



Balalatha's
CSB IAS ACADEMY
The Road Map to Mussoorie...

PRELIMS EDGE 2025

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PLACES IN NEWS

Sir Creek



- Sir Creek is a **96-km strip of water disputed between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch marshlands.**
- Originally named Ban Ganga, Sir Creek is named after a British representative.
- The Creek **opens up in the Arabian Sea and roughly divides the Kutch region of Gujarat from the Sindh Province of Pakistan.**

What's the dispute?

- The dispute lies in the interpretation of the maritime boundary line between Kutch and Sindh. Before India's independence, the provincial region was a part of the Bombay Presidency of British India.

- But after India's independence in 1947, Sindh became a part of Pakistan while Kutch remained a part of India.
- Pakistan claims the entire creek as per paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Bombay Government Resolution of 1914 signed between then the Government of Sindh and Rao Maharaj of Kutch.
- But India claims that the boundary lies mid-channel as depicted in another map drawn in 1925, and implemented by the installation of mid-channel pillars back in 1924.
- According to international law and the **Thalweg principle**, a boundary can only be fixed in the middle of the navigable channel, which meant that it has been divided between Sindh and Kutch, and thereby India and Pakistan.
- If Thalweg principle is to be upheld, Pakistan would lose a considerable portion of the territory that was historically part of the province of Sindh.
- Acceding to India's stance would mean shifting of the land/sea terminus point several kilometres to the detriment of Pakistan, leading in turn to a loss of several thousand square kilometres of its **Exclusive Economic Zone under the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).**

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)



- 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.

SCHEMES IN NEWS

National Pulses Mission



- The Union **Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development** recently announced that the Cabinet has approved the 'National Pulses Mission'
- The "Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses" is a six-year central scheme aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in pulses production, with a financial outlay of ₹11,440 crore.
- It will be for the period from **2025-26 to 2030-31**.

Features

- Under the mission, the Government has set a target to increase pulses production to

350 lakh tonnes by 2030-32 from 242 lakh tonnes achieved in 2023-24.

- The area under pulses cultivation will be expanded to 310 lakh hectares from 242 lakh hectares, while yield is targeted to improve to 1,130 kg per hectare from 881 kg per hectare.
- The mission will be implemented through a **cluster-based approach across 416 focused districts**.
- About 1,000 new packaging and processing units will be set up, with a maximum subsidy of Rs 25 lakh available for establishing processing and packaging facilities.
- To improve productivity, the emphasis will be on developing and disseminating the latest varieties of pulses that are high in productivity, pest-resistant and climate-resilient.
- Multi-location trials will be conducted in major pulse-growing states to ensure regional suitability.
- The Government will distribute 126 lakh quintals of certified seeds to pulse-growing farmers, covering 370 lakh hectares by 2030-31.
- States will prepare five-year rolling seed production plans, with breeder seed production **supervised by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**.
- Foundation and certified seed production will be undertaken by state and central-level agencies and tracked through the Seed Authentication, Traceability & Holistic Inventory (SATHI) portal.
- Additionally, 88 lakh seed kits will be distributed free of cost to farmers to support area expansion by an additional 35

lakh hectares, targeting rice fallow areas and promoting intercropping and crop diversification.

- The mission will particularly focus on increasing production of **tur, urad, and masur**.
- A major feature of the mission is the assured procurement of tur, urad and masur under the **Price Support Scheme (PSS) of the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)**.
- **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd.(NAFED) and National Cooperative Consumers Federation (NCCF)** will undertake 100 percent procurement in participating states for the next four years from farmers who register with these agencies.

Promotion of Research & Innovation in Pharma-MedTech Sector (PRIP) Scheme

- The PRIP scheme was launched by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, to transform India** into a global powerhouse for R&D in the Pharma MedTech sector.
- The scheme was notified on August 17, 2023 with total financial outlay of ₹5000 crores.
- The aim of the scheme is to promote industry-academia linkage for R&D in priority areas and to inculcate the culture of quality research and nurture our pool of scientists.

It focuses on two components:

- **Component A:** Strengthening research infrastructure through establishment of Centres of Excellence (CoE) in the seven existing National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs).
- **Component B:** Promoting research in the pharmaceutical sector by encouraging research in six priority areas wherein financial assistance will be provided for the industries, MSMEs, SMEs, startups working with government institutes, and for both in-house and academic research.
- **Priority Areas:**
 - New Chemical Entity, New Biological Entity, and Phyto-pharmaceuticals
 - Complex generics and Biosimilars
 - Precision medicine (Targeted innovative therapeutics)
 - Medical devices
 - Orphan Drugs
 - Drug development for anti-microbial resistance (AMR)
- An Empowered Committee under the chairmanship of CEO, NITI Aayog, with the secretary-level representation of Pharmaceuticals, Health, ICMR, DBT, CSIR, AYUSH, and DST, will provide guidance for the implementation of the scheme.

SPECIES IN NEWS

Pallas's Cats



- The Pallas's cat, or manul (*Otocolobus manul*), is a **small, long-haired cat** (family Felidae).
- It was named Pallas's cat after Peter Simon Pallas, who first described it in 1776 based on specimens collected near Lake Baikal, Russia.

Distribution:

- They are **primarily found in Central Asia**, with their range extending to western Iran, Mongolia, China, Russia (on the border of Mongolia and China), Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.
- In these regions, these cats inhabit mountainous plains and semi-desert foothills.
- In India, these elusive wild cats are found in the high-altitude regions of India, particularly in **Ladakh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh**

Features:

- It is a soft-furred animal about the size of a house cat and is pale silvery gray or light brown in colour.
- Head and body length ranges from 45 to 60 centimetres (18 to 24 inches) with an additional 23–30 cm for the tail; weight ranges from 2.5 to 3.5 kilograms (5.5 to 7.7 pounds).
- The Pallas's cat is distinguished by a broad head with high-set eyes and low-set ears.
- The end of its tail is ringed and tipped with black, and some individuals have vague, dark markings on the body.
- The fur of the underparts is about twice as long as that of the upperparts and possibly represents an adaptation to the cat's habitual lying and crouching on cold ground.

Conservation Status:

- IUCN Red List: Least Concern
- CITES: Appendix II

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1; Thalweg principle, often seen in the news is related to which of the following?

- Rocket Launches
- Border Disputes
- Climate Change
- Artificial Intelligence

Q2; The Equator passes through which of the following countries?

- Morocco
- Algeria
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Lesotho

Q3; Consider the following statements regarding the National Pulses Mission

1. Under the mission, the Government has set a target to increase pulses production to 350 lakh tonnes by 2030-32 from 242 lakh tonnes achieved in 2023-24.
2. A major feature of the mission is the assured procurement of tur, urad and masur under the Price Support Scheme (PSS) of the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA).

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only Statement 1
- Only Statement 2
- Both the Statements
- None of the Above

Q4; Consider the following statements regarding the Promotion of Research & Innovation in Pharma-MedTech Sector (PRIP) Scheme

1. The aim of the scheme is to promote industry-academia linkage for R&D in priority areas and to inculcate the culture of quality research and nurture our pool of scientists.
2. It is being implemented by Ministry of Health and Farmers Welfare

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only Statement 1
- Only Statement 2
- Both the Statements
- None of the Above

Q5; In India, The Palla's Cats are often spotted in which of the following regions?

- A. Himalayas
- B. Western Ghats
- C. Eastern Ghats
- D. Thar Desert

Answers

- 1. B
- 2. C
- 3. C
- 4. A
- 5. A

