



08 July 2024

National and International News

Vaquita



Why in the news?

- The **vaquita**, the **world's most endangered marine mammal**, is on the **brink of extinction**.

About Vaquita:

- **Scientific Name:** Phocoena sinus
- **Endangered Status:** Vaquitas are the most endangered marine mammals in the world, with **less than 20 individuals remaining in the wild**.
- **Distribution:**
 - **Smallest range among whales, dolphins, and porpoises.**
 - Exclusively **found in the northern part of the Gulf of California.**
 - Typically sighted in shallow waters up to 50 meters deep.
- **Unique dorsal fins:**
 - Taller and wider than other porpoises.
 - Distinctive dark ring around the eyes.
- **Behavior:**
 - Shy and elusive, tend to avoid boats and human activity.
 - Communicate using **echolocation (sonar) by emitting high-frequency clicks.**
- **Threats:** The primary threat is gillnets illegally set for **totoaba**, a large fish similar in size to vaquitas.
- **Conservation Status:** Critically Endangered.

Shree Jagannath Temple

Why in the news?

- A **high-level committee, chaired by an Orissa High Court judge**, has expedited the **process of opening the Ratna Bhandar treasury of Shree Jagannath Temple** after 46 years.

About Shree Jagannath Temple:

- **Location:** Puri, Odisha
- **Dedication:** Lord Jagannath, a **form of the Hindu deity Vishnu**
- **Historical Significance:** Built during the reign of **King Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva** of the **Eastern Ganga dynasty in the 12th century.**
- **Architecture:**
 - Exemplifies **Kalinga architecture**, distinct to the Odisha region
 - Complex includes **shrines, gardens, and sacred tanks**
 - Main structure (sanctum sanctorum/garbhagriha) **houses idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and**



	<p>Subhadra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 20-foot-high chakra at the pinnacle visible from any part of the city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ratha Yatra: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commemorates Jagannath's annual visit to Gundicha Temple via Mausai Maa Temple ○ Begins on the second day of the bright half of the lunar month of Ashadha (June–July) and lasts nine days ○ Deities placed on three massive chariots during the festival ● Religious Significance: One of the four sacred pilgrimage sites, known as the Chaar Dhaams ● Recognition: UNESCO World Heritage Site
NIRMAN Scheme	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Union Minister for Coal and Mines recently launched the NIRMAN portal. <p>About NIRMAN Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scheme Name: Noble Initiative for Rewarding Mains Aspirants of the National Civil Services Examination (NIRMAN) ● Organizer: Coal India Limited (CIL) ● Type: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme ● Objective: Support meritorious candidates from CIL's operational districts ● Financial Assistance: ₹1,00,000 to candidates who cleared the preliminary round of UPSC Civil Services and Forest Service Examinations in 2024 ● Eligibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual family income less than ₹8 lakhs ○ Permanent residents of the 39 districts where CIL operates ○ Includes Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), female, and third-gender candidates
SEHER programme	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform and Credit Bureau have collaborated to launch the SEHER programme. <p>About SEHER programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A comprehensive credit education program aimed at enhancing financial literacy and business skills among women entrepreneurs. ● Expected to enable women to access financial tools necessary for business growth and job creation. ● An initiative of NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and TransUnion CIBIL. ● Supports WEP's goal of improving financing access for women in India's 63 million MSMEs.



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Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

Kaziranga National Park

Why in the news?

- A devastating flood in Assam's Kaziranga National Park has claimed the lives of 114 wild animals, while 95 others have recently been rescued.

About Kaziranga National Park:

- **Location:**
 - Situated in the north-eastern part of Assam, in the districts of Golaghat and Nagaon.
 - It is the largest undisturbed area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.
- **National Park Status:**
 - Declared a National Park in 1974.
 - First national park in Assam, covering 400 sq. km.
 - Declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985.
- **Flora:**
 - Dominated by dense, tall elephant grass mixed with small swamplands.
 - Includes water lilies, water hyacinths, lotus, and Rattan Cane (climbing palm).
- **Fauna:**
 - Inhabited by the world's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses.
 - Other mammals include tigers, elephants, panthers, bears, Eastern swamp deer, buffalo, Hoolock gibbon, capped langur, and Gangetic River dolphin.
- **Rivers:**
 - The river Difalu (tributary of the Brahmaputra) flows through the core/critical tiger habitat.
 - Another tributary, Moradifalu, flows along its southern boundary.



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