PRELIMS EDGE 2025   **14-07-2025**

TERMS IN NEWS

Jarawa Tribe

- The Jarawas are an **indigenous tribe which lives in the Andaman Islands.**
- They are classified as a Particularly **Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).**
- They inhabit parts of the Middle Andaman and South Andaman Islands. The region is characterized by dense forests, mangroves, and pristine beaches, providing a rich habitat.
- They are regarded as descendants of the Jangil tribe, which is now extinct.
- Some believe the ancestors of the Jarawas were part of the first successful human migrations out of Africa.
- The Jarawas have **traditionally been hunter-forager-fishermen,** and are known as warriors who fiercely defend their territory.

- They are known for **their robust physique and excellent nutritional health.**
- Traditional clothing among the Jarawa Tribe is minimal and functional, designed to suit the tropical climate of the Andaman Islands.
- After the British established a colonial presence in the Andaman Islands in 1789, the population of Jarawas declined massively.
- However, the Jarawas survived the British colonial presence and World War II.
- Over the years, the contact between the Jarawas and the outsiders increased, and since 1997, they have initiated contacts with settled populations, where they traded and interacted with tourists, got medical aid, and even sent their children to school.
- At present, their number ranges between 250 to 400 individuals.

Akash Missile System

- It is a Short-Range Surface to Air Missile (SAM) system to protect vulnerable areas and vulnerable points from air attacks.
- It was indigenously designed and developed by India's Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and is produced by Hyderabad-based Bharat Dynamics Ltd. (BDL).

Akash Missile System Features

- It features a solid-fuel, ramjet propulsion system, capable of reaching speeds of Mach 2.5 to 3.5 (up to 4,200 km/h).
- It has an operational range of 4.5 to 25 km and can engage targets at altitudes of up to 18 km.
- The system uses command guidance, a digital autopilot, and includes self-destruct mechanisms to minimize collateral damage in case of target miss.
- Each missile is capable of carrying a 60 kg warhead, which can be conventional or nuclear.
- The system boasts a kill probability of 88% with a single missile and up to 99% when fired in a salvo of two.

- The most important element of the Akash SAM system battery is its high-power, multi-function Rajendra phased array radar.
- The 3D passive electronically scanned array Rajendra radar (PESA) can electronically scan and guide the missile towards targets. It provides information on the range, azimuth, and height of a flying target.
- The AKASH Weapon System can simultaneously engage Multiple Targets in Group Mode or Autonomous Mode.
- It has built-in Electronic Counter-Counter Measures (ECCM) features.
- It is fully automatic, with a quick response time from target detection to kill.
- The entire weapon system has been configured on mobile platforms.
- It has an open-system architecture that ensures adaptability to existing and futuristic air defense environments.

SPECIES IN NEWS

Caracal

- The National Board for Wildlife includes the caracal in the list of **critically endangered species in India**
- The recovery programme for critically endangered species in India now includes **22 wildlife species.**

About Caracal:

- It is a medium-sized wild cat native to Africa, Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia including India. The population of this cat is increasing in Africa while its numbers are declining in Asia.

Characteristics:

- **Features:** The caracal has long legs, a short face, long canine teeth. It has distinctive ears that are long and pointy with tufts of black hair at their tips.
- **Nocturnal Animal:** It is an elusive, primarily nocturnal animal. Its sightings are not common.
- **Diet:** The caracal is a carnivore. It typically preys upon small mammals, birds, and rodents.
- **Significance:** The caracal has traditionally been valued for its flexibility and its extraordinary ability to catch birds in flight.

Habitat:

- Earlier Caracals could be found in arid and semi-arid scrub forest regions of 13 Indian states. It was also found in nine out of the 26 biotic provinces.
- However, currently, its presence is restricted to Rajasthan, Kutch, and parts of Madhya Pradesh (MP).

Conservation Status:

- **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern

- **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I
- **CITES Listing:** Appendix I for the Asian population and Appendix II for others.

Threats:

- Loss of habitat and increasing urbanisation
- **Example**: Chambal ravines which are caracal's natural habitat has been often officially notified as wasteland.
- Infrastructure projects such as the building of roads lead to the fragmentation of the caracal's ecology and disruption of its movement.

Slender Loris

- The slender lorises (Loris) are a genus of loris **native** to **India and Sri Lanka.**
- Slender lorises spend most of their life in trees, traveling along the tops of branches with slow and precise movements.
- They generally feed on insects, reptiles, plant shoots, and fruit.

Habitat:

- They are found in tropical rainforests, scrub forests, semi-deciduous forests and swamps.

Types:

- There are two species of Slender Loris, the only members of the genus 'Loris':
- Red Slender Loris (Loris tardigradus) Grey Slender Loris (Loris lydekkerianus)

Threat:

- It is believed that they have **medicinal properties and they are captured and sold.**
- Since there is great demand for **keeping these animals as pets, they are illegally smuggled.**
- Habitat loss, electrocution of live wires and road accidents are other threats that have caused its populations to dwindle.

Protection Status:

- IUCN: Endangered,
- Wildlife (Protection) Act of India, 1972: Schedule I
- CITES: Appendix II

PLACES IN NEWS

The Black Sea

- **Location**– It is a marginal sea of the Atlantic Ocean lying between Europe and Asia.

Bordering region:

- **West**: The Balkan Peninsula in Southeastern Europe.
- **East**: The Caucasus Mountains.
- **North**: The East European Plains, including Russia and Ukraine.
- **South**: Anatolia in Turkey, part of Western Asia.

Bordering countries:

- **North**: Russia and Ukraine.
- **South**: Turkey.
- **West**: Bulgaria.
- **East**: Georgia.
- Romania also has access to the Black Sea.

Other Geographical features:

- The Black Sea connects to the Aegean Sea (Mediterranean) through the Bosporus Strait, Sea of Marmara, and Dardanelles Strait.
- The Kerch Strait links it to the Sea of Azov.
- Russia has the longest coastline (2,300 km), followed by Turkey (1,329 km) and Ukraine (1,282 km).
- The Crimean Peninsula extends into the Black Sea from the north.
- **Major rivers** flowing into it include the Danube, Dnieper, Southern Bug, Rioni, and Dniester.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1: Which among the following countries do not share borders with the Black Sea?

A. Russia

B. Bulgaria

C. Turkey

D. Albania

Q2 : Consider the following statements regarding Slender Loris

1. They spend most of their life in trees, traveling along the tops of branches with slow and precise movements.
2. Since there is great demand for keeping these animals as pets, they are illegally smuggled.
3. They are mostly found in wetlands and grasslands of Central India.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

A. Only One
B. Only Two
C. All of the Above
D. None of the Above

Q3 : Which among the following is not considered as one among the Big Cats?

A. Snow Leopards
B. Cougars
C. Cheetah
D. Caracal

Q4 : Which among the following tribal group is not found in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands?

A. Onge
B. Jarawa
C. Sentinelese
D. Changpa

Q5 : Which among the following is a Short-Range Surface to Air Missile (SAM) system to protect vulnerable areas and vulnerable points from air attacks in India?

A. Nag Missiles
B. Akash Missiles
C. Astra Missiles
D. Agni Missiles

Answers

1. D
2. A
3. D
4. D
5. B