

Paleo proxies

- “Paleo proxies”- are biological and chemical signatures of the temperature somewhere having been warmer or colder than a specific baseline temperature.
- Such a baseline is typically from modern times when thermometer records existed.
- These measures are called “proxies” because they do not directly measure temperatures.
- Instead, they are simply the responses of physical, biological, and chemical processes to temperatures at that time having been warmer or colder than the baseline value.
- The study of Holocene epoch warming helps understand how ancient civilizations responded to climate change, but it's challenging to pinpoint specific daily temperature records without direct thermometer measurements.
- The Holocene is the current geological epoch. It began approximately 11,700 years before 2000 CE. It follows the Last Glacial Period, which concluded with the Holocene glacial retreat.

THE HINDU

Forest conservation bill

1. The Bill amends the short title of the Act to be called the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
2. It clarifies the scope of applicability of the Act upon various lands.
3. The Bill extends the applicability of the Act to certain types of land. These include land notified as a forest under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or in government records after the 1980 Act came into effect.
4. It exempt certain categories of lands from the purview of the Act which includes the following:
 - 4.1 Such forest land situated alongside a rail line or a public road maintained by the Government, which provides access to a habitation, or to a rail, and roadside amenity up to a maximum size of 0.10 hectare.
 - 4.2 The forest land which is situated within a distance of one hundred kilometers along international borders or Line of Control or Line of Actual Control, as the case may be, proposed to be used for construction of strategic linear project of national importance and concerning national security.
 - 4.3 Land up to ten hectares, proposed to be used for construction of security related infrastructure.
 - 4.4 Land as is proposed to be used for construction of defence related project or a camp for paramilitary forces or public utility projects, as may be specified by the Central Government, the extent of which does not exceed five hectares in a Left Wing Extremism affected area as may be notified by the Central Government.
 - 4.5 Such tree, tree plantation or reforestation raised on lands that are not declared or notified as a forest in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or under any other law for the time being in force or has been recorded in Government record as forest, as on or after the 25th October, 1980.

THE HINDU

Aspartame

- The World Health Organization (WHO) recently declared aspartame, an artificial sweetener used in the food industry, as a possible carcinogen.
- The report in which aspartame was evaluated and several such declarations that christen a substance as being carcinogenic are

authored by a committee of experts under the authority of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

- The agency, headquartered in Lyon, France, was established under the WHO in 1965 with a mandate to study the causes of cancer.
- The IARC uses a grading system. Grade 1 substances are factors known to cause cancer in humans, with sufficient evidence supporting their carcinogenicity.
- This category includes smoking, asbestos, and processed meats, all of which have been linked to a higher cancer hazard.
- Grade 2 substances, or exposures, are classified as being probably or possibly carcinogenic to humans.
- Within Grade 2, there are two subcategories. '2A' includes agents that are probably carcinogenic in humans, supported by ample evidence of carcinogenicity in experimental animals but limited data regarding humans.
- Red meats, DDT pesticides, and night-shift work fall into the 2A category.
- On the other hand, '2B' includes agents that are possibly carcinogenic in humans but for which there is insufficient evidence of carcinogenicity in animals and

limited or inadequate evidence in humans.

- For example, cell phone radiation and occupational exposure as a hairdresser fall under 2B.
- A Grade 3 recommendation is assigned to agents that can't be classified as carcinogenic due to limited or inadequate data, even in experiments.
- Coffee, mercury, and paracetamol are examples of agents in this category

THE HINDU

IIM bills

- In 2017, Parliament passed the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) Act. The Act, which hugely expanded the autonomy already enjoyed by the IIMs, contains an important clause.
- It requires the Board of Governors (Bog) of the IIMs to commission an independent review of the institutes at least once every three years and place the report in the public domain
- The 2017 legislation was an extraordinary act of self-abnegation by the government.
- All key appointments of the chairperson and board members, the director, and the chairperson of the Coordination Forum of the IIMs

were left to the Bog.

- The government reduced the presence of the Central and State governments on the Board from four members to two.
- The 2023 Bill seeks to undo many of the provisions of the earlier Act. It creates the post of Visitor, the President of India.
- The Visitor will appoint the chairperson of the Bog, one nominee on the selection committee for the director, and the chairperson of the Coordination Forum for the IIMs. He or she will also approve all director appointments.
- The Visitor can initiate any review of or inquiry into the affairs of an institute and remove the director on his or her own

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