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11 November 2023

West Bengal News

<p><b>Efforts for GI status of Kalna town's 'Nora Pantua'</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>State Animal Resources Development (ARD) minister Swapan Debnath has written to Ujjal Biswas, Minister in Charge (MIC) of Science &amp; Technology and BioTechnology department.</li><li>The letter urges necessary measures for Geographical Indication (GI) approval of <b>'Nora Pantua' – a unique refined sweetmeat from Kalna town in East Burdwan district.</b></li></ul> <p><b>Do You Know?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>'Nora Pantua'</b> is a unique refined sweet from Kalna, known for its distinct taste.</li><li>Kalna in East Burdwan district is described as a heritage town with notable religious structures, including <b>108 Shiva temples, Siddheshwari temple, Mahaprabhu temple, Pratapeshwar temple, and Gopalbari temple.</b></li><li>Kalna holds a special place on the tourism map, attracting visitors from the state, country, and abroad.</li></ul> <p><b>Key Facts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The proposal for GI status for 'Nora Pantua' is being taken seriously by the concerned department, as indicated by Ujjal Biswas.</li><li>Swapan Debnath's letter emphasizes the cultural and touristic significance of Kalna, highlighting the need to protect and promote the unique sweetmeat associated with the region.</li></ul>
<p><b>Logistic Conclave 2023</b></p>	<p><b>Context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New initiatives in the transport sector aim to <b>enhance cargo movement through waterways</b>, as discussed by Saumitra Mohan, the principal secretary of the state's transport department, during the Logistics Conclave 2023.</li></ul> <p><b>Key points</b></p> <p><b>Investment Expectation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Through public-private initiatives, an anticipated investment of <b>Rs 5000 crore</b> in the next three years is expected for the development of waterways and surface transport.</li></ul> <p><b>Utilization of World Bank Fund:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A World Bank fund is being utilized to establish jetties along the Ganga, from Nurpur in South 24-Parganas to Tribein in Hooghly.</li></ul> <p><b>Jetties for RORO Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The constructed jetties will facilitate the proposed Roll-On-Roll-Off</li></ul>



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(RORO) services, designed to transport trucks and buses across the river.

### RORO Service Proposal:

- The Merchants' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) proposed starting RORO services.
- The state government is actively working on the proposal and has initiated a survey for establishing a RORO service along the Raichak-Kukrahati section.

### Connectivity Consideration:

- The success of RORO services involves not only jetty and ferry ghat construction but also connectivity planning.
- The state is identifying suitable locations for efficient RORO service operations.

### E-Buses Obstacles:

- The government aims to launch 1200 e-buses, but legal obstacles, possibly litigation, are impeding the process.
- Currently, 100 e-buses are operational in the state.

### Do You Know:

- **Organizer:** The Logistics Conclave 2023 was organized by the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- **Theme:** The conclave was titled 'Evolving Contours of Logistics.'

### Lion Safari and Siberian tiger treat

### Context

- The **Bengal Safari Park near Siliguri and the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZA) in Darjeeling** are set to welcome new additions – lions and Siberian tigers, respectively.

### Key Points:

#### Bengal Safari Park:

- Located on the outskirts of Siliguri, it is the only open-air zoological park in north Bengal.
- Spread over 297 hectares, it is located around 9km from Siliguri off NH31.
- Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's pet project, known for captive breeding of Royal Bengal Tigers.
- Popular for safari rides to spot Asiatic black bears, leopards, and rhinos, and features an open-air aviary and a gharial enclosure (fish-eating crocodiles).
- New lions are expected in December, with a lion safari to begin in a 20-hectare enclosure.
- The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has completed the necessary documentation for procuring lions from Tripura and other northeastern states and a pair from Alipore Zoological Park in Calcutta.



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## Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

	<p><b>Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZA):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Located in Darjeeling, recognized by the CZA as the best zoo in the country in 2022 among 130+ zoological parks in India.</li><li>• Established on August 14, 1958, it gained international recognition for conservation and captive breeding programs of red pandas, snow leopards, and other endangered Himalayan species.</li><li>• Expecting a pair of Siberian tigers from Paphos Zoological Park in Cyprus next month under an animal-exchange program.</li><li>• The tigers will be exchanged for a pair of Himalayan red pandas.</li><li>• Currently houses one Siberian tiger and 25 red pandas.</li></ul> <p><b>Do You Know:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Bengal Safari Park is a major crowd-puller known for contributing to the captive breeding of Royal Bengal Tigers.</li><li>• The PNHZA in Darjeeling has received acclaim for its conservation and breeding programs for red pandas, snow leopards, and other endangered Himalayan species.</li></ul>
<p><b>Panel to survey the use of water bodies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Bengal cabinet has decided to address the <b>status of water bodies on vest land.</b></li><li>• The primary focus is on creating a committee to survey and formulate a policy for monetization.</li><li>• Many water bodies are currently under private control or small groups without payment of user fees, with fishing being a common activity.</li></ul>

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