

Manas tiger reserve

- The Manas Tiger Reserve in Assam has 2.4 tigresses for every tiger
- According to the latest camera trapping assessment stipulated by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the 2,837.31 sq. km reserve with a critical tiger habitat area of 536.22 sq. km has 52 adult tigers along with eight cub
- The Manas Tiger Reserve is contiguous with the 1,000 sq. km Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan.

Manas Wildlife Sanctuary

- Manas Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the State of Assam in North-East India, a biodiversity hotspot.
 - Covering an area of 39,100 hectares, it spans the Manas River and is bounded to the north by the forests of Bhutan.
 - The Manas Wildlife Sanctuary is part of the core zone of the 283,700 hectares Manas Tiger Reserve, and lies alongside the shifting river channels of the Manas River.
 - The site provides critical and viable habitats for rare and endangered species, including tiger, greater one-horned rhino, swamp deer, pygmy hog and Bengal florican.
- The Manas-Beki system is the major river system flowing through the property and joining the Brahmaputra River further downstream.
 - The monsoon and river system form four principal geological habitats: Bhabar savannah, Terai tract, marshlands and riverine tracts.
 - The dynamic ecosystem processes support broadly three types of vegetation: semi-evergreen forests, mixed moist and dry deciduous forests and alluvial grasslands
 - It also harbours endemic species like pygmy hog, hispid hare and golden langur as well as the endangered Bengal florican.
 - The property, which has six national and international designations (i.e. World Heritage Site, National Park, Tiger Reserve (core), Biosphere Reserve (national), Elephant Reserve (core) and Important Bird Area) has the highest legal protection and strong legislative framework under the provisions of Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and Indian Forest Act, 1927/Assam Forest Regulation 1891.

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'Bauhinia Vahlii'

- The nationwide ban on single-use plastic has come as a boon for local folks, especially women in villages of the hill State of Himachal Pradesh, who are involved in making traditional leaf plates and bowls as the demand for these eco-friendly products is currently on the rise and fetching them improved returns.
- To aid the makers of leaf plates and bowls, the Himachal Pradesh Forest Department, in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), is motivating community groups to prepare leaf plates and bowls using machines instead of doing it manually in order to meet the increasing demand for leaf plates.
- Under a project titled 'Improvement of Himachal Pradesh Forest Ecosystems Management and Livelihoods', the department is also ensuring that there's no shortfall in the supply of quality leaves, by planting specific species such as 'Bauhinia Vahlii' in the forest adjoining the villages of trained community groups
- Bauhinia Vahlii is a vigorous climbing shrub, able to grow onto the top of trees in the forest.

Chabahar port

- India welcomed the expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to include Iran next year
- While India pushed for Chabahar port to be a conduit for trade to central Asia, Pakistan's Foreign Minister promoted the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor for trans-regional trade, including in a meeting with Taliban-appointed Acting Foreign Minister.
- Chabahar has two ports Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti - each with five berths.
- The project investment arm of the shipping ministry India Ports Global is partnering with a joint venture between the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust and Gujarat's Kandla Port Trust to develop two container berths with a length of 640 metres and three multi-cargo berths by investing \$85 million.



- India can bypass Pakistan in transporting goods to Afghanistan.

- Chabahar port will boost India's access to Iran, the key gateway to the International North-South Transport Corridor that has sea, rail and road routes between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia.
- Chabahar port will be beneficial to India in countering Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea which China is trying to ensure by helping Pakistan develop the Gwadar port. Gwadar port is less than 400 km from Chabahar by road and 100 km by sea.
- With Chabahar port being developed and operated by India, Iran also becomes a military ally to India. Chabahar could be used in case China decides to flex its navy muscles by stationing ships in Gwadar port to reckon its upper hand in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and the Middle East.
- With Chabahar port becoming functional, there will be a significant boost in the import of iron ore, sugar and rice to India. The import cost of oil to India will also see a considerable decline.
- Chabahar port will ensure in the establishment of a politically sustainable connectivity between India and Afghanistan. This will, in turn, lead to better economic ties between the two countries.
- From a diplomatic perspective, Chabahar port could be used as a point from where humanitarian operations could be coordinated.
- The Zaranj-Delaram road constructed by India in 2009 can give access to Afghanistan's Garland Highway, setting up road access to four major cities in Afghanistan - Herat, Kandahar, Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif.

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(IIBX)

- Prime Minister y launched the India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX), a first in the country and NSE IFSCSGX Connect at Gandhinagar's GIFT city, an international financial services hub set up by the Gujarat government outside the State capital.
- India is the world's second biggest consumer of gold and the move to set up the IIBX is seen as India's effort to bring transparency to the market for the precious metal.
- Moreover, setting up of IIBX could lead to standard gold pricing in the country and make it easier for small bullion dealers and jewellers to trade in the precious metal.

- India is a leading importer of the metal and imported 1,069 tonnes of gold in 2021, up from 430 tonnes a year ago.
- The yellow metal is tightly regulated in the country and currently only nominated banks and agencies approved by the Reserve Bank of India can import gold and sell to dealers and jewellers across the country.

What Is Bullion?

- Bullion is gold and silver that is officially recognized as being at least 99.5% and 99.9% pure and is in the form of bars
- Bullion is often kept as a reserve asset by governments and central banks.

Gujarat International

- **Finance Tec-City (GIFT)**
- GIFT City is an integrated development on 886 acres of land with 62 mn sq. ft. of Built Up area which includes Office spaces, Residential Apartments, Schools, Hospital, Hotels, Clubs, Retail and various Recreational facilities, which makes this City a truly “Walk to Work” City.
- GIFT City consist of a conducive Multi-Service SEZ (Special Economic

Zone) and an exclusive Domestic Area.

- This City is a Vertical City which will optimize land area consumption for development. The City is located on the bank of river Sabarmati connecting the Business capital (Ahmedabad) and Political capital (Gandhinagar) of Gujarat State, The Growth Engine of India.
- GIFT City is a new Financial & Technology Gateway of India to the World.
- GIFT City is a planned business district in Gujarat, India. It is the new business destination offering competitive edge to financial services and Technology related activities.
- GIFT City is equipped with some of the latest technology known to man. From the latest public transport, to automated waste collection to an efficient district cooling system.

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State assembly session

- Kerala, which slipped to the eighth slot in holding Assembly sittings during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, returned to the top spot in 2021, with its House

sitting for 61 days, the highest in the country

- Despite enjoying the record of having the highest number of sittings in 2021, Kerala (where the Left Democratic Front is in power since May 2016) had promulgated 144 ordinances, also the highest in the country.
- Of the 28 State Assemblies and one Union Territory's legislature, 17 met for less than 20 days.
- Of them, five Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Delhi met for less than 10 days.
- The figures for Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Punjab were 17, 16 and 11, respectively.
- The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2000-02), headed by former Chief Justice of India M.N. Venkatachaliah, had prescribed that the Houses of State (/Union Territory) legislatures with less than 70 members, for example, Puducherry, should meet for at least 50 days a year and other Houses (Tamil Nadu), at least 90 days.
- (Ten fall under the first category; 20 under the second).
- The Presiding Officers' conference, held in Gandhinagar in January 2016, suggested State legislatures hold a

minimum of 60 days of sittings in a year.

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Core sector

- India's eight core sectors' output growth moderated to 12.7% in June, from 18.1% in May, with all sectors except crude oil registering an uptick in production.
- Coal, cement, electricity and refinery products rose 15% or more, compared with the June 2021 output levels, while natural gas (1.2%), steel (3.3%) and fertilizers (8.2%) grew at a milder pace.
- Crude oil output dropped 1.7% from a year earlier, returning to contractionary territory after recording the first uptick in several months this May.
- Eight core industries comprise 40.27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- The eight core sector industries in decreasing order of their weightage: Refinery Products> Electricity> Steel> Coal> Crude Oil> Natural Gas> Cement> Fertilizers.

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