

# **Current Affairs MCQs [ 24 and 25 December 2017 ]**

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# India cautious over Maldives curbs on envoy

## Ambassador facing travel restrictions

MEERA SRINIVASAN  
KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE  
COLOMBO/NEW DELHI

New Delhi appears to be weighing diplomatic options after Male reportedly placed restrictions on the movement of the Indian Ambassador to the Maldives.

Asked to comment on reports that travel restrictions had been imposed on the Indian High Commissioner, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs Ravesh Kumar said, “I don’t think this information is correct.”

According to reports, the Maldives’ Local Government Authority has mandated that foreign diplomats in Male obtain government approval before meeting any Maldivian official. The government suspended three members of a local body allegedly for meeting Indian Ambassador Akhilesh Mishra without permission.

However, Ibrahim H. Shihab, International Spokesperson at the President’s office, said the Indian envoy was a friend of the Maldives.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 10

Arrange the following **island countries** of the Indian Ocean in the increasing order of their distance from the Malabar coast.

1. Madagascar
2. Seychelles
3. Mauritius
4. Maldives

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 2-3-4-1
- (b) 4-2-3-1
- (c) 3-1-4-2
- (d) 2-1-3-4

Apart from Sri Lanka, which other country in India’s neighbourhood has the World Health Organisation officially declared as **Malaria-free**?

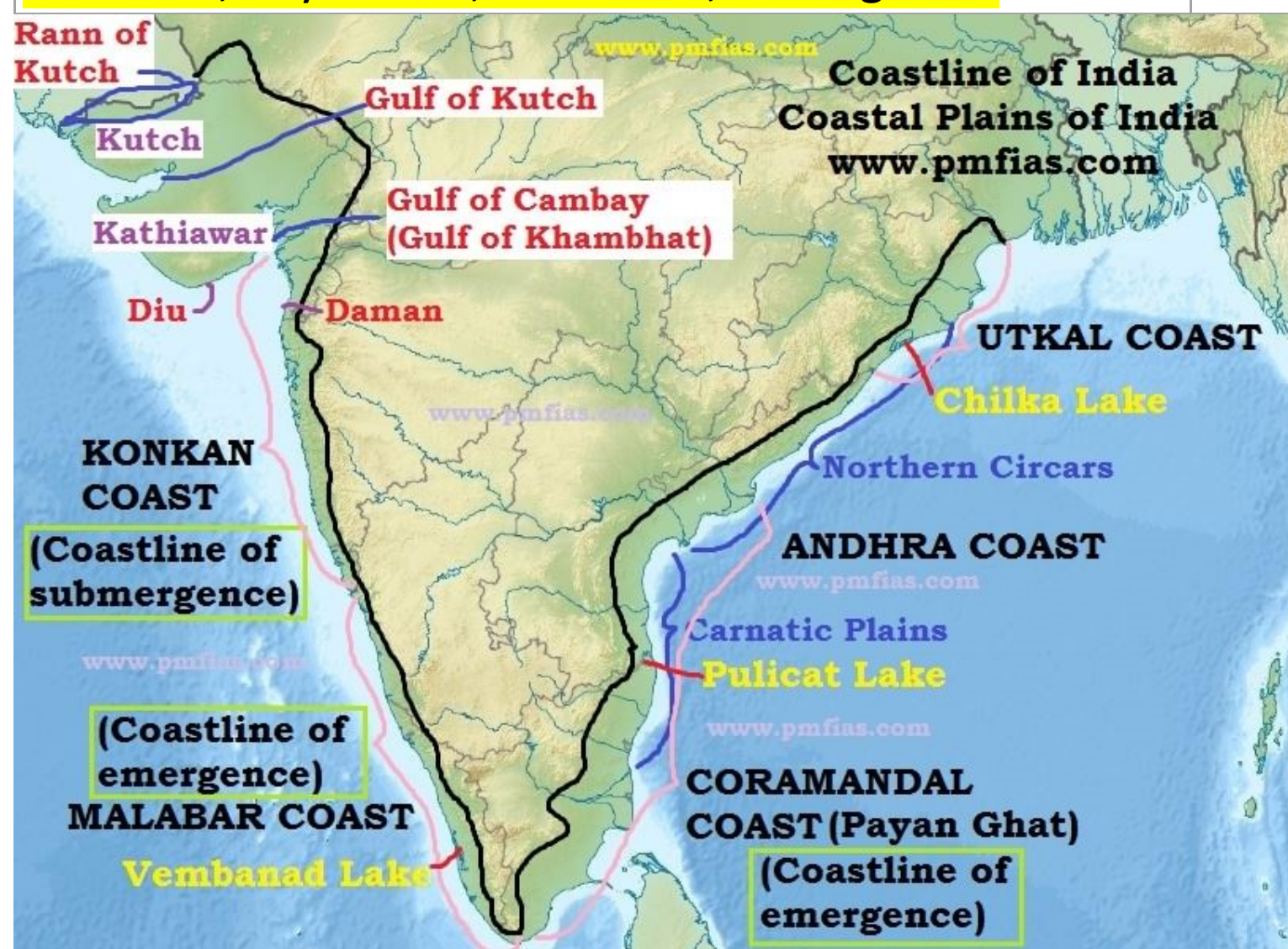
- a) Bhutan
- b) Nepal
- c) Myanmar
- d) Maldives

According to **WHO’s World Malaria Report 2016**, India contributed 89% of the incidence of malaria in the South-East Asia region. The Indian record stands in sharp contrast to some of its neighbours —



Based on the world map, the given countries may be placed in increasing order of their distance from the Malabar coast in India, in the following order:  
Maldives, Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar.

the Maldives was certified malaria-free in 2015, and Sri Lanka followed last year.





Consider the following pairs:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercise Maitree is an <b>Indo-Thailand</b> joint Military Exercise which includes combined training, familiarisation with weapons and equipment used by both the countries, analysing groupings, drills and tactics while operating in counter-terrorism environment, and modalities for conduct of Area Domination operations in urban environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Joint Military Exercise</b>	<b>Country</b>	
1. Maitree	Thailand	
2. Lamitye	Maldives	
3. Nomadic Elephant	Mongolia	

<p>Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>(b) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exercise 'Lamitye'</b> is a series of <b>Indo-Seychelles</b> Joint Training Exercises conducted with an aim to improve interoperability between both Armies in jointly fighting Counter Insurgency/Counter Terrorism.</li> <li>• The <b>Indo-Mongolia</b> joint training Exercise, '<b>Nomadic Elephant</b>' is conducted to promote military associations between India and Mongolia.</li> </ul>
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<p>Which of the following is correct regarding <b>EKOVERIN 2017</b>?</p> <p>(a) It is the joint military exercise between India and Maldives.</p> <p>(b) It is a WHO initiative to spread awareness against the spread of Zika Virus.</p> <p>(c) It is the name of recently discovered comet by Rosetta.</p> <p>(d) It is a UNESCO initiative for rehabilitation of refugees in Europe.</p> <p><b>EKOVERIN 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India - Maldives joint military exercise</li> <li>• Held in Belagavi, Karnataka</li> </ul>	Al-Nagah-II 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India-Oman joint military exercise</li> <li>• Held in Dhauladhar Ranges in Bakloh belt of Himachal Pradesh</li> </ul>
	Ajeya Warrior 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India-UK Military Exercise</li> <li>• Held in Bikaner</li> </ul>
	AUSINDEX 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India-Australia Naval Exercise</li> <li>• Will be held in Freemantle, Australia</li> </ul>
	CORPAT (India and Indonesia Coordinated Patrol)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India and Indonesia maritime exercise</li> <li>• Held in Andaman and Nicobar</li> </ul>



Exercise Name	Details
DRUZBA 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint military exercise between special forces of Pakistan and Russia</li> <li>• Held in Minralney Vody, Russia</li> </ul>
EKUVERIN 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India - Maldives joint military exercise</li> <li>• Held in Belagavi, Karnataka</li> </ul>
Hand in Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India and China joint military exercise</li> <li>• Aims to enhance cooperation and maintain peace and tranquillity along border areas of both countries.</li> </ul>
IMBAX 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India-Myanmar Bilateral Military Exercise</li> <li>• Held in Meghalaya</li> </ul>
Indra 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint exercise between India and Russia</li> <li>• Army, Navy and Air Force all will take part</li> <li>• Held in Russian city of Vladivostok</li> </ul>
INDRA NAVY 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India - Russia joint navy exercise</li> <li>• Held in Bay of Bengal</li> </ul>
Konkan 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Maritime Exercise between Indian and British Navy</li> <li>• Held in Mumbai and Goa</li> </ul>
Maitree 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India-Thailand Military Exercise</li> <li>• Held in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh</li> </ul>
Malabar Trilateral Exercise 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trilateral Naval Exercise between India, USA and Japan</li> <li>• Will be held in Bay of Bengal</li> </ul>
Mitra Shakti 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India and Sri Lanka Joint military exercise</li> <li>• Held in Pune</li> </ul>
Naseem-Al-Bahr (Sea Breeze) 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Naval Exercise between India and Oman</li> <li>• Held in Said Bin Sultan Naval Base, Wudam in Oman</li> </ul>
Nomadic Elephant 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Military Exercise between India and Mongolia</li> <li>• Held in Mizorama</li> </ul>
PRABAL DOSTYK-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India, Kazakhstan joint bilateral military exercise</li> <li>• Held in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh</li> </ul>
SAMPRITI-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India and Banglaseh Joint military exercise</li> <li>• To practice counter-terrorism and disaster management operations</li> <li>• Held in Vairengte, Mizoram</li> </ul>
SIMBEX-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India and Singapore Joint Naval Exercise</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Held in South China Sea</li></ul>
SLINEX-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• India and Srilanka Joint Naval Exercise</li><li>• Held in Vishakhapatnam</li></ul>
Surya Kiran 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• India and Nepal Joint military exercise</li><li>• Held in Saljhandi, Nepal</li><li>• Conducted annually alternatively in India and Nepal</li></ul>
TROPEX 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TROPEX 17 exercise is aimed at testing combat readiness of the combined fleets of the Indian Navy, and the assets of the Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard</li><li>• Held on Western Coast</li></ul>
Yudh Abhyas 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Joint military training exercise between India and United States</li><li>• Held in Washington, USA</li></ul>

WHAT

The lowdown  
on diphtheria  
and its  
resurgence



**WHAT IS IT?** Diphtheria is a highly infectious disease, which usually shows up as a sore throat and difficulty in breathing. It spreads through contact or cough and sneeze droplets, and is caused by the bacterium *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*. In severe cases, the toxin secreted by this bacterium kills cells in the throat, and the debris forms a wing-shaped grey membrane, disrupting breathing and earning diphtheria the name “The Strangling Angel.” If the patient isn’t treated quickly with anti-diphtheria se-

rum, the toxin can spread through the bloodstream hurting the heart and kidneys.

Before the 1940s, when diphtheria vaccination grew widespread, millions of children died of the disease across the world. But as vaccination rates and sanitation improved, incidence dropped everywhere, including in India. Yet, India continues to be a world leader in diphtheria today, with 3,380 cases and 177 deaths reported in 2016. This year has seen worrying outbreaks in Karnataka, Kerala and Telangana, among other States.

**HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?** India has had a diphtheria vaccination programme since the 1980s. Despite this, we continue to do poorly in controlling the disease because the vaccination does not reach everyone. Under the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP), all children below one year of age are supposed to



## UPSC Prelims 2014

Consider the following diseases:

1. Diphtheria
2. Chickenpox
3. Smallpox

Which of the above diseases has/have been eradicated in India?

- (a) 1 and 2 only  
(b) 3 only  
(c) 1, 2 and 3 only  
(d) None of the above

Small pox was eradicated in 1979

## CAPSULE



### Origin of photosynthesis

According to a new analysis, the world oldest algae fossils are about 1.25 billion years old. This puts a sharp date on the origin of photosynthesis as the algae are believed to be the oldest ancestor of modern plants and animals. This was earlier dated at between 720 million and 1 billion years.

Consider the following pairs:

Disease	Pathogen
1. Tuberculosis	Bacteria
2. Malaria	Protozoa
3. Diphtheria	Virus

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?


- (a) 1 only

- A wide range of organisms belonging to bacteria, viruses, fungi, protozoans, helminths etc. could cause diseases in man. Such **disease causing organisms** are called **pathogens**.
- Tuberculosis (TB)
  - is an infectious disease caused by the **bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (MTB)**.
  - Tuberculosis generally **affects the lungs**, but can also affect other parts of the body.
  - Most infections do not have symptoms; in which case it is known as latent tuberculosis.
  - The symptoms of active TB are a chronic cough with blood-containing sputum, fever, night sweats, and weight loss.

(b) 1 and 2 only (c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Plasmodium</u>, a tiny <b>protozoan</b> is responsible for <b>malaria</b>. Different species of Plasmodium (P. vivax, P. malaria and P. falciparum) are responsible for different types of malaria. Of these, malignant malaria caused by Plasmodium falciparum is the most serious one and can even be fatal.</li> <li>• <u>Diphtheria</u> is an <b>infectious disease</b> caused by <b>bacterial microorganisms</b> known as Corynebacterium diphtheriae.</li> </ul>
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किसी स्तर पर न रहा हो। अंग्रेजी फरटि से बोलती हो, पर क्लब में डांस बगैरह का शौक पाले हुए न हो। उसमें बिट और ह्यू मर हो, पर बातूनी न हो। मेकअप का ज्यादा शौक न हो। रंग खूब गोरा और बाल लम्बे और काले हों।  
 उनका तो उनका, उनके पति का भी धैर्य टें बोल गया। जहाँ मामला इतना पेचीदा था, वहाँ लड़का ही पसन्द कर सकता था। इसलिए बात को उसके आने तक टालना ही पड़ा। उनमें अब लड़कों की चिट्ठी आने पर कोई खास उत्साह न जागता। यह अहसास घर करने लगा था कि लड़के उनके हाथ से निकल गये।

# fatal

/'feɪt(ə)l/ 

*adjective*

- causing death.
- "a fatal accident"
- synonyms:* deadly, lethal, mortal, causing death, death dealing, killing; [More](#)
- leading to failure or disaster.
- "there were three fatal flaws in the strategy"
- synonyms:* disastrous, devastating, ruinous, catastrophic, calamitous, cataclysmic, destructive, grievous, dire, crippling, crushing, injurious, harmful, costly; *literary* direful
- "don't make the fatal mistake of assuming others think as you do"

In which of the following zones of lakes and ponds photosynthesis does <b>NOT</b> take place?  1. Profundal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A typical lake has <b>distinct zones</b> of biological communities linked to its physical structure: <b>littoral, limnetic, benthic and profundal</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>littoral zone</b> is the near shore area where sunlight penetrates all the way to the sediment and allows aquatic</li> </ul>
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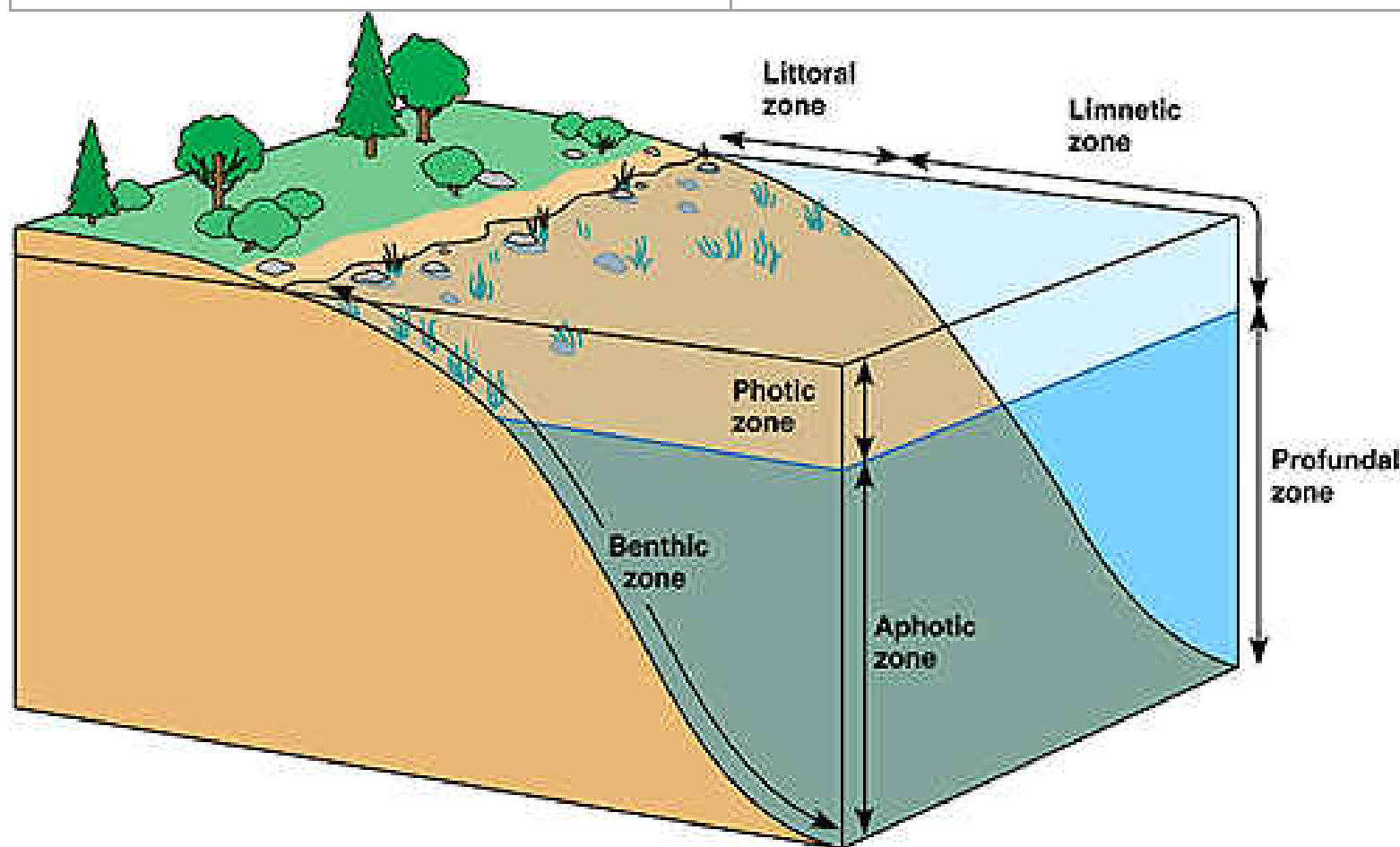
2. Limnetic
3. Littoral
4. Benthic

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 4 only
- (d) 3 and 4 only

plants (macrophytes) to grow. The 1 % light level defines the euphotic zone of the lake, which is the layer from the surface to the depth where light levels become too low for photosynthesis.

- The **limnetic zone** includes all the waters beyond the littoral zone and down to the light compensation level. The community of the limnetic zone is composed only of plankton, nekton, and sometimes neuston.
- The third component of the lake habitat is **benthic zone** (the bottom of the lake), covered by fine layers of mud in which animals live.
- The deepest part of the open water forms **profundal zone**. **Photosynthesis does not take place in benthic and profundal zones as light does not penetrate here.**





# IACS develops hydrogel to remove toxic dyes and metal ions

It could begin absorbing dyes within 15 minutes, metals in about 6 hours

ASWATHI PACHA

Scientists from Indian Association for Cultivation of Sciences (IACS), Kolkata, have developed a new gel that can remove toxic organic dyes and metal ions from waste water. They found the hydrogel began absorbing various commonly used dyes within 15 minutes. The dyes tested were malachite green, congo red, brilliant blue and rhodamine B. In the case of metals, the hydrogel was able to considerably remove commonly found ones such as cobalt and nickel from industrial effluents in about six hours.



**Useful tool:** "The hydrogel can be used by the industries for effective treatment before wastewater disposal," says Prof. Arindam Banerjee (Centre) ▪

tion point. The gel was able to remove 78-92% of the dyes and more than 80% metals ions," explains Nibedita Nandi, research scholar at IACS and first author of the paper published in *Peptide Science*.

**Reusable resource**

"The hydrogel can be washed with sodium bicarbonate and ethyl acetate and reused. As the dyes and metal ions are soluble in water they get washed out from the gel and the hydrogel can be used for up to four cycles. It can be used by the industries for effective treatment before waste-

**Pusa Hydrogel**, a super absorbent polymer developed by the Indian Agriculture Research Institute, helps in:

- (a) improving water use efficiency of crops.
- (b) improving shelf life of fruits and vegetables.
- (c) making crops pest resistant.
- (d) improving nutritional content of crops.

- **Pusa Hydrogel** is a semi-synthetic super absorbent polymer which has been developed by the Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI).
- It is mixed with the soil on which the seeds are sown.
- The gel then absorbs water and expands to 300 times its original size.
- It sticks to the roots of the plants and when the soil moisture falls as the temperature rises, the gel sheds water to nourish the crop. Hence, as less water is required, it increases water-use efficiency.
- The Gel is non-toxic and bio-degradable and it also increases plant yield by 10-25 per cent.
- Pusa Hydrogel has been in use in India since 2012.

## CRISPR-Cas9

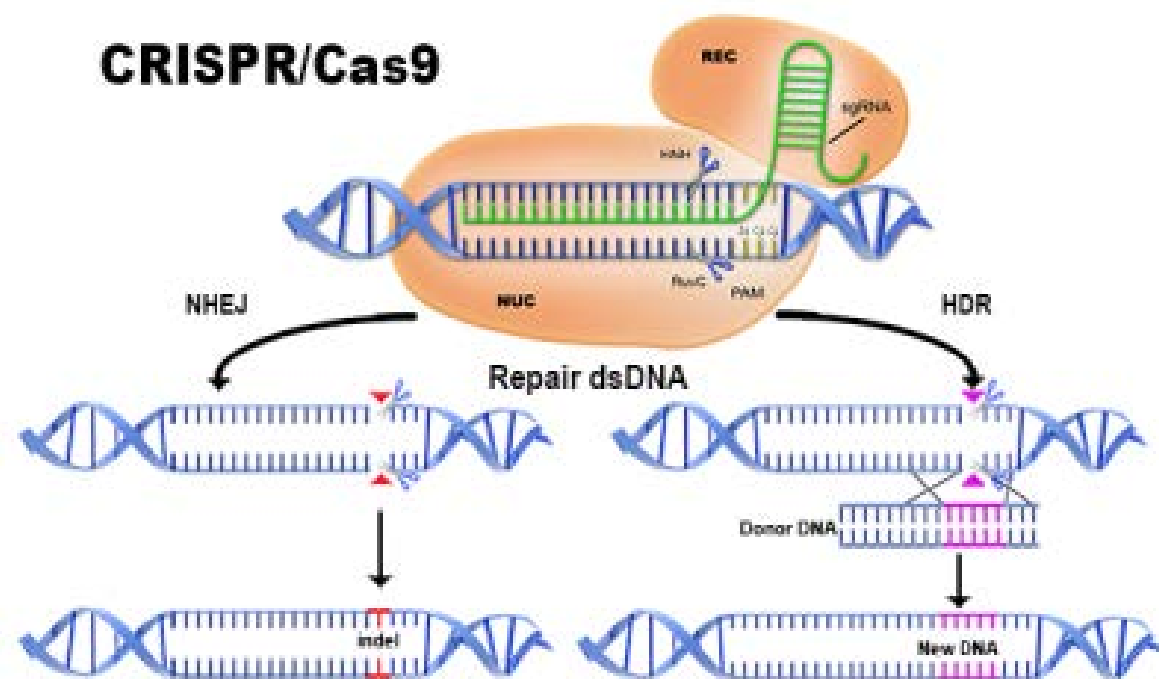
technique is often seen in news in the context of:

- (a) Space technology
- (b) Defence technology
- (c) Cyber warfare
- (d) Gene editing

## CRISPR /Cas9

- Crispr/Cas9 is related to **genome editing**. (Genome: Complete DNA sequence)
- CRISPR stands for clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats
- In simple terms, a DNA sequence is cut at a particular spot and then with help of a guide RNA (gRNA) that place is re-made with desired base pairing. This way genes can be altered.
- It allows scientists to selectively edit genome parts and replace them with new DNA stretches
- **Cas9** is the enzyme which acts as a "molecular scissors" and helps in cutting the DNA sequence.
- CRISPR is a collection of DNA sequences that direct Cas9 where to cut and paste

CRISPR-Cas9 is a genome editing tool. It is a unique technology that enables geneticists and medical researchers to edit parts of the genome by removing, adding or altering sections of the DNA sequence. It is currently the simplest, most versatile and precise method of genetic manipulation.



**CRISPR–Cas9** technique was named “2015 Breakthrough of the Year” by the U.S. journal Science. This technique is related to

- a) Tuberculosis vaccine
- b) DNA editing
- c) Zika vaccine
- d) None of the above

A Chinese group has become the first to inject a person with cells that contain genes edited using the revolutionary CRISPR–Cas9 technique.

#### CRISPR

- CRISPR, short for clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats, was named “2015 Breakthrough of the Year” by the U.S. journal Science.
- It allows scientists to selectively edit genome parts and replace them with new DNA stretches.
- It’s already been done with pigs, fish, mice, and mosquitoes, as well as human embryos.
- Cas9 is an enzyme that can edit DNA, allowing the alteration of genetic patterns by genome modification.

‘**Zinc Fingers**’ and ‘**TALENs**’ are terms that sometimes appear in the news in the context of

- a) Energy Innovation
- b) Geoengineering technologies
- c) Gene-editing technologies
- d) Cyber security

**Zinc fingers, Talens and Crispr** all share the same general concept – **they act as a type of satnav** (satellite navigation) that **finds its way to specific sites in our DNA** and a pair of molecular scissors that can edit the DNA.



<p><b><u>Yemen</u></b> shares its borders with which of the following countries?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Saudi Arabia</li> <li>2. UAE</li> <li>3. Oman</li> <li>4. Kuwait</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 1, 2 and 3 only</li> <li>b) 1 and 3 only</li> <li>c) 2 only</li> <li>d) 1, 2, 3 and 4</li> </ol>	<p>Which of the following functions is/are performed by the <a href="#">National human Rights Commission in India</a>?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To visit any jail for the study of the living conditions of the inmates and make recommendations.</li> <li>2. Undertake and promote research in the field of human rights</li> <li>3. Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office.</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the option given below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1 and 2 only</li> <li>2. 2 and 3 only</li> <li>3. 1 and 3 only</li> <li>4. 1, 2 and 3</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To <b><u>visit any jail or other institutions</u></b> under the the control of the State Government, where persons are detained or lodged for purposes of treatment, reformation or protection, for the study of the living conditions of the inmates and make recommendation is one of the function performed by NHRC.</li> <li>• <b><u>Undertake and promote research in the field of human rights</u></b> is also one of the functions performed by NHRC.</li> <li>• Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office is also one of the function performed by NHRC.</li> </ul>
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With reference to recently introduced **Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP)** consider the following statements:

1. The Health Ministry has decided to provide drug regimen on daily basis.
2. The programme will use fixed dose

- The **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** has recently announced the launch of **daily regimen for TB patients** across the country under **The Revised National TB Control Programme** (RNTCP).
- The Health Ministry has been providing the thrice weekly regimen for the treatment of tuberculosis (TB), however it has now decided to change the treatment strategy for TB patients from thrice weekly to daily drug regimen using fixed dose combinations (FDC) for treatment.  
**What are Fixed Dose Combination (FDC) drugs?**
  - FDC drugs are drugs having two or more active ingredients in a single dosage.

<p>combinations (FDC) for treatment.</p> <p>Which of the statement(s) is/are incorrect?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Only 1</li><li>2. Only 2</li><li>3. Both 1 nor 2</li><li>4. Neither 1 nor 2</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ They are widely used to improve patient compliance as it is easier for them to take one drug than several.</li><li>◦ They are acceptable only when the drugs so combined have a therapeutic advantage.</li><li>◦ India is one of the world's largest markets for FDC drugs that make up almost half the market share.</li></ul>
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The "[Pharma Jan Samadhan](#)" [Scheme](#) launched by Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers is:

- (a) a scheme to incentivize private pharmaceutical companies to manufacture drugs under Make in India programme.
- (b) an effort to store drugs by the government to provide for their availability during natural calamities.
- (c) a web enabled system for redressal of consumers' grievances relating to pricing and availability of medicines.
- (d) an effort to provide easy access of Fixed dose combinations of therapeutic advantage to public through primary health centres.

**Pharma Jan Samadhan Scheme:**

- It is a **web enabled system** for **redressal of consumers' grievances** relating to **pricing and availability of medicines**, created by **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority** (NPPA).
  - It puts in place a speedy and effective complaint redressal system with respect to availability and pricing of medicines.
- It would serve as a robust e-governance tool for protection of consumers' interests through effective implementation of the Drugs (Price Control) Order 2013. 'Pharma Jan Samadhan' will provide consumers and others with an on-line facility to redress their complaints relating to over-pricing of medicines, non-availability or shortage of medicines, sale of new medicines without prior price approval of NPPA, and refusal of supply for sale of any medicine without good and sufficient reason. NPPA will initiate action on any complaint within 48 hrs of its receipt.



<p>With reference to <b>South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Centre (SARTTC)</b> consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.It is a joint venture of India and ILO.</li> <li>2.Its objective is to enhance capacity development and train officials dealing with macro-economics.</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statement(s) is/are not correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Only 1</li> <li>2.Only 2</li> <li>3.Both 1 nor 2</li> <li>4.Neither 1 nor 2</li> </ol>	<p>India and <b>International Monetary Fund (IMF)</b> have decided to set up South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Centre (SARTTC) in New Delhi. SARTTC will set up <b>for enhancing capacity development and training officials</b> in dealing with macroeconomic and financial issues in the South Asia regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will become the focal point for planning, coordinating, and implementing the IMF's capacity development activities in the region on a wide range of areas.</li> <li>• These wide range of areas are includes macroeconomic and fiscal management, financial sector regulation, monetary operations and supervision, and macroeconomic statistics.</li> <li>• It will help to address existing training needs and respond to the demand for IMF training in India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives and Sri Lanka.</li> <li>• SARTTAC will build upon the IMF's in-depth experience with capacity development on the experiences of the IMF's Regional Technical Assistance Centres (RTACs) and Regional Training Centres (RTCs).</li> <li>• Funding for the centre will come from contributions by Regional Member countries and Development Partners.</li> <li>• Australian Agency for International Development, South Korea and India also have pledged financial support for the Centre.</li> </ul>
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<p>With reference to the recently launched '<b><u>She Means Business' programme</u></b>, consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The main purpose of this programme is that the union government will provide offline marketing skill training to the women entrepreneurs</li> </ol>	<p>Main purpose is that <b>the state government of Odhisha</b> will provide <b>digital training to the women and to the SHG members</b>. For the programme, <b>Facebook</b> has partnered the <b>Odisha's MSME department</b> and Project Mission</p>
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<p>2. For the programme, Google has partnered the Odisha's MSME department and Project Mission Shakti to train women entrepreneurs</p> <p>Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?</p> <p>1. 1 only</p> <p>2. 2 only</p> <p>3. Both 1 and 2</p> <p>4. Neither 1 or 2</p>	<p>Shakti to train 25,000 women entrepreneurs and self-help group (SHG) members on digital marketing skills by the end of 2018. After imparting training, Facebook will make a database of entrepreneurs in the state and will monitor their growth, turnover and profit after one year.</p>
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<p>With reference to '<b>Project Loon</b>' consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. It proposes to provide internet connectivity to remote areas using balloons floating in troposphere.</p> <p>2. It aims to tap unused TV spectrum to provide internet access.</p> <p>3. The project is being implemented by Google Inc.</p> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 and 3 only</p>	<p><b>Project Loon</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is <b>a research and development project</b> being developed by Google X with the mission of providing Internet access to rural and remote areas.</li> <li>• The project uses high-altitude balloons placed in the <b>stratosphere</b> at an altitude of about 18 km (11 mi) to create an aerial wireless network with up to 4G-LTE speeds.</li> <li>• By partnering with Telecommunications companies to share <b>cellular spectrum</b>, Google is trying to enable people to connect to the balloon network directly from their phones and other LTE-enabled devices.</li> </ul>
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- (b) 2 only  
(c) 2 and 3 only  
(d) 3 only

- **Microsoft** is planning to use unused TV spectrum to provide internet access in remote areas.

With regard to **Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD)** in an aquatic ecosystem, consider the following statements:

1. BOD is the amount of oxygen required for the respiration of all aquatic organisms in an ecosystem.
2. Higher the BOD, lower is the pollution level in the aquatic ecosystem.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

- (a) 1 only  
(b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2  
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

- The amount of oxygen required to break down a certain amount of organic matter is called the **biological oxygen demand (BOD)**.
- Higher the BOD, higher is the pollution level.
- The amount of BOD in the water is an indicator of the level of pollution.
- If too much organic matter is added to the water all the available oxygen is used up.
- This causes fish and other forms of oxygen dependent aquatic life to die.



# Bejjur vultures show an increase in numbers

Conservationists identify 18 adults that have mated, built nests and laid eggs

S. HARPAL SINGH  
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Insulated as the birds are from any disturbance by outside world, Bejjur vultures, now in Penchikalpet range of Kagaznagar Forest Division in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district are able to add to their population in the normal course of things. In this instance, their number could increase by eight, given the number of nests which are being tended at present by the nature's scavengers on their picturesque habitat, the Pala Rapu cliff, abutting the Peddavagu stream.

The cliff, measuring 200 metres at the base and rising about 100 metres before tapering to half the width at the top, is located on a bend in the stream where it con-



**Peaceful abode:** A pair of vultures in their nest in the Kumram Bheem Asifabad district. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

fluences with the Pranahita river in the Motlaguda forest beat. A temporary perch or machan has been erected on the opposite bank of the stream from where re-

searchers and conservationists keep a close eye on the movements of the high-perching birds. The team of vulture conservationists at the remotely located habitat

have identified 18 adults, which inhabit the eight nests and one roosting point.

The eggs were laid in the first of this month and as the incubation period is about 50 days on an average, hatching of eggs is expected sometime early February next year.

### Critically endangered

"We expect eight chicks to hatch in February provided there is no egg mortality," pointed out Bejjur Forest Range Officer M. Ram Mohan, who has overseen conservation efforts at the habitat since the last three years. In fact, it was he who had chanced upon the habitat with a tiny population of the critically endangered long billed vulture or the Indian vulture (*Gyps Indicus*) in

2013 which, informally, came to be known after the name of the range where the habitat is located.

In the first year of conservation, 2014-15, the conservation team comprising a field researcher and wildlife biologist M. Ravikanth among others, sighted eight nests and two roosting sites. One of the eight chicks had died then.

In the following years, 2015-16 and 2016-17 the number of vultures at this habitat rose to 30 and 32 respectively. In the current year, 2017-18 there are 18 adults that have mated, built their nests and laid eggs, all between October and December first week.

Of all the chicks born at the Pala Rapu habitat, 20 have been missing since

2015. These birds are assumed to have migrated to another habitat, which is located in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra not far from the habitat in question.

"Our efforts in conservation of vultures are ceaseless as is evident from the spate of awareness programmes being conducted by us in the villages.

"While the district administration has assured of funds to lay a black-top road to the habitat, the villagers of Motlaguda in Dahegaon mandal have promised to give us a piece of land for construction of a permanent watch tower to replace the temporary perch to be used for research and by visitors," said the Kagaznagar Forest Divisional Officer A. Narasimha Reddy.

Consider the following statements with respect to [Himalayan Griffon vulture](#):

1. It is listed as critically endangered species by the IUCN.
2. Apart from the Himalayas, it is found in Southern India as well as Central Asia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only  
(b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2  
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

- **Himalayan Griffon:** The species has been listed as **Near Threatened** by the IUCN.
- It is one of the two largest Old World vultures and true raptors. They do not breed in the first three years and hence juvenile birds of the species do not remain in breeding grounds to avoid competition. In recent years the bird has been spotted in **southern states including Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh**. It is also found in **western China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan**.



रेड डाटा बुक \_\_\_\_ - द्वारा प्रकाशित किया जाता है?

- संयुक्त राष्ट्र पर्यावरण कार्यक्रम
- विश्व वन्यजीव कोष
- विश्व पर्यावरण सुविधा
- प्रकृति और प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के संरक्षण के लिए अंतर्राष्ट्रीय संघ

संकटग्रस्त जातियों की IUCN लाल सूची जिसे IUCN लाल सूची या रेड डाटा सूची (IUCN Red List) भी कहते हैं

- विश्व-भर में पौधों और पशुओं की जातियों की संरक्षण स्थिति की सबसे व्यापक तालिका है।
- अंतर्राष्ट्रीय प्रकृति संरक्षण संघ (IUCN) विश्व-स्तर पर विभिन्न जातियों की संरक्षण-स्थिति पर निगरानी रखने वाला सर्वोच्च संगठन है।
- क्षेत्रीय लाल सूचियों की एक शृंखला विश्व के विभिन्न देशों तथा संगठनों द्वारा किसी एक राजनीतिक प्रबंधन इकाई के अंतर्गत जातियों के विलुप्त होने के जोखिम का आकलन कर, तैयार की जाती हैं।

आईयूसीएन) कि लाल सूची में हर जीव जाति को नौ में से एक श्रेणी में डाला जाता है।

- विलुप्त (Extinct या EX) – जाति का कोई भी जीवित सदस्य नहीं बचा है
- वन-विलुप्त (Extinct in the Wild या EW) – जाति वनों से पूर्णतः खत्म हो चुकी है और इसके बचे हुए सदस्य केवल चिड़ियाघरों या अपने मूल निवास स्थान से अलग किसी कृत्रिम निवास स्थान पर ही जीवित हैं
- घोर-संकटग्रस्त (Critically Endangered या CR) – जाति का वनों से विलुप्त होने का घोर खतरा बना हुआ है
- संकटग्रस्त (Endangered या EN) – जाति का वनों से विलुप्त होने का खतरा बना हुआ है
- असुरक्षित (Vulnerable या VU) – जाति की वनों में संकटग्रस्त हो जाने की संभावना है
- संकट-निकट (Near Threatened या NT) – जाति की निकट भविष्य में संकटग्रस्त हो जाने की संभावना है
- संकटमुक्त (Least Concern या LC) – जाति को बहुत कम खतरा है - बड़ी तादाद और विस्तृत क्षेत्र में पाई जाने वाली जाति
- आंकड़ों का अभाव (Data Deficient या DD) – जाति के बारे में आंकड़ों की कमी से उसकी संरक्षण स्थिति और संकट का अनुमान नहीं लगाया जा सकता
- अनाकलित (Not Evaluated या NE) – जाति की संरक्षण स्थिति का अ°प्र°स°स° के संरक्षण मानदंड पर आँकन अभी नहीं किया गया है

Besides poisoning by Diclofenac, what other threats do vultures in India face?

1. Cattle herders poisoning meat to kill carnivores to protect their livestock
2. Lack of food due to unavailability of carcasses owing to hygienic and scientific disposal methods

Consider the following statements:

1. India is not a member of the G20.
2. China is the only Asian member of G20.
3. G20 is the working group of the OECD.

<p>3. Hunting, because vulture-meat in China is considered to have blood-purifying properties</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the codes given below:</p> <p>a) 1 and 2 Only</p> <p>b) 2 and 3 Only</p> <p>c) 1 and 3 Both</p> <p>d) 1 Only</p>	<p>Which of the above statements is/are correct?</p> <p>a) 1 Only</p> <p>b) 2 and 3 Only</p> <p>c) 3 Only</p> <p>d) None</p> <p><b>India is a member of the G20.</b></p> <p>Bangladesh is not a member. G20 and OECD are independent of each other.</p>
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