



**UPSC
Mentorship**
A Unit of Mentorship India

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

19 July 2024



SOURCES



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GS I

1. Scientists discover a new microcontinent between Greenland and Canada

Source: **The Times of India**,

Context: A microcontinent has been recently discovered in the Davis Strait, between Canada and Greenland.

Newly discovered Microcontinent:

- The discovery was made **around the Davis Strait**, a large stretch of water located between **Canada's Baffin Island and Greenland**.
- The strait was formed millions of years ago when the tectonic plates between the two islands shifted, reconfiguring the Earth's crust.
- This resulted in the formation of a thick continental crust in the ocean, which has now been declared a newly discovered primitive microcontinent.
- It has been named the **Davis Strait proto-microcontinent** since it **formed owing to the tectonic evolution of the strait in the region**.
- The **microcontinent is 19–24 km thick thinned continental crust** and is surrounded by two narrow bands of thin (15–17 km) continental crust.

Key Facts about Davis Strait:

- Also known as the **northern arm of the Atlantic Ocean**, the Davis Strait is situated north of the Labrador Sea amidst southwestern Greenland and southeastern Baffin Island in Nunavut, Canada.
- It **separates the depths of northern Baffin Bay from the southern Labrador Sea** and forms an important part of the Northwest passage route going through the Canadian Arctic Archipelago and connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
 - **Baffin Bay** is situated between Baffin Island and Greenland's west coast.
 - Defined as a **marginal sea of the Arctic Ocean**, it is also considered a **small sea of the North Atlantic**.
 - It is **not navigable during the winter months due to the thick ice cover**, floating icebergs and heavy fog.
- The Davis Strait is approximately 400 miles (650 km) north to south and 200 to 400 miles wide.
- It has a water depth ranging from 1000 to 2000 metres, and is **comparatively shallower than the southern Labrador Sea**.
- The Davis Strait is home to **complex geological formations** such as **underwater basins and ridges** that were **created due to the strike-slip faulting along the Ungava fault Zone** around 45 to 62 million years ago.
- It triggered plate tectonic movements in the Labrador Sea and the Baffin Bay, leading to the formation of the Strait.
- **Two different ocean currents are active in the Davis Strait, with contrasting temperatures** leading to varying concentrations of ice on the eastern and western sides of the Strait.
 - From the shores of Greenland, the **western Greenland current** carries comparatively **warmer waters** towards the east, while the **Labrador current** pushes **iceberg-filled water** southward along the Canadian coast, the Labrador Sea, and subsequently the Atlantic.
 - Ice conditions reflect this flow regime, with heavy ice movement and icebergs along the western shore contrasting sharply with more open water along the Greenland side.



GS III

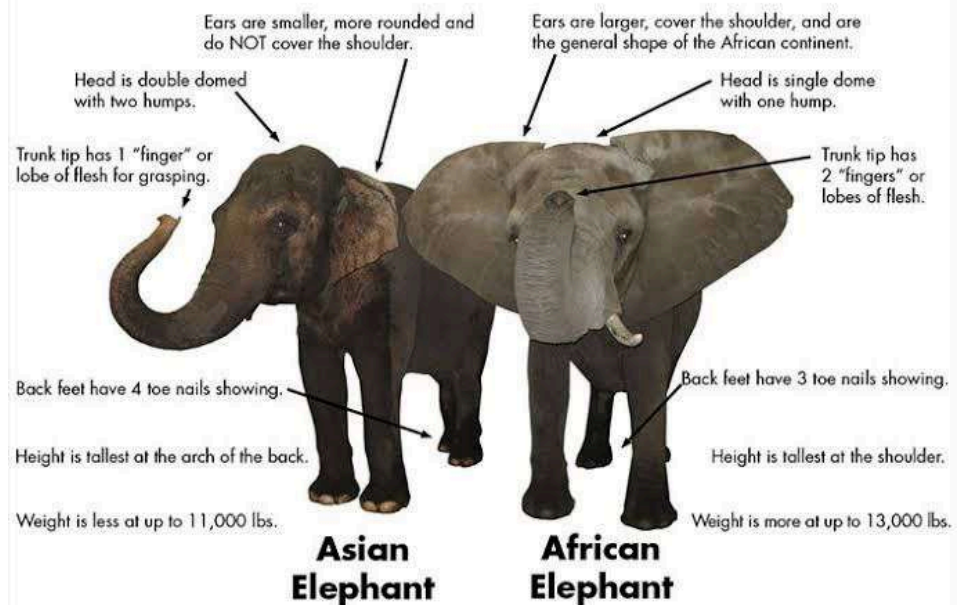
2. Over 800 elephants died in Kerala in 8 years

Source: The Hindu, Page 6

Context: Kerala's forests recorded 845 elephant deaths between 2015 and 2023.

Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpesvirus:

- It is a **double-stranded DNA virus** that is classified in the family Herpesviridae.
- It causes acute, fatal haemorrhagic disease in wild and captive juvenile Asian and African elephants.
- It is **lethal for young elephants** between the ages of one and 12.
- The disease is usually **fatal**, with a **short course of 28-35 hours**.
- **Transmission:** Direct contact with **body fluids** of infected elephants (saliva, shedding from skin lesions, etc.)
- **Symptoms:** Some elephants show symptoms such as reduced appetite, nasal discharge and swollen glands.
- **Treatment:** It includes a combination of **antiviral therapy, aggressive fluid therapy** (to counter haemorrhaging), **immuno-stimulant drugs** (selenium and Vitamins C, E), **antipyretics and analgesics** (to bring down fever). There is **no true cure for herpesviruses** in animals or in humans because herpes viruses go latent.



Elephants in India:

- India has the largest number of wild Asian Elephants, estimated at 29,964 according to the 2017 census by Project Elephant.
- It is about 60% of the species global population.
- Karnataka has the highest number of elephants, followed by Assam and Kerala.

Species of Asian Elephants:

- Asian elephants are categorised into three subspecies: the Indian, Sumatran, and Sri Lankan.
- Compared to African savannah elephants, Asian elephant herds are notably smaller in size.
- Within elephant herds, the **largest and oldest female, known as the matriarch**, assumes leadership and decision-making responsibilities.
- Asian elephants have the **longest known gestational period among mammals, lasting up to 680 days (22 months)**.
- Female elephants typically give **birth to calves every four years between the ages of 14 and 45**.
- This interval increases to five years by age 52 and six years by age 60.
- Throughout Asia, elephants hold significant cultural importance and have a long history of close association with humans, evolving into symbolic figures in various cultures.

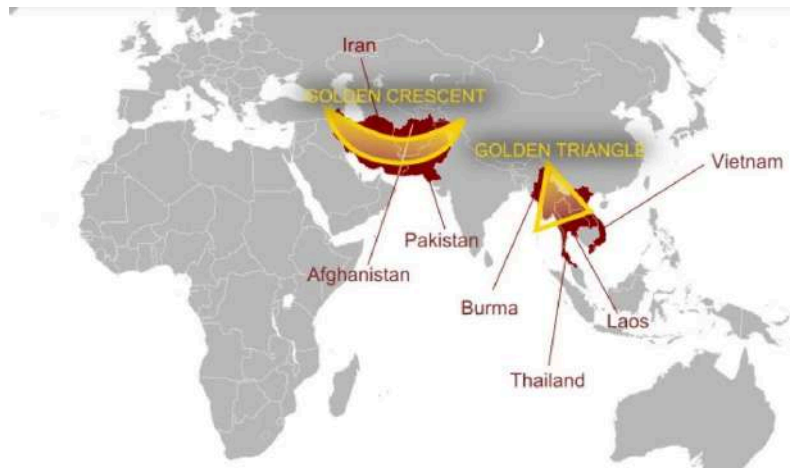
Protection Status of Asian Elephants:

- IUCN Red List: **Endangered**.
- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: **Schedule I**
- CITES: **Appendix I**

3. Home Minister calls for action against drug syndicates

Source: The Hindu, Page 14

Context: Home Minister launched a toll-free helpline, 1933, called MANAS (Madak Padarth Nishedh Asuchna Kendra), a web portal, and a mobile app for citizens to connect round-the-clock with the Narcotics Control Bureau to share anonymous information on drug peddling, trafficking or consultation related to issues such as drug abuse, de-addiction and rehabilitation.



Drug Menace In India:

- The menace of drug addiction has spread fast among the youth of India.
- India is sandwiched between two largest Opium producing regions of the world that is the **Golden triangle** on one side and the **Golden crescent** on other.
- The **golden triangle area comprises Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos**.
- The **golden crescent area includes Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran**.



As per the report **Magnitude of Substance Use in India** released by **All India Institute Of Medical Science (AIIMS)** in 2019:

- **Alcohol is the most abused** substance in India.
- Around 5 crore Indians reported to have used cannabis and opioids at the time of the survey (conducted in the year 2018).
- Of the total cases estimated by the report, more than half of them are contributed by states like Punjab, Assam, Delhi, Haryana, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim and Uttar Pradesh.
- More and more children are taking to alcohol consumption and the highest percentage of children who are addicted to alcohol are in Punjab followed by West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

Impacts of Drug Abuse:

- Higher risk of **unintentional injuries, accidents, domestic violence incidents, medical problems, and death.**
- **Economic potential** gets wasted.
- **Affects relationships** with family, friends creating emotional and social problems
- Increases financial burden.
- Drug abuse seriously affects our **health, security, peace and development.**
- Increase in **diseases like Hepatitis B and C, Tuberculosis**
- Drug dependence, **low self esteem, hopelessness** can lead to criminal action and even suicidal tendencies.

Challenges to Curb the Drug Menace:

- **Legally Available Drugs:** Tobacco is a huge problem which is usually seen as a gateway drug which children take just to experiment with.
- **Lack of Availability of Rehabilitation Centres:** There is a lack of rehabilitation centres. Also, NGOs operating de-addiction centres in the country, have failed to provide the required kind of treatment and therapy.
- **Smuggling of Drugs:** Smuggling of drugs through the states like Punjab, Assam and Uttar Pradesh which share the border with neighbouring countries.

Government Initiatives to Tackle Drug Addiction:

- It constituted the **Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD)** in November, 2016 and revived the scheme of "**Financial Assistance to States for Narcotics Control**".
- Narcotics Control Bureau has been provided funds for developing a new software i.e. **Seizure Information Management System (SIMS)** which will create a complete online database of drug offences and offenders.
- The **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, (NDPS) 1985:** It prohibits a person from producing, possessing, selling, purchasing, transporting, storing, and/or consuming any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance. The NDPS Act has since been amended thrice – in 1988, 2001 and 2014. The Act extends to the whole of India and it applies also to all Indian citizens outside India and to all persons on ships and aircraft registered in India.



- Government has also announced the launch of the 'Nasha Mukh Bharat', or Drug-Free India Campaign which focuses on community outreach programs.

International Treaties and Conventions to Combat Drug Menace:

India is signatory of the following International treaties and conventions to combat the menace of Drug Abuse:

- United Nations (UN) Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
- UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971).
- UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)
- UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) 2000

4. World's rarest whale' washes up on NZ beach

Source: The Hindu, Page 11

Context: A whale that was found dead on a beach in New Zealand recently has been identified by scientists as a spade-toothed whale, a species so rare it has never been seen alive.

Spade-Toothed Whale:

- They are the world's rarest whales, with no live sightings ever recorded.
- The species was first described in 1874 after a lower jaw and two teeth were collected from New Zealand's Chatham Islands.
 - The skeletal remains of two other specimens found off islands in New Zealand and Chile enabled scientists to confirm a new species.
 - Two more recent findings of stranded whales off New Zealand's North Island in 2010 and 2017 added to the small collection.
- **Nothing is currently known about the whales' habitat.** The creatures deep-dive for food and likely surface so rarely that it has been impossible to narrow their location further than the southern Pacific Ocean, home to some of the world's deepest ocean trenches.
- **No one knows how many there are, what they eat, or even where they live in the vast expanse of the southern Pacific Ocean.**
- **Conservation Status:**
 - IUCN Red List: Data Deficient



Editorial, Ideas and Opinions

5. Does India have enough laws to combat superstition?

Source: The Hindu, Page 11

Context: The recent stampede at a religious congregation in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh, resulting in more than 120 deaths, has reignited the debate on whether India has adequate legislation to address exploitative religious and superstitious practices.

Anti-Superstition Laws in India:

What is Superstition?

- It is a **belief related to ignorance or fear** and characterised by obsessive reverence for the supernatural.
- Superstitions are not country, religion, culture, community, region, caste, or class-specific, it is widespread and found in every corner of the world.



What is Black Magic?

- Black magic, also known as **witchcraft**, is the usage of supernatural power for evil and selfish purposes and to perform malicious practices to destroy someone physically or mentally or financially.
- It can be done using the victim's hair, clothes, photo or looking directly into eyes.

How Pervasive are Superstitious Killings in India?

- As per the **2021 report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**, six deaths were linked to human sacrifices, while witchcraft was the motive for 68 killings.
- The **maximum number of witchcraft cases** were reported from **Chhattisgarh (20)**, followed by Madhya Pradesh (18) and Telangana (11).
- In 2020, India saw 88 deaths due to witchcraft and 11 died as part of 'human sacrifices', the NCRB report states.

Related Laws in India:

- In India, **there is no central law that exclusively deals with crimes related to witchcraft, superstition, or occult-inspired activities.**
- In 2016, Prevention of Witch-Hunting Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha, but it wasn't passed.



State-Specific Laws:

- **Bihar:** Bihar was the first State to enact a law to prevent witchcraft, identification of a woman as a witch and eliminate torture, humiliation and killing of women. The Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act came into force in October 1999.
- **Maharashtra:** In 2013 Maharashtra enacted the Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and Other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act, which banned the practice of human sacrifice in the state.
- **Karnataka:** Karnataka effected anti-superstition law in 2017 known as the Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Act. The Act comprehensively counters "inhumane" practices linked to religious rituals.
- **Kerala:** Kerala does not have a comprehensive Act to deal with black magic and other superstitions.

Need for Country-Wide Anti-superstition Act:

- Allowing the unhindered continuance of such practices violates an individual's fundamental right to equality and right to life under **Articles 14 and 21** of the Indian Constitution respectively.
- Such acts also violate several provisions of various international legislations to which India is a signatory, such as the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948', 'The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966', and 'Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979'.
- **Only eight states in India have witch-hunting legislations so far.** These include Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, Assam, Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- In the absence of measures to tackle superstitions, unscientific and irrational practices such as faith healing, quackery, and misinformation regarding medical procedures can also balloon up, which can have severe detrimental effects on public order and health of citizens.

6. What is the role of the Finance Commission?

Source: The Hindu, Page 11

Context: The sixteenth Finance Commission headed by former Niti Aayog Vice-Chairman Arvind Panagariya has begun its work by inviting suggestions from the public on the mandate set for it by the Centre.

Finance Commissions:

- FCs are **constitutional bodies set up under Article 280 of the Constitution every five years** to make recommendations on the distribution of financial resources between the Union and the states.
- Finance Commissions (FCs) play a crucial role in shaping the **fiscal federalism and development trajectory of India.**
- They make recommendations on how to distribute the financial resources between the Union and the states, as well as among the states, for a period of five years.



- FCs also provide guidance and advice on various issues related to public finance, governance and development, such as **fiscal consolidation, debt management, local bodies, disaster relief, health, education, justice delivery, statistical system, etc.**
- FCs have made significant contributions to enhancing the fiscal autonomy, equity and efficiency of the Union and state governments, as well as promoting cooperative and competitive federalism in the country.

How are the Recommendations of FCs Implemented and Monitored?

The recommendations of FCs are **advisory in nature and not binding** on the Union government. However, they are usually accepted with minor modifications or deviations.

Challenges of FCs:

Data Gaps and Quality Issues:

- FCs rely on official data sources to assess the fiscal situation and performance of the Union and states, but these data are often incomplete, inconsistent or outdated.
- For instance, there is no reliable data on inter-state trade flows, unit costs of public services, or outcomes of various schemes and programmes.

Political Economy Factors:

Finance Commission

The Finance Commission is the balancing wheel of fiscal federalism in India

~ Indian Constitution

Article 280
(Indian Constitution Part XII)
Constitution of FC as a Quasi Judicial Body

Constituted by
President of India
quinquennially (or earlier)

Members

- Chairman + 4 members (including an HC judge) – appointed by President
- Authority to decide qualifications – Parliament
- Tenure – as specified by the President
- Reappointment – Eligible

Makes Recommendations to President about

- Distribution of net tax proceeds between Centre and States
- Principles for grants-in-aid to the states by the Centre
- Evaluates the rise in the Consolidated Fund of a state to affix the resources of Panchayats/Municipalities
- Other financial matters referred to it by President

Powers of a Civil Court

As per Code of Civil Procedure 1908

*Recommendations of the FC are **only advisory and not binding** on the Government

First FC
(1952–57)

Chairman - KC Neogy

Second FC
(1957–62)

Chairman - K Santhanam

Current/Fifteenth FC
(2021–2026)

Chairman - NK Singh

State Finance Commission

- Constituted by Governor every 5th year (Article 243)
- Reviews the financial position of Panchayats and Municipalities



- FCs have to balance the competing interests and demands of various stakeholders, such as the Union government, state governments, local bodies, civil society groups, etc.
- They also have to take into account the changing political and economic scenarios in the country and the world.

Implementation Challenges:

- FCs have to ensure that their recommendations are **feasible, acceptable and effective** in achieving the desired objectives.
- However, they have no direct control over how their recommendations are implemented or monitored by the Union and state governments.
- They also have to deal with issues such as delays, deviations, non-compliance or misuse of funds by the recipients.

Way Forward

Enhancing Fiscal Autonomy and Equity:

- FCs should aim to provide **adequate and predictable resources** to the Union and state governments, based on their respective constitutional responsibilities and expenditure needs.
- They should also **ensure a fair and transparent distribution of resources** among states, taking into account their fiscal capacities, performance and special circumstances.

Promoting Fiscal Efficiency and Accountability:

- FCs should **encourage the Union and state governments to adopt sound fiscal policies and practices**, such as fiscal consolidation, debt sustainability, revenue mobilisation, expenditure rationalisation, etc.
- They should also **incentivise them to improve the quality and effectiveness of public spending**, especially in priority sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, etc.

7. How do Assam's Foreigners Tribunals function?

Source: The Hindu,

Context: Recently, the Assam government asked the Border wing of the State's police not to forward cases of non-Muslims who entered India illegally before 2014 to the Foreigners Tribunals (FTs).

- This was in keeping with the Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019 that provides a citizenship application window for non-Muslims — Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jains, and Buddhists — who allegedly fled persecution in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

Recent Controversy:

- On July 11 2024, the Supreme Court overturned a Foreign Tribunal decision that had declared **Rahim Ali, a now-deceased farmer, a foreigner 12 years ago.**
- The court called this decision a "grave miscarriage of justice" and emphasized that the Foreigners' Act does not give authorities the power to randomly select people and demand they prove their citizenship.



- In September 2018, an FT member in Morigaon, central Assam, remarked that cases involving foreigners had become like an industry, with many people trying to make money off the situation.
- The member also pointed out that notices were often placed on trees or electric poles, leaving the accused unaware of the cases against them.

Foreign Tribunal:

- Foreign Tribunals (FTs) are quasi-judicial bodies established through the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order of 1964, under Section 3 of the **Foreigners' Act of 1946**.
- These tribunals **allow local authorities in a state to refer individuals suspected of being foreigners for further examination**.
- Currently, FTs are exclusive to **Assam**, while other states handle cases of "illegal immigrants" according to the Foreigners' Act.
- **Composition of an FT:**
 - Each FT is led by a member who is a judge, advocate, or civil servant with judicial experience.
- In 2021, the Ministry of Home Affairs informed Parliament that Assam has 300 FTs.
 - However, the State's Home and Political Department website indicates that only 100 FTs are currently operational.

Powers of Foreign Tribunal:

- Under the 1964 order, Foreign Tribunals (FTs) have similar powers to civil courts.
- They can summon people, enforce attendance, examine individuals under oath, and request documents.
- When a person is suspected of being a foreigner, the tribunal must serve a notice in English or the state's official language within 10 days of receiving the case.
- The person then has 10 days to respond and another 10 days to present evidence supporting their claim of citizenship.
- **The FT must resolve the case within 60 days.**
- If the person cannot prove their citizenship, the tribunal can send them to a detention center, now called a transit camp, for eventual deportation.

Role of Assam Police Border Organisation:

- The Assam Police Border Organisation was initially formed in 1962 as part of the State police's Special Branch under the **Prevention of Infiltration of Pakistani (PIP) scheme**.
- It became an independent wing in 1974 and is now led by the Special Director General of Police (Border).
- Following Bangladesh's liberation war, the PIP scheme was renamed the **Prevention of Infiltration of Foreigners (PIF) scheme**.
- The Central government has sanctioned 3,153 of the 4,037 personnel posts in this wing under the PIF scheme, with the remaining 884 posts sanctioned by the Assam government.
- **This wing is responsible for:**
 - Detecting and deporting illegal foreigners,
 - Patrolling the India-Bangladesh border alongside the Border Security Force,
 - Maintaining a secondary line of defense to prevent illegal entry, and
 - Monitoring people living in riverine and sandbar areas.
- Additionally, they refer individuals with questionable citizenship to FTs to determine their nationality based on documentation.



- The Election Commission of India can also refer cases of 'D' (doubtful) voters to an FT.
- People excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) draft, released in August 2019, can appeal to FTs to prove their citizenship.
- Approximately 19.06 lakh out of 3.3 crore applicants were excluded from the NRC, and the process is currently on hold.



In Brief

8. When a home is ‘enemy property’

Source: The Hindu, Page 8

Context: The Indian government has begun to auction properties belonging to erstwhile citizens of the country who now hold Pakistani and Chinese passports.

Enemy property in India:

- The enemy properties are those left behind by the people who took citizenship of Pakistan and China after leaving India during the partition and after the 1962 war.
- The enemy properties are vested with the Custodian of Enemy Property for India (CEPI), an authority created under the Enemy Property Act 1968.
- The 2017 amendment to the Act (Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2017) stated that the successors of those who migrated to Pakistan and China ceased to have a claim over the properties left behind in India.
- The amended law stated that enemy property should continue to vest in the Custodian even if the enemy, enemy subject, or enemy firm ceases to be an enemy due to death, extinction, business winding up, or change of nationality or if the legal heir or successor is an Indian citizen or a citizen of a non-aggressive country.
- Of the total 9,406 enemy properties in India, 9,280 are left behind by Pakistani nationals and 126 properties by Chinese nationals.
- Maximum number of enemy properties is in Uttar Pradesh - 4,991. Bengal has 2,735, and Delhi has 487.

9. World’s first hydrogen-powered commercial ferry launches in San Francisco

Source: The Hindu, Page 8

Context: The world’s first commercial passenger ferry powered by 100% hydrogen fuel, the MV Sea Change, was launched recently at the San Francisco Ferry Building.

MV Sea Change:

- It is the world’s first commercial passenger ferry powered entirely by zero-emission hydrogen fuel cells.
- The 75-passenger ferry was built by All American Marine Shipyard for the compatriot shipowner SWITCH Maritime.
- The vessel, designed by Incat Crowther, is fitted with hydrogen-powered fuel cells producing electricity to power electric motors, enabling the vessel to operate for about 16 hours, traveling around 300 nautical miles, between refueling sessions.



- It can reach speeds up to 20 knots, and its service speed will be about 8-12 knots.
- It uses H₂ fuel cells to **generate electricity through the combination of H₂ from storage tanks and oxygen from the ambient air.**
- Unlike current diesel-powered ferries that emit pollutants, the hydrogen-powered Sea Change **produces only heat and water vapor as byproducts.** Passengers can even drink the emissions from an onboard water fountain.



Daily Quiz

Q1. Consider the following information:

| ELEPHANT RESERVES | STATE |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Singhbhum ER | Andhra Pradesh |
| Lemru ER | Jharkhand |
| Kameng ER | Arunachal Pradesh |

In how many of the above rows is the given information correctly matched?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q2. Which countries are typically associated with the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle, respectively?

- A. **Golden Crescent:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran; **Golden Triangle:** Myanmar, Laos, Thailand.
- B. **Golden Crescent:** Myanmar, Laos, Thailand; **Golden Triangle:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran.
- C. **Golden Crescent:** Colombia, Peru, Bolivia; **Golden Triangle:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran.
- D. **Golden Crescent:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran; **Golden Triangle:** Colombia, Peru, Bolivia.

Q3. Which statement correctly describes the Finance Commission of India?

Assertion: The Finance Commission of India is a constitutional body appointed every five years.

Reason: Its primary role is to recommend the distribution of tax revenues between the Union and State governments.

- A. Both Assertion and Reason are correct, and Reason is the correct explanation of Assertion.
- B. Both Assertion and Reason are correct, but Reason is NOT the correct explanation of Assertion.
- C. Assertion is correct, but Reason is incorrect.
- D. Assertion is incorrect, but Reason is correct.

Q4. Which statements correctly describe enemy property?

Statement 1: Enemy property refers to assets and properties owned by individuals or entities considered enemies of the state during times of war or national emergency.

Statement 2: The management and disposal of enemy property in India are governed by the Enemy Property Act, which provides for the custodianship and administration of such properties.

- A. Statement 1 is true, and Statement 2 is false.
- B. Statement 1 is false, and Statement 2 is true.
- C. Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are true.
- D. Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are false.

Q5. Which statement is true about Indian elephants (*Elephas maximus indicus*)?

- A. They are taller and larger than African elephants.
- B. They are primarily found in captivity and are not seen in the wild.
- C. They have smaller ears compared to their African counterparts.
- D. They are solitary animals and do not live in herds.



Solutions

1. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- **Singhbhum Elephant Reserve** is located in East & West Singhbhum & Saraikela-Kharsawan districts of **Jharkhand**.
- **Lemru Elephant Reserve** is located in the Korba district of **Chhattisgarh**. It seeks to give elephants a permanent habitat while also minimising property damage and human-animal conflict.
- The **Kameng-Sonitpur Elephant Reserve (KSER)** is located in the eastern hill forests of **Arunachal Pradesh and Assam** in India.

2. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- **Golden Crescent:** This term refers to a region in South Asia known for its opium production. The countries typically associated with the Golden Crescent are Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran. These countries are major producers of opium poppy, which is used to produce heroin.
- **Golden Triangle:** This term refers to a region in Southeast Asia known historically for its opium production. The countries typically associated with the Golden Triangle are Myanmar (formerly Burma), Laos, and Thailand. This region has been a major source of opium and heroin production.

3. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- **Assertion (The Finance Commission of India is a constitutional body appointed every five years):** This statement is correct. The Finance Commission of India is indeed a constitutional body

established under Article 280 of the Indian Constitution. It is appointed every five years by the President of India to recommend how the net tax revenue should be distributed between the Union government and the state governments, as well as among the states.

- **Reason (Its primary role is to recommend the distribution of tax revenues between the Union and State governments):** This statement is also correct and provides a correct explanation for the Assertion. One of the main functions of the Finance Commission is to make recommendations to the President regarding the distribution of the net proceeds of taxes between the Union and the States. These recommendations are based on various factors such as population, area, revenue, fiscal capacity, and other relevant factors.

4. Correct Answer is C

Explanation:

- **Statement 1:** This statement is true. Enemy property refers to assets and properties owned by individuals or entities considered enemies of the state during times of war or national emergency. These properties are seized or placed under custodianship to prevent their use against national interests.
- **Statement 2:** This statement is also true. In India, the management and disposal of enemy property are governed by the Enemy Property Act. This Act provides for the custodianship, administration, and eventual disposal of such properties by the Custodian of Enemy Property for India, who is appointed under the Act.



5. Correct Answer is C

Explanation:

- **Statement A:** This is **incorrect**. Indian elephants are generally smaller in size compared to African elephants. African elephants are taller and larger overall.
- **Statement B:** This is **incorrect**. Indian elephants are found both in the wild and in captivity. They are not exclusively kept in captivity.
- **Statement C:** This is the **correct** answer. Indian elephants are characterised by their relatively smaller ears compared to African elephants. Their ears are smaller and shaped somewhat like the Indian subcontinent.
- **Statement D:** This is **incorrect**. Indian elephants are social animals and typically live in groups led by a matriarch. They exhibit complex social behaviour and do not live solitary lives.

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

1. Discuss the challenges and limitations faced by Finance Commissions in fulfilling their mandate ? (250 Words)





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