

Daily Current Affairs 9 January 2024



Important News: International

Kyrgyzstan Declares Snow Leopard As National Symbol

Why in News:

- Kyrgyzstan has officially declared the snow leopard as its national symbol, underscoring its commitment to conservation and ecological balance.

Key Points:

- A decree signed by President Sadyr Zhaparov of the Kyrgyz Republic, states: “The snow leopard is not only a symbol of natural wealth and cultural prosperity, but also an indicator of the stability and health of the mountain ecosystem, which occupies 1/3 of the global territory. The loss of snow leopards in the wild will lead to the risk of disturbing the fragile ecological balance, which will have a detrimental impact on various animal species and on humans.”
- President Zhaparov also directed the Cabinet of Ministers to recognize the snow leopard as a national symbol, and protect its population and ecosystem. The Cabinet is tasked with developing a logo, exploring symbol usage at different levels, and defining its ideological content.
- In ancient Kyrgyz culture, *Panthera uncia*, or the snow leopard, held significance as a totem animal linked to the legendary hero of the Kyrgyz people, Manas. Within Kyrgyz culture, the snow leopard symbolizes greatness, nobility, courage, bravery, and resilience.
- Kyrgyzstan has taken a leading role in snow leopard conservation at the international level, hosting the inaugural Global Snow Leopard Forum in 2013 in the capital, Bishkek. During this event, the Bishkek Declaration on Snow Leopard Protection was unanimously adopted.
- Additionally, the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme (GSLEP) was initiated with the collaboration of representatives



9 January Daily Current Affairs

from 12 snow leopard range countries and the global environmental community to safeguard these majestic mountain cats.

Source: DD News

Important News: National

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Why in News:

- On Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, the role played by overseas Indians in the development and progress of their adopted countries is celebrated.

Key Points:

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, an annual event celebrated on January 9th, holds great significance in recognizing and honoring the Indian diaspora spread across the globe.
- This day marks the contribution and achievements of overseas Indians in various fields, fostering a strong connection between the homeland and its diasporic communities.
- The concept of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was first introduced in 2003 by the then Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to commemorate the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India on January 9, 1915.
- The day serves as a platform to acknowledge the valuable role played by overseas Indians in the development and progress of their adopted countries.
- The Ministry of External Affairs has held 17 conventions to date to commemorate the prominent members of the Indian diaspora. Since 2015, the event is celebrated every two years.
- The last Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was celebrated in the Indore of Madhya Pradesh in 2023.

Source: Money Control



Government to Invest 60,000 Cr in River Cruise Tourism and Green Vessels

Why in News:

- Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal at the first Inland Waterways Development Council meeting at Kolkata informed that the government would invest Rs 60,000 crore by 2047 in river cruise tourism and development of green vessels.

Key Points:

- The government will invest Rs 45,000 crore in river cruises, which will take the passenger capacity from 2 lakh to 15 lakh by 2047.
- The central government aims to invest another Rs 15,000 crore in green transport over the next 10 years to develop 1,000 vessels and ferries.
- The council meeting, represented by officials of around 20 states and Union territories, also saw the unveiling of Harit Nauka' guidelines for the green transition of inland vessels and the River Cruise Tourism Roadmap 2047.
- The sessions covered topics such as fairway development, private sector engagement and best practices, optimising cargo transport efficiency in Inland Water Transport (IWT), fostering the promotion and development of eco-friendly vessels for passenger transportation, exploring the economic advantages of river cruise tourism, among others.
- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is the statutory authority in charge of the waterways in India.
- It was constituted under IWAI Act-1985 by the Parliament of India.
- Its headquarters is located in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

Source: Business Standard

India's GDP likely to grow by 7.3% in FY24: NSO data

Why in News:

- The National Statistics Organisation (NSO) has released its first advance forecast for India's gross domestic report (GDP) growth in the financial year 2024 (FY24), expecting the economy to grow at 7.3%, higher than the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest 7% forecast.



Key Points:

- The government anticipates a year-on-year Gross Value Added (GVA) growth of 6.9% for fiscal year 2024, slightly lower than the 7% recorded in fiscal year 2023.
- The RBI had forecast a growth of 6.5% in their first estimate in April 2023.
- In December, RBI elevated its growth forecast for FY24 to 7% from its initial estimate of 6.5% citing robust growth in high-frequency indicators.
- Another contributing factor is the unexpectedly strong GDP figure for the September quarter. The Indian economy demonstrated a faster-than-expected growth of 7.6% year-on-year during this period, following a 7.8% expansion in the previous quarter.
- A United Nations report has estimated India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth forecast for the 2024 calendar year to 6.2 percent from its earlier estimate of 6.7 percent.
- The UN report said GDP in the larger South Asian region grew by an estimated 5.3 per cent in 2023 and is projected to increase by 5.2 per cent in 2024, driven by a robust expansion in India.

Source: Livemint

81st annual Golden Globes Awards

Why in News:

- The 81st Golden Globe Awards honored the best in film and American television productions of 2023.

Key Points:

- 'Oppenheimer' was named best motion picture, drama, with Christopher Nolan taking home the directing award for his work on the movie.
- 'Poor Things' won the Globe for best motion picture, musical or comedy.
- 'Anatomy of a Fall' won the film for best non-English-language motion picture, while 'The Boy and the Heron' was named best-animated film.
- On the TV side, 'Succession' was named best drama series, while 'The Bear' was named best TV series, musical or comedy.



9 January Daily Current Affairs

- Lily Gladstone, Paul Giamatti, Emma Stone, Robert Downey Jr., Jeremy Allen White, Da'Vine Joy Randolph, Ayo Edebiri, Kieran Cullkin, Ali Wong, Steven Yeun and Matthew Macfadyen were among the winners in the acting categories.
- Billie Eilish O'Connell and Finneas O'Connell won the award for best song.

Source: The Guardian

Microsoft's 'AI Odyssey' to Upskill 100,000 Indian Developers

Why in News:

- Microsoft has announced the launch of an initiative that aims to skill 100,000 developers in India in the latest AI technologies and tools.

Key Points:

- The program offers comprehensive learning experience that helps developers acquire and demonstrate the relevant skills needed to execute critical projects using AI technologies that align with business goals and outcomes.
- With AI revolutionizing the way we work and live, India needs a skilled workforce that can use AI to solve complex problems and create value.
- Through programs like AI Odyssey, Microsoft is offering opportunities for developers to build solutions for India's growth and showcase their talent to solve real-world problems.
- To participate in the AI Odyssey, developers need to register on aka.ms/AIOdyssey and access the learning modules and resources. The month-long program is open to all AI enthusiasts in India, regardless of experience level or background. The program has two levels that participants need to complete by January 31, 2024.
- The first level of the program educates participants on how to use Azure AI services to create and deploy AI solutions for different scenarios. This will give them access to useful resources, code samples, and guides to master practical AI skills.



9 January Daily Current Affairs

- The second level of the program challenges participants to prove their AI skills by completing an online assessment with interactive lab tasks that earns them Microsoft Applied Skills credentials, a new verifiable credential that validates their ability to solve real world problems with AI.
- Participants completing both the levels of challenges will also stand a chance to win a VIP Pass to attend the Microsoft AI Tour in Bangalore on February 8, 2024, and witness the revolutionary impact of generative AI.

Source: Economic Times

Indian Army Chief Gen MM Naravane's Book "Four Stars of Destiny"

Why in News:

- The Indian Army's former Chief of Army Staff (CoAS), General Manoj Mukund Naravane, has written an autobiography titled "Four Stars of Destiny: An Autobiography."

Key Points:

- General Naravane served as the 28th Army Chief and led the Indian Army from December 2019 to April 2022.
- According to the excerpts show details of Gen Naravane's communications with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh when the PLA mobilized at Rechin La pass in Eastern Ladakh in August 2020.
- Gen MM Naravane also wrote that the bloody Galwan valley clash would not be easily forgotten by Chinese President Xi Jinping given PLA soldiers suffered first combat deaths in decades.
- On the Agnipath Scheme, which led to country-wide protests, Naravane has written that the Army's initial view was that 75 per cent of the personnel to be recruited could be retained while 25 per cent should be released.
- In June 2022, the government rolled out the Agnipath recruitment scheme for short-term induction of personnel with an aim to bring down the age profile of the three services. It provided for recruiting people between the



age bracket of 17-and-half years and 21 for four years with a provision to retain 25 per cent of them for 15 more years.

Source: Business Standard

Union Minister Piyush Goyal inaugurated the exhibition 'Indus Food 2024' showcasing the diverse food ecosystem

Why in News:

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles, Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurated the Indus Food 2024 exhibition on India's vibrant and diverse food eco-system held at India Exposition Mart, Greater Noida.

Key Points:

- Speaking on India's food processing sector, Shri Goyal highlighted the 150% growth in processed food exports over the last nine years. The Minister highlighted that India's agricultural exports stood at an aggregate of about US\$ 53 Billion. Shri Piyush Goyal quoted the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and said that the time has come for a fusion of technology and taste. He emphasized the need for large-scale food processing, product branding, and export focus to provide better value to farmers, generate employment, and enhance the country's earnings.
- The Minister recognized the burgeoning demand for Indian foods globally, he underscored the country's diverse agro-climatic zones, 158 food and agri Geographical Indications (GIs), and the identification of 708 unique food items across districts under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative.
- He lauded the success of food security initiatives of the government such as the 'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana', providing free food grains to 81 Crore people and ensuring zero starvation deaths in the country. Additionally, he commended efforts to mitigate food inflation through strategic interventions like 'Bharat Atta' and 'Bharat Dal'.



9 January Daily Current Affairs

- Shri Piyush Goyal praised the significant success and outstanding achievements of the seventh edition of Indus Food, hailing it as the epicenter for food and beverage excellence in South Asia. He highlighted the international prominence of the event, revealing plans for India Global Culinary Exchange, welcoming 20 top international chefs to experience the country's culinary excellence firsthand.

Source: PIB

