



Entry into Forest

❖ Context

- A controversy erupted when the Assam CM went to night safari in **Kaziranga National Park** (also a tiger reserve) along with a popular personality.

❖ What do the Rules Say?

- In India, entry into forests is governed by two laws - the **Indian Forest Act, 1927**, and the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- The first applies to all **reserve forests and bars trespassing**. Everyone other than people who live in villages inside reserve forests, needs permission from the **divisional forest officer** concerned for entering these forests for any purpose.
- The Wildlife Protection Act empowers the **Chief Wildlife Warden of a state** to frame laws for tourists entering Protected Areas - sanctuaries and national parks.
- Under the same Act, the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** has the powers to set rules for tiger reserves.
- While a chief wildlife warden must act "with the previous approval of the State Government" concerned, no rule once set by the warden can be violated by anyone.

❖ Law Currently in Kaziranga National Park

- Like most national parks & tiger reserves of India, Kaziranga does not allow entry after sunset, barring forest staff.
- ❖ **Policy in Wildlife Parks Around the World**
 - Night game drives are **routine across Africa** in the private concessions of Botswana, South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Zambia etc.
 - Night boat safaris to spot caimans - or their eyes reflecting roving spotlights - are popular across the Amazon river system from Peru to Brazil.
 - Singapore offers a more curated experience in **Mandai wildlife reserve** - advertised as the "world's first nocturnal wildlife park".
- ❖ **Reason for Not Encouraging Night Safaris**
 - Unlike Africa, in India most forests present dense tropical vegetation where **sighting wildlife is not easy even during the day**.

Encyclopaedic Dictionary Sanskrit Project

❖ Context

- A team of about 22 faculty and researchers of Sanskrit are working towards publishing the **world's largest Encyclopaedic Sanskrit Dictionary's 36th volume**.



❖ Key Highlights

- Pune's **Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute** houses the scriptorium and the editorial room of the project.
- Commenced in **1948** by Linguist and Sanskrit **Professor SM Katre** who was **founder of India's oldest Department of Modern Linguistics** in Deccan College.
- First published in **1976**, it took 25 years for the scholars to complete the word extraction process from around **1,464 books** (spread across 62 knowledge disciplines - starting from the Rigveda (approximately 1400 B.C.) to Hāsyārṇava (1850 A.D.) to generate **one crore reference slips**. All these paper slips have been well preserved, alphabetically, in the scriptorium.
- 35 volumes published so far contain about **1.25 lakh vocables (word)** as compared with Oxford which has published 20 volumes and 2.90 lakh words.
- ❖ **Project KoshaSHRI**
 - Consisting of a **customised software**, the aim of the project is to enable the **online access of the dictionary**.

National Centre of Excellence for AVGC

❖ Context

- The **Information and Broadcasting Secretary** said that the Centre has taken an in-principle decision to set up a National Centre of Excellence for the **Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC)** in collaboration with the private sector (**48% stake for the Ministry of I&B, 26% for FICCI and 26% for CII**).



❖ Key Highlights

- The Centre will also work with state governments to formulate a **'Model Theatre Policy'**. The aim is to reverse the decline in the number of theatres across the country (**12,000 to 8,000 in 5-6 years**).
- The media and entertainment sector should grow to more than **100 billion dollars by 2030 (from the present \$22 BN)**.
- The **Film Facilitation Office** will be handed over to **Invest India** to come up with a single-window portal for opening theatres.
- **National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC)**, Mumbai will become the hub of the cinematic arm of the government. Established in **1975**, it functions in areas of film financing, production and distribution.
- **Prasar Bharati**, in collaboration with **IIT Kanpur**, has come up with a proof-of-concept, where **more than 200 channels** and high-quality films can be watched on mobile phones, **without consuming any data**, using **direct-to-mobile broadcast**.

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Rapid Intensification of Tropical Storms



❖ Context

- **Hurricane Ian**, a tropical storm with heavy rain and winds of at least 73 mph, grew within 24 hours to hit western Cuba as a major hurricane.

❖ Key Highlights

- As Earth's climate warms, more storms are undergoing rapid intensification, growing quickly from relatively weak tropical storms to Category 3 or higher hurricanes in under 24 hours, stunning forecasters and giving residents little time to prepare.
- **Rapid intensification technically refers to an increase of at least 30 knots, or 35 mph, in the maximum sustained winds over a 24-hour period.**
- ❖ **Role of Warming Oceans**
- **Storms gather strength over the ocean.** And, the warmer the water, the more power they pick up.
- Higher surface temperatures allow hurricanes to reach higher levels of maximum sustained wind.
- More than 90% of the excess heat from human-caused global warming over the past 50 years has been absorbed by the oceans.

- Since 1901, sea surface temperatures have risen an average of 0.14 degrees Fahrenheit per decade.
- **Warmer oceans not only make storms stronger but also make the rate of intensification more rapid.**
- ❖ **Vertical Wind Shear**
- It is the **measure of how much the wind changes in speed or direction at increasing heights** in the atmosphere.
- **Strong vertical wind shear can inhibit the development of hurricanes** by tilting the structure of a storm and by forcing cool, dry air into its core.
- According to a study, **warming temperatures may lead to weakening vertical wind shear**, allowing hurricanes to intensify more rapidly.

International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI)

❖ Context

- The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has made it **mandatory** for mobile phone manufacturers to **register the IMEI of all handsets made in India** with the government, in a bid to curtail the rampant **cloning and theft of mobile phones**.



❖ Key Highlights

- **Importers, too**, will have to register with the government the IMEI of each phone before importing it for sale, testing, research or "any other purpose".
- **IMEI** is a 15-digit number that uniquely identifies and verifies the identity of a device when a user uses the Internet or places a call through it.
- The registration will be done with the **Indian Counterfeited Device Restriction portal** of the Government of India. It will also allow the DoT to carry out IMEI-based **lawful interception**.

- The identity register categorises mobile phones based on their IMEI status in three lists :
 - **White** : permitted for use.
 - **Grey** : do not conform to standards but are permitted to connect under supervision.
 - **Black**: reported stolen or lost & are not allowed to access the network.

Kirit S Parikh Panel

❖ Context

- The Government-appointed panel for reviewing the **pricing of natural gas** has sought more time to submit its report.



❖ Key Highlights

- The panel headed by **former planning commission member Kirit S Parikh** was tasked to suggest a **fair price to the end-consumer**.
- Its prices remained docile till last year but have shot up in recent months, raising the cost of production of user industries in general and city gas operators that sell CNG to automobiles and piped cooking gas to households, in particular.

- To keep rates under check so that they do not add fire to already high inflation, the government formed the committee to review the way prices of gas produced in India are fixed.
- Currently, the **government sets the price of gas every 6 months-on April 1 & 1 October**-each year based on prevailing rates in gas surplus nations such as the US, Canada & Russia.
- The rates are fixed based on **volume weighted average price in a year** in these global benchmarks **with a lag of one quarter**.

India Household Savings Rate

❖ Context

- Indian households' savings rate fell to the **lowest in five years in 2022**.



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❖ **Key Highlights**

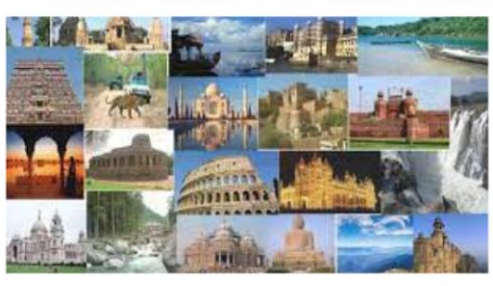
- The household saving rate had substantially **increased initially during COVID.**
- **Inflation and pent-up demand post COVID** have contributed to higher levels of nominal consumption, lowering people's ability to save.

❖ **What is Pent-up Demand?**

- Pent-up demand describes a **rapid increase in demand** for a service or product, usually **following a period of subdued spending.**
- Consumers tend to hold off making purchases during a recession, building up a backlog of demand that is unleashed when signs of a recovery emerge.

News in Between the Lines

Indian Tourism Statistics 2022



❖ **Context**

- According to the report released by the **Ministry of Tourism**, the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions saw foreign tourist arrivals in India dip by 44.5% in 2021.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- In 2021, the **top 15 countries from which foreign tourists arrived in India** included the U.S., the U.K., Bangladesh, Canada, Nepal, Afghanistan and Australia, accounting for nearly 81% of foreign tourist arrivals.
- The **UAE was the top destination for Indians in 2021**, followed by the U.S., Qatar, Oman and the U.K.

Carl Gustaf M4



❖ **Context**

- Swedish defence major **Saab** (saab: Swedish defence products company) announced plans to manufacture its Carl-Gustaf M4 weapon system in India.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- The Carl-Gustaf recoilless rifle is a **man-portable, multi-role weapon system** - neutralising armoured tanks, clearing obstacles or engaging enemies in buildings.
- This is the **first time the company will be setting up a manufacturing facility for this outside Sweden.**
- The Army has been using the iconic Carl-Gustaf since **1976** and currently operates the Mk2 and Mk3 versions. The **M4 version is shorter and lighter.**

Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORAD)



❖ **Context**

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** conducted two successful test flights of **VSHORADS** missiles.

❖ **Key Highlights**

- The missile is a **Man Portable Air Defence System (MANPAD)** designed and developed indigenously by **DRDO's Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad** in collaboration with other DRDO facilities and various Indian industry partners.
- The missile incorporates many novel technologies including **miniaturised Reaction Control System (RCS) and integrated avionics**, which have been successfully tested.
- The missile has been designed to **neutralise low altitude aerial threats at short ranges** and is propelled by a **dual thrust solid motor.**

Phygital Asset



❖ **Context**

- An Auction house is launching a **1st 'phygital' auction of an Indian artist's work**

❖ **Key Highlights**

- A phygital asset (or phygital NFT) is a **physical item that has an Non-fungible Tokens (NFT) counterpart on the blockchain.**
- The two go hand-in-hand, which means the ownership of any physical item can be verified on the blockchain.
- **M. F. Hussain's work 'Fury'** will be offered for auction along with a NFT marketplace, **Hefty Art.**

World Rabies Day

❖ **Context**

- **World Health Organization** celebrated the day on **28th September** with this year's theme -**"One Health, Zero Death"** to raise awareness about its prevention.

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❖ Key Highlights

- **Zero by 30** is a **global Strategic Plan for the elimination of dog-mediated human rabies deaths by 2030**. Rabies is a **vaccine-preventable, zoonotic, viral disease** caused by **Rabies lyssavirus**, a neurotropic virus. Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is virtually 100% fatal.
- In up to 99% of cases, domestic dogs are responsible for rabies virus transmission to humans. It is one of the **Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD)** that predominantly affects poor and vulnerable populations who live in remote rural locations. Approximately 80% of human cases occur in rural areas.

Dadasaheb Phalke Award



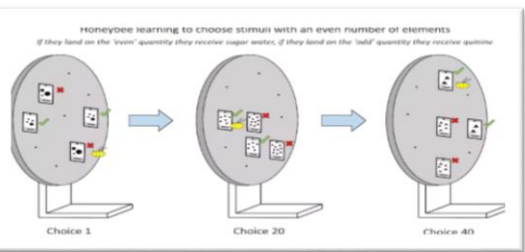
❖ Context

- The **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** announced that the **Dadasaheb Phalke Award** for 2020 will be conferred on **veteran actor Asha Parekh**.

❖ Key Highlights

- It is **India's highest award in the field of cinema** presented annually at the **National Film Awards ceremony** by the **Directorate of Film Festivals**, an organisation set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- The recipient is honoured for their "**outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian cinema**" and is selected by a committee consisting of eminent personalities from the Indian film industry.
- The award comprises a **Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus) medallion**, a shawl, and a cash prize of ₹1,000,000. It was introduced to commemorate Dadasaheb Phalke popularly known as "**the father of Indian cinema**" and **first presented in 1969**.

Parity Classification



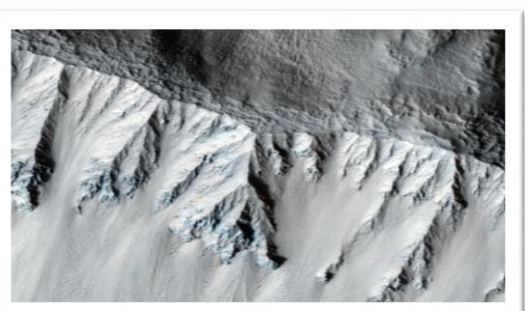
❖ Context

- **Honey bees join humans as the only known animals** that can tell the difference between odd and even numbers.

❖ Key Highlights

- Parity tasks (such as odd and even categorisation) are considered abstract and high-level numerical concepts in humans. Studies have shown honeybees can learn to order quantities, perform simple addition and subtraction, match symbols with quantities and relate size and number concepts.

Zhurong Rover



❖ Context

- **China's Zhurong Rover** that landed on **Mars** in 2021 has found evidence of major floods that took place billions of years ago.

❖ Key Highlights

- The rover with **ground-penetrating radar** identified two horizontal layers underneath its landing site **Utopia Planitia** in the northern half of the Red Planet.
- Liquid water was not found but each of these layers at depths of 10-80 metres had smaller rocks spread over larger ones indicating the occurrence of flooding.
- Radio waves from the radar bounce off underground materials to reveal two crucial pieces of information about them - Their grain size and ability to hold an electric charge. **Stronger signals typically indicate larger objects**.

Ancient Plant Silphion



❖ Context

- A study by **Istanbul University researchers** claim that the traditional plant thought to have gone extinct 2,000 years ago, may still be around.

❖ Key Highlights

- It was a **Mediterranean medicinal plant** considered a cure-all.
- Silphion was used to treat various health problems, including goitre, sciatica (nerve pain), toothache, intestinal disorders, hormonal disorders, epilepsy, tetanus, polyps (abnormal growth of tissues) and malignant tumours.
- Its stalks were eaten as a vegetable, while the roots were consumed raw. The plant was also used to preserve lentils. The resin of the silphion was extensively used as a **spice, perfume, aphrodisiac, contraceptive and medicine**.
- It occupied an important place in the export economy of **ancient Cyrene**, an old Greek and later Roman colony **near north-eastern Libya**.

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