

The Hindu

Front Page

Abnormal' dinosaur egg found in India (Page no.1)

(GS Paper 3, Environment and Biodiversity)

A team of researchers from the University of Delhi has discovered a unique set of fossilised dinosaur eggs, with one egg nesting within the other.

While eggs-within-eggs are a rare phenomenon, they are so far known to occur only in birds and never known in reptiles. This discovery brings out newer connections between reptilian and avian evolution. The findings, published in the journal Scientific Reports, talk about the “egg-in-egg” phenomenon in a titanosaurid dinosaur egg found at Bagh in Madhya Pradesh’s Dhar district .

Dinosaurs of the Sauropod family were among the largest land animals that ever lived and widespread millions of years ago in the territory that is now India.

Fossils of these animals have been found in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya.

States

Study suggests child artists work for more than 12 hours a day (Page no 3)

(GS Paper 2, Polity and Governance)

A recent study reveals that a child below the age of 15 in the entertainment industry in India, works for more than 12 hours a day and casting agencies are violating The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CALPRA) that prohibits engagement of children in all occupations.

In 2019, India’s Media and Entertainment industry was valued at ₹1.67 trillion from which children (up to 15 years of age) make up nearly 30% share of “impressions”, which means that they account for a significant portion of those consuming films and television (regardless of the platform), as per the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries.

A study titled ‘Child Artists in India’ by Child Rights and You, a non-governmental organisation that works towards ensuring children’s rights suggests that the overall number of child artists is estimated to be between 6,059 and 12,334 based on Media and Entertainment Skills Council estimates for 2017 and Census of India 2011 respectively.

There are no precise statistics available on the estimate of child artists in the country, a sample of seven casting agencies that contained a total of 41,392 profiles of artists online (across India), suggested that 24.9% were classified as child actors (i.e., under the age of 15)

OPED

Afghan women’s rights are at risk (Page no. 7)

(GS Paper 3, International Relation)

The initial shock following the Taliban’s seizure of power in Kabul is waning. The Taliban, who during the initial period of the takeover had demonstrated a modicum of moderation to gain international acceptability, funding and recognition, have now started showing their true colours.

For long-term observers of Afghanistan, this is hardly surprising. Notwithstanding the U.S.-mediated 2020 peace deal, which seemed to erroneously pin hopes on a “reformed” Taliban to govern the country, many observers had issued warnings that the takeover of power by the Taliban would result in the loss of the fragile gains made in Afghanistan over the last two decades.

While there can be a debate over the gains made by the international community in Afghanistan in the last 20 years, it was unmistakable that opportunities for girls and women in education and employment had expanded vastly. Female participation in Afghanistan’s labour force had climbed from around 15% in 2009 to nearly 22% in 2019.

During my frequent visits to various provinces of Afghanistan, it was always heartening to see women play important roles in the government, parliament, the media, the health and education sectors, and in civil society.

They had carved space for themselves in conflict-ridden patriarchal structures and systems. Though the various interventions by the international community on women’s issues did not transform the structures, they did provide opportunities for women to be enablers of change.

In parliament, and in the provincial councils of Kandahar, Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Herat, Balkh and others, young women took grave risks in political participation and mobilisation.

Explainer

Understanding the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (Page no. 8)

(GS Paper 2, International Relation)

The OIC claims to be the “collective voice of the Muslim world”. It was established at a 1969 summit in Rabat (Morocco) after what it describes as the ‘criminal arson’ of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the disputed city of Jerusalem.

The OIC endeavours to establish solidarity among member states, support restoration of complete sovereignty and territorial integrity of any member state under occupation; protect, defend and combat defamation of Islam, prevent growing dissension in Muslim societies and work to ensure that member states take a united stand at the UN General Assembly, Human Rights Council and other international fora.

The OIC has consultative and cooperative relations with the UN and other inter-governmental organisations to protect the interest of Muslims, and settle conflicts and disputes involving member states, among them being the territorial conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the status of Jammu & Kashmir. Presently based in Jeddah, the organisation plans to permanently move its headquarters to East Jerusalem once the disputed city is ‘liberated’. Moreover, it aspires to hold Israel accountable for ‘war crimes’ and violations of international law.

The organisation adheres to a charter that lays out its objectives, principles and operating mechanism. First adopted in 1972, the charter has been revised multiple times in line with emerging conditions in the developing world.

The present charter was adopted in March 2008 at Dakar in Senegal. It enshrines that all members be guided and inspired by the noble Islamic teachings and values alongside committing themselves to the purposes and principles of the UN charter.

Member states are expected to uphold and promote good governance, democracy, human rights, fundamental freedom and the rule of law — settling disputes through peaceful means and refraining from the use of threat or force.

The FATF and Pakistan’s position on its ‘grey list’ (Page no. 8)

(GS Paper 2, International Relation)

Ahead of the plenary session of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global financial crime watchdog, from June 14 to 17 in Berlin, Pakistan which continues to face an economic crunch, is hoping for some respite in the form of its removal from the FATF’s ‘grey list’ or the list of countries presenting a risk to the global financial system.

In its last plenary meeting in March, the FATF had retained Pakistan’s listing, asking it to expeditiously address the remaining deficiencies in its financial system.

The Financial Action Task Force is an international watchdog for financial crimes such as money laundering and terror financing. It was established at the G7 Summit of 1989 in Paris to address loopholes in the global financial system after member countries raised concerns about growing money laundering activities.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attack on the U.S., FATF also added terror financing as a main focus area. This was later broadened to include restricting the funding of weapons of mass destruction.

The FATF currently has 39 members. The decision-making body of the FATF, known as its plenary, meets thrice a year. Its meetings are attended by 206 countries of the global network, including members, and observer organisations, such as the World Bank, some offices of the United Nations, and regional development banks

Text and Context

The crypto conundrum (Page no. 9)

(GS Paper 3, Science and Tech/ Economy)

The most important feature of cryptocurrencies that is flaunted by their enthusiasts is their limited supply. In a world where central banks create a lot of money out of thin air, it is natural for investors who are looking to protect their wealth to seek abode in alternative assets whose supply cannot be cranked up as easily.

Money creation by central banks causes the price of all goods to rise and also tends to accelerate the adoption of alternative assets as currencies.

When central banks create a lot of money, it leads to an increase in the prices of not just goods such as food and cars but also that of commodities such as gold and silver, considered to be alternative forms of money.

Yet, for various reasons, the rally in bitcoin may be no more than a case of speculative mania. For one, scarcity alone is not sufficient to facilitate the adoption of cryptocurrencies as money.

Any asset must have either use value or exchange value in order for it to possess any fundamental value. This fundamental value, in turn, is reflected in the price of these assets in the long run. Stocks and bonds, for instance, possess exchange value that is based on the expected future cash flow from these assets.

News

'India in talks for more Apache, Chinook choppers' (Page 10) (GS Paper 2, Defence)

The F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet fighter jet has distinct advantages in terms of capability over the competitor French Rafale-M jet to operate from the Indian Navy's aircraft carriers, says a senior official from aircraft manufacturer Boeing. India is also negotiating the purchase of additional Chinook CH-47F(I).

Chinook heavy-lift helicopters and AH-64E Apache attack helicopters, according to Torbjorn (Turbo) Sjogren, vice-president, International Government and Defence, Boeing.

"One thing we are very confident about is the capability that readiness and the proficiency of the product. The F/A-18 and F/A-18F can operate off Indian aircraft carriers.

That's a clear discriminator we've got over the French," Mr. Turbo said in a virtual interview to The Hindu, pointing that the twin seater trainer variant of the Rafale-M cannot operate from carriers and would be sitting on the ground. The number of trainer aircraft within the deal is not an insignificant number.

Pondicherry varsity in QS global rankings (Page no. 12)

GS Paper 2, Education

Pondicherry University has been ranked among the top 1,000 universities in the world in the latest QS World University Rankings, which is among the most widely-accepted global survey benchmarks.

According to a university press note, the QS World University rankings released for the 2022-2023 academic year placed Pondicherry University in the 801-1,000 rank range.

A record number of 2,462 institutions from about 100 countries participated in this year's rankings. Only 41 Indian institutions managed to make an entry into the QS World University Rankings for 2022-2023.

The rankings were based on eight parameters - academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty/student ratio, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio, international student ratio, international research network and employment outcomes.

New advisory on Type-1 diabetes (Page no. 12)

GS Paper 2, Health

From never wearing brand new shoes for a trip, to travelling with flash cards to navigate language barrier, managing meals when crossing time zones, storage of insulin and how to minimise glucose fluctuation — all of these are part of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) pre-travel advice for children and adolescents living with Type-1 diabetes.

This is the country's first-ever list of basic dos and don'ts to ensure the safety of Type-1 patients during travel.

India has the highest number of incident and prevalent cases of Type-1 diabetes in the world as per recent estimates from the International Diabetes Federation, and the Council has now published a comprehensive document providing advice on care of diabetes in children, adolescents and adults with Type-1 diabetes