

The Hindu

Front Page

World's first fishing cat census done in Chilika (Page 1)

(GS Paper 3, Environment)

The Chilika Lake, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, has 176 fishing cats, according to a census done by the Chilika Development Authority (CDA) in collaboration with the Fishing Cat Project (TFCP).

This is the world's first population estimation of the fishing cat done outside the protected area network.

According to the CDA, phase 1 of the estimation was conducted in 2021 in the 115-sq.km marshland in the north and north-eastern section of Chilika and its surrounding areas.

Phase 2 was conducted in 2022 in the Parikud side along the coastal islands of Chilika.

A total of 150 camera traps were deployed in two phases with each fixed in the field for 30 days.

Spatially explicit capture-recapture method was used to analyse the data, the CDA said in a statement.

Editorial

The IPEF holds promise but there are perils too (Page no. 6)

(GS Paper 3, International Relation)

On May 23, the Joe Biden administration took a significant step to turn the clock back to the Obama Presidency by launching its own version of a "pivot to Asia" through the establishment of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) with other partner countries.

The partner countries are Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the United States.

Within days of its launch, IPEF expanded its membership to the Pacific Island states, with Fiji joining the initiative.

An American initiative to bring together its allies in the Indo-Pacific region to enhance economic cooperation is bound to lead to comparisons with one of former U.S.

President Barack Obama's pet projects, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which was spiked by Donald Trump immediately after he took over the reins in Washington.

The IPEF reignites the twin ambitions of the U.S. to provide economic leadership and to challenge China's hegemony in the region.

Explainer

The status of eVTOL: a soon to be reality? (Page no. 8)

(GS Paper 3, Science and Tech)

The Union Civil Aviation Minister, Jyotiraditya Scindia, has said that the Government of India is exploring the possibility of inviting manufacturers of Electric Vertical Take off and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft to set up base in India. The Minister had been on a visit to the U.S. and Canada in April and in his interactions with key players in the industry, it was said that several eVTOL players were 'keen on setting up production centres' in the country.

In late May, while speaking at "India@2047", which was part of the seventh edition of the India Ideas Conclave in Bengaluru, the Minister also said that India is in 'conversation' with a number of eVTOL producers — the implication being a futuristic vision for India.

As the acronym suggests, an electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft is one that uses electric power to hover, take off, and land vertically. Most eVTOLs also use what is called as distributed electric propulsion technology which means integrating a complex propulsion system with the airframe.

There are multiple motors for various functions; to increase efficiency; and to also ensure safety.

This is technology that has grown on account of successes in electric propulsion based on progress in motor, battery, fuel cell and electronic controller technologies and also fuelled by the need for new vehicle technology that ensures urban air mobility (UAM).

Thus, eVTOL is one of the newer technologies and developments in the aerospace industry.

News

HC remark on conversion ‘right’ raises questions (Page no. 10)

(GS Paper 2, Judiciary)

Recent observations by the Delhi High Court that religious conversion, unless forced, is not prohibited raise a question if proselytism is also protected under the right to religious freedom in the Constitution.

Recently, High Court, hearing a petition by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay to frame laws to prohibit conversions by force or deception, observed that “first and foremost, conversion is not prohibited.

It is a right of an individual to profess any religion, religion of his birth, or religion that he chooses to profess. That is the freedom our Constitution grants”.

Article 25(1) of the Constitution says that “subject to public order, morality and health... all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practice and propagate religion”.

Though a person has a right to “profess” or affirm his allegiance to a religion, does Article 25 extend the right to propagate” one’s religion to converting another to one’s faith.

Rivers facing heavy pollution: CSE (Page no. 12)

(GS Paper 3, Environment)

Three of every four river monitoring stations in India posted alarming levels of heavy toxic metals such as lead, iron, nickel, cadmium, arsenic, chromium and copper.

In about a fourth of the stations, which are spread across 117 rivers and tributaries, high levels of two or more toxic metals were reported.

Of the 33 monitoring stations in the Ganga, 10 had high levels of contaminants.

The river, which is the focus of the Centre’s Namami Gange mission, has high levels of lead, iron, nickel, cadmium and arsenic, according to the State of Environment Report, 2022 from the environmental NGO, the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

The report is an annual compendium of environment development data and is derived from public sources.

India has 764 river quality monitoring stations across 28 States. Of these, the Central Water Commission tested water samples from 688 stations for heavy metals between August 2018 and December 2020.

World

China marks new space milestone (Page no 13)

(GS Paper 3, Science and Tech)

Three Chinese astronauts docked at the country’s space station, the state broadcaster said, marking a new milestone in Beijing’s drive to become a major space power.

The trio blasted off in a Long March-2F rocket from the Jiuquan launch centre in northwestern China’s Gobi desert.

The team is tasked with “completing in-orbit assembly and construction of the space station”, as well as “commissioning of equipment” and conducting scientific experiments.

The spacecraft docked at the Tiangong station after about “seven hours of flight”.

Tiangong, which means “heavenly palace”, is expected to become fully operational by the end of the year.

China’s heavily promoted space programme has already seen the nation land a rover on Mars and send probes to the Moon.

Sports

Relentless Nadal wins No. 22, raises the stratospheric bar even higher (Page no 15)

Rafael Nadal won a 14th French Open and record-extending 22nd Grand Slam title on Sunday with a straight sets rout of Casper Ruud to become the oldest male champion at Roland-Garros and he vowed to “keep fighting”.

In a disappointing final, 36-year-old Nadal won 6-3, 6-3, 6-0 with victory coming 17 years to the day since he claimed his first French Open as a 19-year-old in 2005.

Nadal won the last 11 games of the final and is now two Slams ahead of old rivals Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer with victory coming against all the odds.