

Prime Minister's Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM - KISAN)

❖ Context

- According to the Agriculture Ministry's response to a Right to Information query the number of **farmers who received the 11th instalment** of funds from the **Prime Minister's Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)** has **fallen by 67%**.

Key Highlights

- **Only 3.87 crore farmers** received the 11th instalment of ₹2,000 in their accounts in **May-June 2022**.
- This is a **sharp drop from the 11.84 crore farmers** who received the first instalment back in February 2019.

About PM-KISAN

- It was **launched in February 2019**.
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** with 100% funding from the Government of India.
- It is implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.

Features

- Under the scheme, the **Center transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal installments**.
- It goes **directly into the bank accounts** of all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings.
- The scheme **defines family as husband, wife and minor children**.
- **Identification of Beneficiaries**
 - The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiary farmer families rests with the **State / UT Governments**.
- **Beneficiaries**
 - **Landholding farmers' families** with cultivable landholding in their names can apply under this scheme.
 - Farmers from both the **urban and rural areas**.
 - **Small and marginal farmers families**.

● **Exclusion Categories**

- Institutional landholders.
- Present or retired officers and employees of state/central government as well as PSUs and government autonomous bodies.
- Beneficiaries with higher economic status are not eligible.
- Those who pay income tax.
- Farmer families holding constitutional posts.
- Professionals like doctors, engineers and lawyers.
- Retired pensioners with a monthly pension of over Rs 10,000.

● **Objectives**

- To provide income support to all land holding eligible farmer families
- To **supplement the financial needs** of the Small and Marginal Farmers in procuring various inputs.
- To **protect them from falling in the clutches of money lenders** for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.

Royal Bengal Tiger

❖ Context

- The **population of Royal Bengal Tigers in Andhra Pradesh** has increased in the last few years.

Key Highlights

- The latest count is **73 in the Nagarjuna Sagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR)**, and **two in Papikonda National Park**.
- As per the All India Tiger Estimation taken up in 2022, the **population of Royal Bengal Tigers has increased by 60% in NSTR**.
- The overall tiger **population in India** is estimated at around 3,000.

Royal Bengal Tiger

- **About**

● **Protection Status**

- **IUCN Red List-** Endangered
- **WPA 1972-** Schedule I
- **CITES-** Appendix I

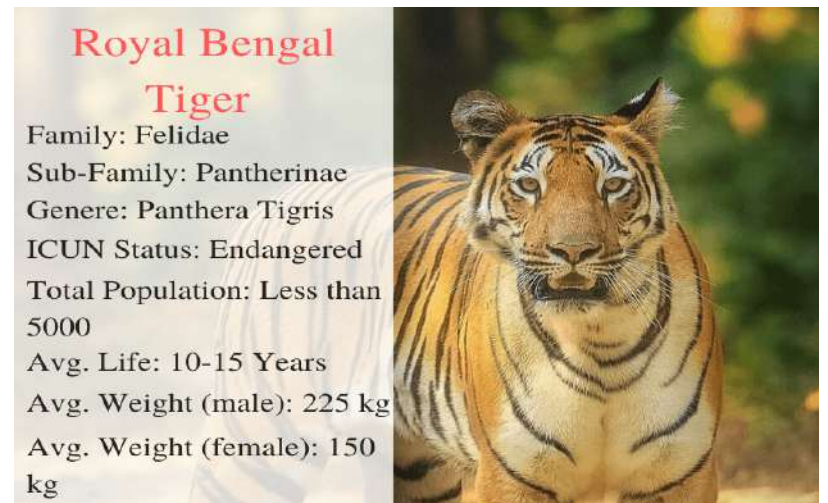
● **Conservation**

- India is **home to 53 tiger reserves spread across 18 states** and the last tiger census of 2018 showed a rise in the tiger population.
- India **achieved the target of doubling the tiger population four years ahead** of schedule (2022) of the **St. Petersburg Declaration** on tiger conservation.



- Royal Bengal Tigers are also known as Indian Tiger and Bengal Tiger.
- They constitute a large population of tiger families in the world.
- Scientific Name: *Panthera tigris tigris*.
- **Habitat and Distribution**
 - Royal Bengal Tiger **lives mostly in the dense forest of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal.**
 - Together, these countries have more than 80% of the world's Tiger Population.
- **Threat**
 - Hunting, Poaching, Urbanization, Habitat loss, and the Illegal Wildlife Trade.

- The Govt. of India had launched **“Project Tiger”** on 1st April 1973 to promote conservation of the tiger.
- **National Tiger Conservation Authority-** It is a **statutory body** under the MoEFCC and was established in 2005 following the **recommendations of the Tiger Task Force.**



Melocanna baccifera

❖ Context

- A study by The Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), Thiruvananthapuram, spanning 13 years has revealed some interesting facts on flowering in ***Melocanna baccifera***.

Key highlights

- Researchers detected a correlation between the **sugar content** in the fruit of ***Melocanna baccifera*** and the frenzied feeding and population boom in rats during ‘Mautam’.
- **Mautam** is the cyclical, mass bamboo flowering that occurs once in 48 years.
- Earlier, it was presumed that high protein in fruits/seeds was attracting the rats.

About the Species & the Rat Flood

- It is a **tropical bamboo species** that has long fascinated researchers for its association with the occurrence of ‘bamboo death,’ ‘rat floods’ and famines in northeast India.
- Called **‘Muli’** in northeast India, it is the **largest fruit-producing bamboo** and is **native to the northeast India-Myanmar region.**

- During its gregarious flowering, the bamboo produces large fruits which draw animal visitors/predators.
- These include pollen predators (honey bees), fruit predators (millipedes, slugs and snails, fruit borers, monkeys, rats, porcupines, wild boars and palm civets), seedling predators (rabbits, deer), and insect/pest predators (ants, mantis).
- Of these, **black rats greatly relish the fleshy, berry-like fruit.**
- During this period, they also **multiply rapidly**, a phenomenon dubbed as **‘rat flood.’**
- Once the fruits are gone, they start devouring standing crops, causing **famines** that have claimed thousands of human lives.



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News in Between the Lines

Nicobari Hodi



❖ Context

- The Geographical Indications Registry at Guindy, Chennai, has received an application from the **Tribal Development Council, Andaman & Nicobar Islands**, seeking the **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag for the **Nicobari hodi** craft.

❖ Key Highlights

- This is the **first application from the Union Territory** seeking a tag for one of its products.

❖ About Nicobari Hodi

- The hodi is the **Nicobari tribe's traditional craft**.
- It is an **outrigger canoe**, very commonly operated in the Nicobar group of islands.
- The **technical skills** for building a hodi are based on **indigenous knowledge** inherited by the Nicobarese from their forefathers.
- The hodi is **built using either locally available trees or from nearby islands**, and its design varies slightly from island to island.
- Hodis are **used for transporting people and goods** from one island to another, for sending coconuts, fishing and racing purposes.
- The **tuhet**, a group of families under a headman, consider the hodi an asset.

Donyi Polo Airport Arunachal Pradesh



❖ Context

- Recently, Prime Minister inaugurated **Arunachal Pradesh's first greenfield airport, Donyi Polo Airport**, in Itanagar.

❖ Key Highlights

- The airport **located at Hollongi**, around 15 km from the state capital Itanagar.
- The airport is suitable for **all weather day operations**.
- The airport terminal is a **modern building**, which **promotes energy efficiency**, renewable energy and the recycling of resources.
- Donyi Polo Airport will be the **third operational airport for Arunachal Pradesh**, taking the total airport count in the Northeast region to 16.

➤ Significance

- It will **link the border state** with other Indian cities with commercial flights as well as other parts of Arunachal through helicopter services.
- It will also **serve as a stimulus for the expansion of commerce and tourism**, hence boosting the region's economic and social development.

Gandhi Mandela Award

❖ Context

- Recently, The **14th Dalai Lama** conferred the **Gandhi Mandela Award 2022** at Thekchen Choeling in Dharamshala's McLeodGanj by Himachal Pradesh's governor.

❖ About Gandhi Mandela Award

- **Gandhi Mandela Foundation** has constituted an international prize, the Gandhi Mandela Award.
- It is a government of India registered Trust and a **non-profit organisation**.

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- It was formed with the motive to **promote Mahatma Gandhi's** and former President of South Africa **Nelson Mandela's values of non-violence**.
- The foundation instituted the award on the **150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, MK Gandhi**.
- The award is **given to personalities** who have **carried forward the legacies of Gandhi and Mandela** by making significant contributions in the fields of Peace, Social Welfare, Culture, Environment, Education, Healthcare, Sports and Innovation.

Chondrite Meteorites



❖ Context

- According to the scientists, the meteorites may have been responsible for water in Mars history.

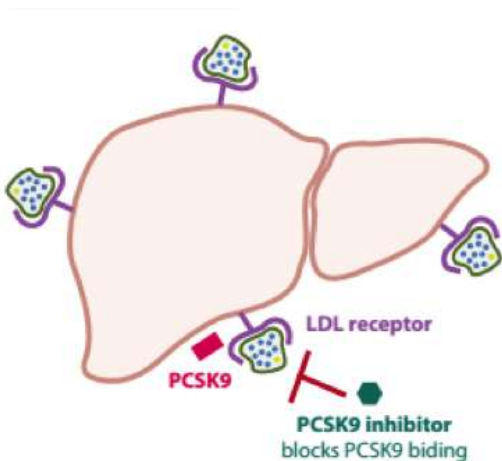
❖ Key highlights

- It has been estimated that the bombardment of the planet by **water and carbon rich chondrite meteorites** from the outer Solar System delivered a large volume of water to its crust.
- Scientists used a measure called **global equivalent layer (GEL)** to find that the total volume would equate to a global ocean roughly 300 metres deep.

❖ What are chondrites?

- They are the **most abundant meteorite class**. They are stony meteorites that have not been modified, by either melting or differentiation of the parent asteroids.
- They are characterised by the presence of **chondrules**.
- Chondrules are roughly **spherical inclusions** made up of silicates, metal, and sulphide.
- They appear to have formed as **molten droplets at high temperatures in the early solar nebula**.

PCSK9



❖ Context

- The US scientists have found a new oral drug for lowering cholesterol.

❖ Key highlights



- Researchers found that **nitric oxide** which can prevent heart attacks by **dilating blood vessels** can also **target and inhibit PCSK9**.
- The discovered drug molecule functions to increase nitric oxide inactivation of PCSK9.
- PCSK9 controls the **number of LDL (low density lipoprotein) receptors** in the blood, by marking them for degradation.
- **LDL receptors** sit at the surface of liver cells and **remove cholesterol** from blood.
- PCSK9 inhibitors are the next leading class of medications after statins for managing cholesterol. However, unlike statins, they can only be administered as shots.

❖ About cholesterol & lipoproteins

- Cholesterol is a type of **lipid** that is **biosynthesized** by all animal cells and forms an essential structural component of cell membranes.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Excess cholesterol in blood combines with other substances in blood to form plaque. The building up of plaque is known as atherosclerosis. ➤ The plaque sticks to the walls of arteries. which lead to coronary artery disease, i.e., narrowing or blocking of coronary arteries. ➤ Lipoproteins are the combination of lipids (fat) and protein. Lipids need to be attached to the protein so that they can move through blood.
<p style="text-align: center;">Friendshoring</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Context ➤ The term has gained traction in the wake of disruption of global supply chains due to COVID-19 pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war. ❖ Key highlights ➤ The term is shorthand for the practice of relocating supply chains to countries where the risk of disruption from political chaos is low. ➤ The related terms are - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reshoring or onshoring- making products at home. ■ Nearshoring - making products closer to home. ■ Allied shoring - making products in countries aligned with the national interests.
<p style="text-align: center;">Battle of Walong & Battle of Rezang La</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Context ➤ The 60th anniversary of two iconic battles in the India-China war was observed this week. ❖ Key highlights ➤ At both the battles, the Indian Army resisted advancing Chinese soldiers and fought to the last men showing exemplary courage and sacrifice. ➤ The Battle of Walong was fought on November 16, 1962 at Walong, one of India's most easternmost villages in Arunachal Pradesh. ➤ It is famously known as the only Indian counterattack during the 1962 war. ➤ The Battle of Rezang La was fought on November 18, 1962 at an altitude of 18,000 feet in eastern Ladakh. ➤ The place is a narrow gap between the higher mountains surrounding the strategic village of Chushul and the Spanggur Lake. ➤ Rezang La was vital for the defence of the crucially important Chushul. Any invader reaching there would have had a free run to Leh. ➤ India-China 1962 war took place between 20 Oct to 21 Nov 1962.

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