



25 June 2024

National and International News

<p>Critical minerals</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Union Mines Minister launched a new auction tranche for mining rights in 21 blocks of critical and strategic minerals. <p>About Critical minerals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical minerals are natural resources essential for the economy and national security but have supply chain risks due to geopolitical, economic, or other factors. • Critical minerals and their Uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Phosphorite: Used in fertilizers for agriculture. ○ Lithium: Essential for batteries, especially in electric vehicles and energy storage. ○ Graphite: Used in batteries, lubricants, and as a refractory material. ○ Manganese: Important in steel production and battery manufacturing. ○ Rare Earth Elements: Used in electronics, renewable energy technologies, and defense applications. ○ Cobalt: Used in batteries and superalloys. ○ Nickel: Used in stainless steel, batteries, and various alloys. • Supply Chain Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Geopolitical tensions and trade restrictions. ○ Concentration of supply in a few countries (e.g., China, Democratic Republic of Congo). ○ Environmental and ethical concerns related to mining practices.
<p>Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has recently been awarded the 2024 Blue Planet Prize. <p>About IPBES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established: 2012 • Purpose: Strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for conservation and



sustainable use of biodiversity.

- **Role:**
 - Provides policymakers with objective scientific assessments about the state of knowledge regarding the planet's biodiversity, ecosystems, and the benefits they provide.
 - Offers tools and methods to protect and sustainably use vital natural assets.
- **Inspiration:** Independent body inspired by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.
- **Relation to the UN:**
 - Not a United Nations body.
 - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides secretariat services to IPBES since 2013, at the request of the IPBES Plenary and with the authorization of the UNEP Governing Council.
- **Membership:** India is a member country.
- **Governing Body:**
 - IPBES Plenary made up of representatives of member States.
 - Meets once per year.
- **Secretariat:** Located in Bonn, Germany.

Iberian lynx



Why in the news?

- The Iberian lynx, once one of the rarest cat species globally, has improved its status from 'endangered' to 'vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List.

About Iberian lynx:

- **Endemic Species:** One of two carnivore species endemic to Europe (other being European mink, Mustela lutreola).
- **Characteristics:**
 - World's most endangered cat species.
 - Pointy ears, long legs, and leopard-like spotted fur.
- **Behavior:**
 - Generally nocturnal.
 - Activity patterns synchronized with major prey (rabbits).
- **Habitat:**
 - Requires variable terrain below 1300 m.
 - Prefers a mosaic of closed Mediterranean scrubland interspersed with open patches of



	<p>grassland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Often found in areas with marsh ecotones. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Once widespread throughout the Iberian Peninsula. ○ Now sparsely distributed in Spain and Portugal. ● Conservation Status: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IUCN Red List: Vulnerable. ○ CITES: Appendix II.
e-Samridhi Portal	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development has urged state governments to encourage more farmers to register on the e-Samridhi portal to avail the facility of assured procurement. <p>About e-Samridhi Portal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launched through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) ○ National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF) ● Purpose: Registration of farmers for government procurement of pulses at Minimum Support Prices (MSP). ● Portal Registration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can be done directly by farmers ○ Can be done through Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) ● Payment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Made by NAFED directly into the farmers' mapped bank accounts ○ No intermediary agency involved
Indus Water Treaty (IWT)	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Pakistani delegation recently arrived in Jammu for ongoing discussions about the 1960 Indus Water Treaty (IWT). <p>About IWT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Date of Signing: The Indus Water Treaty was signed on September 19, 1960. ● Signatories: The treaty was signed by India and Pakistan, with the World Bank acting as a third-party guarantor.



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- **Rivers Covered:** The treaty governs the use of waters from the Indus River system, which includes six rivers:
 - The Indus,
 - Jhelum,
 - Chenab,
 - Ravi,
 - Beas, and
 - Sutlej.
- **Allocation of Rivers:**
 - **Eastern Rivers:** India has **exclusive rights** over the waters of the Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej.
 - **Western Rivers:** Pakistan has control over the waters of the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab, although India is allowed limited use for agricultural, transport, and power generation purposes.
- **Permanent Indus Commission:**
 - The treaty established the Permanent Indus Commission, comprising **one commissioner from each country**.
 - The commission is **tasked with the administration of the treaty and the resolution of disputes**.
- **Duration:** The treaty has **no expiration date** and is intended to **remain in force unless both countries agree to amend or terminate it**.



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