue warning about a person’s criminal activities, in case the person is considered a possible threat to public safety.
- f) **Orange Notice:** To warn about an event, a person, an object, or a process that poses a serious and imminent threat to public safety.
- g) **Purple Notice:** To collect or provide information on modus operandi, objects, devices, and concealment methods used by criminals.
- h) **INTERPOL–United Nations Security Council Special Notice:** Issued for groups and individuals who are the targets of the UN Security Council Sanctions Committees. These notices are made public.

Interpol Issues 8 Different Types of Notice



IMAI announces committee to study issues faced by VC firms in India (GS Paper 3, Economy)

Why in news?

- The **Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)** announced setting up a committee to hold public policy consultations for building an industry network of **venture capital (VC) firms**.

Stakeholders:

- Vikas Agnihotri, operating partner at SoftBank Investment Advisers, will chair the committee and Shweta Rajpal Kohli, chief public policy officer, Sequoia India & Southeast Asia, will be the co-chair.
- Sequoia India, SoftBank, Multiples Alternate Asset Management, Indian Angel Network, 3one4 Capital, Eximius and other domestic and international venture funds are on the committee, which has nearly half its members from the Indian VC community.



Internet And Mobile Association Of India

Mandate:

- The committee will work for direct foreign listing of Indian start-ups, clarification on Gift tax, taxation on ESOPs, angel fund structure, GIFT City regulations etc.
- The increasing support of venture capital firms to Indian start-ups makes it imperative to highlight the collective issues faced by these firms at appropriate forums.

Way Forward:

- The formation of this committee is a crucial step towards furthering the government's vision of turning India into an attractive investment destination for VC & PE firms and building a world-class start-up ecosystem.

Discovery sheds light on region's transition from Christianity to Islam

(GS Paper 1, Culture)

Why in news?

- Israeli archaeologists unveiled a **rare ancient mosque** in the country's south that sheds light on the **region's transition from Christianity to Islam**.
- The remains of the mosque, **believed to be more than 1,200 years old**, were discovered during works to build a new neighbourhood in the Bedouin city of Rahat.



Key Highlights:

- The mosque located in the Negev desert contains “a square room and a wall facing the direction of Mecca”, with a half-circle niche in that wall pointing to the south.
- These unique architectural features show that the building was used as a mosque, noting it probably hosted a few dozen worshippers at a time.
- A short distance from the mosque, a “luxurious estate building” was also discovered, with remains of tableware and glass artefacts pointing to the wealth of its residents.

Background:

- Three years ago, the authority unearthed another mosque nearby from the same era of the seventh to eighth century AD, calling the **two Islamic places of worship “among the earliest known worldwide”**.
- The mosques, estate and other homes found nearby illuminate “the historical process that took place in the northern Negev with the introduction of a new religion — the religion of Islam, and a new rulership and culture in the region.