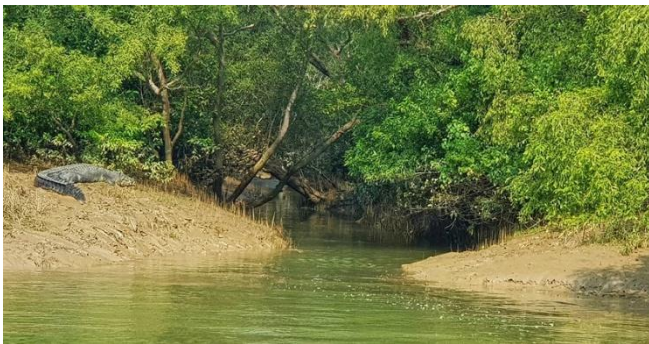


**PRELIMS EDGE 2025****28-07-2025****PLACES IN NEWS****Bhitarkanika National Park**

- It is located in the **Kendrapara district of Odisha**.
- Spread across an area of 672 sq.km. of the **mangrove swamp situated on the delta** formed by the three rivers, namely **Brahmani, Baitarani, and Dhamra**, the park houses an array of creeks, backwaters, estuaries, deltas, and mudhuts.
- It is **India's second largest mangrove ecosystem after the Sunderbans**.
- Proximity to the Bay of Bengal makes the soil of the area enriched with salt; the vegetation and species of the sanctuary are those that are mainly found in the tropical and subtropical intertidal regions.
- It is also designated as a **Ramsar site**.
- **Flora:** Mangrove species, casuarinas, and grasses like the indigo bush.
- **Fauna:**
 - It is home to the largest congregation of the endangered

Salt Water Crocodile in the country.

- The **Gahirmatha Beach**, which forms the boundary of the park in the east, is the largest colony of the **Olive Ridley Sea Turtles**.
- It is also home to numerous animals like hyenas, wild boar, Chitals, Sambar, Spotted Deer, Wild Boar, Jungle cat, Wild Pigs, etc., and migratory birds, which make it their home during the winter season, lending a vibrant hue to the ecosystem.
- It is also home to eight varieties of Kingfisher birds, which is also a rarity

Democratic Republic of Congo

- It is located in **Central Africa** with the equator passing through the country.
- **Bordering countries:** Angola, Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia.
- The country also has a coastline on the Atlantic Ocean to the southwest.
- **High Point:** The highest point in the Republic of the Congo is Mount Nabemba.
- **Major River:** Congo River
- **Important plateau region:** Katanga.
 - The plateaus are mostly covered in savanna grasslands, with patches of forests in the valleys and lower areas.
- **Lakes:** It has famous lakes like Lake Tanganyika, Lake Albert, Lake Edward, Lake Kivu
- **Volcanoes:** Mount Nyiragongo which is an active volcano located ★ in Virunga Mountains.
- **Natural Resources:** The DRC is rich in natural resources such as industrial diamonds, cobalt, and copper, and it has large forest reserves and significant hydroelectric potential.
- **Capital city:** Kinshasa

TERMS IN NEWS

Sohrai Paintings



- Sohrai painting is a traditional **indigenous art form** is practised by women of different indigenous communities native to the **villages of Hazaribagh region of Jharkhand, India.**
- The word 'Sohrai' comes from soro – translating to 'to drive with a stick'.
- This art form dates back to the Meso-chalcolithic period (9000-5000 BC).
- The Isko rock shelter excavated in Barkagaon, Hazaribagh area also has rock paintings that are exactly similar to the traditional Sohrai paintings.

Features

- Sohrai paintings are distinctive for their **vibrant colours, intricate patterns, and symbolic motifs;**
- There is a Sohrai festival held every year, marking the harvesting season and the arrival of winter.
- **Themes:** It is usually based on natural elements of the universe, this includes forests, rivers, animals amongst others.

- These ancient paintings are made by tribal women with the use of natural substances like charcoal, clay, or soil.
- It is practiced by indigenous communities, particularly in the States of **Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, and West Bengal**.
- It is the art of the women of the Kurmi, Santal, Munda, Oraon, Agaria, Ghatwal tribes.
- **This art form from Hazaribagh in Jharkhand has received the GI tag.**

Foot and Mouth Disease

- It is a **highly contagious viral disease that affects all cloven-hoofed animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, camelids, deer, and pigs**.
- Cloven-hoofed animals are those with divided hooves.
- It does not affect horses, dogs, or cats.
- Intensively reared animals are more susceptible to the disease than traditional breeds.
- It is a transboundary animal disease (TAD) that deeply affects the production of livestock and disrupts regional and international trade in animals and animal products.
- The disease is estimated to circulate in 77% of the global livestock population in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, as well as in a limited area of South America.
- It is not a human health or food safety threat.
- It is also not related to hand, foot, and mouth disease, which is a common childhood illness caused by a different virus.

- The organism which causes FMD is an aphthovirus of the family Picornaviridae.
 - There are seven strains (A, O, C, SAT1, SAT2, SAT3, and Asia1), which are endemic in different countries worldwide.
 - Immunity to one type does not protect an animal against other types or subtypes.

Transmission:

- The FMD virus is transmitted via direct contact with infected animals or indirect contact with secretions or excretions (including semen and milk) from infected animals or by mechanical vectors (people, horses, dogs, cats, birds, vehicles) or air movement over land or water.
- The virus can enter the host via inhalation, ingestion, or through skin wounds and mucous membranes.

Symptoms:

- FMD is characterised by fever and blister-like sores on the tongue and lips, in the mouth, on the teats, and between the hooves.
- Ruptured blisters can result in extreme lameness and reluctance to move or eat.
- Other frequent symptoms are fever, depression, hypersalivation, loss of appetite, weight loss, growth retardation, and a drop in milk production, which can persist even after recovery.
- The disease causes severe production losses, and while the majority of affected animals recover, the disease often leaves them weakened and debilitated.

- The disease is rarely fatal in adult animals, but there is often high mortality in young animals.
- It was the first disease for which the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE) established official status recognition.
- Vaccines for FMD are available but must be matched to the specific type and subtype of virus causing the outbreak

SPECIES IN NEWS

Blue Finned Mahseer



- The Mahseer belongs to the genus **Tor**, of which there are **several subspecies to be found in India** and in other range countries in South Asia.
- The Blue-finned Mahseer or ***Tor Khudree*** is one of the subspecies of the Mahseer.

Habitat:

- Mainly found in the **Mota Mola river east of Pune**. This species is also found in other **rivers of the Deccan Plateau**.
- The species is migratory; **moving upstream during rains. It prefers clean, fast flowing and well oxygenated waters.**

Freshwater Ecosystem Indicator:

- It is very **sensitive to dissolved oxygen levels, water temperature and sudden climatic changes**. It just cannot bear pollution.

Threats:

- Threatened by **habitat manipulation, over harvesting and competition from other fish species.**

Conservation Initiatives:

- **Tata Power** (private company) is involved in conservation of the blue-finned for 50 years in Lonavala (near Pune), Maharashtra rescuing the species from the endangered list.
- **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern

Hog deer



- It is a solitary creature but sometimes spotted feeding in small groups in open fields when food there is plentiful.
- For the most part it is sedentary and does not migrate.
- Males tend to be territorial and mark their territory with glandular secretions.
- This species exhibits sexual dimorphism. The females are slightly smaller than males and lack antlers.

Distribution

- It has a native geographic range throughout India, including the Himalayan foothill zone and Southeast Asia, including Burma and Thailand.
- Humans have introduced free-ranging populations of this deer in Sri Lanka, Australia and the United States, including Texas, Florida, and Hawaii.

Habitat:

- It appears to prefer dense forests; however, they are often observed in clearings, grasslands and occasionally wet grasslands.
- This variation is usually associated with time of year and food distribution.

Conservation status

- IUCN: Endangered
- Wildlife Protection Act 1972: Scheduled I

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1: It is India's second largest mangrove ecosystem after the Sunderbans. It is home to the largest congregation of the endangered Salt Water Crocodile in the country. This area has the largest colony of the Olive Ridley Sea Turtles.

Identify the National Park from the given description

- A. Bhitarkanika National Park
- B. Nameri National Park
- C. Gorumara National Park
- D. Neora Valley National Park

Q2: Which among the following countries do not share borders with Democratic Republic of Congo?

- A. South Sudan
- B. Central African Republic
- C. Sudan
- D. Angola

Q3: Bilsa, Hasa, Blue Finned Mahasheer etc are the names of which of the following?

- A. Dragon Flies
- B. Birds
- C. Fishes
- D. Crocodiles

Q4: Consider the following statements regarding Hog Deer

1. It is a solitary creature but sometimes spotted feeding in small groups in open fields when food there is plentiful.
2. For the most part it is sedentary and does not migrate.
3. Humans have introduced free-ranging populations of this deer in Sri Lanka, Australia and the United States, including Texas, Florida, and Hawaii.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

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

Q5: Consider the following statements regarding Sohrai Paintings

1. Sohrai painting is a traditional indigenous art form is practised by women of different indigenous

communities native to the villages of Hazaribagh region of Jharkhand, India.

2. It is usually based on natural elements of the universe, this includes forests, rivers, animals amongst others.
3. These ancient paintings are made by tribal women with the use of natural substances like charcoal, clay, or soil.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

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

Answers

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

