



07 June 2024

National and International News

<p>Biopharmaceutical Alliance</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Korea, India, the United States, Japan, and the European Union (EU) have launched an alliance to build a resilient supply chain in the biopharmaceutical sector. • The inaugural meeting of the Biopharmaceutical Alliance was held in San Diego during the Bio International Convention 2024. <p>About Biopharmaceutical Alliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: The alliance was established in response to drug supply shortages experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic. • Coordination: The participating countries will coordinate their bio policies, regulations, and research and development support measures. • Supply Chain Mapping: They plan to create a detailed pharmaceutical supply chain map to enhance reliability and sustainability. • Expansion: Initially formed by South Korea and the U.S., the alliance expanded to include Japan, India, and the EU.
<p>Special category status (SCS)</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2024 Lok Sabha elections have renewed interest in the leaders' demands for special category status (SCS) for their States Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. <p>About Special category status (SCS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Category Status (SCS) is a classification given to states in India that face geographical and socio-economic disadvantages. • Historical Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduced in 1969 by the Fifth Finance Commission of India. ○ Initially granted to three states: Assam, Nagaland, and Jammu & Kashmir. • Criteria for SCS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hilly and difficult terrain.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low population density and/or sizeable tribal population. ○ Strategic location along borders with neighboring countries. ○ Economic and infrastructural backwardness. ○ Non-viable nature of state finances. ● States with SCS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As of now, 11 states have been granted SCS: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir (now split into two Union Territories), Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, and Uttarakhand.
<p>State of Ocean Report 2024</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The UNESCO 'State of Ocean Report, 2024' highlights the significant challenges faced by global oceans due to climate change and human activities. ● The report provides crucial insights into the current state of our oceans. <p>About State of Ocean Report, 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The UNESCO 'State of the Ocean Report' was initiated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO) during the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference. ● It provides an accessible overview of the ocean's current status and supports the monitoring of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030). ● Upper Ocean Warming: The upper 2,000 meters of the oceans have experienced significant warming. ● Energy Absorption and Impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oceans absorb about 90% of Earth's excess energy. ○ This leads to increased deoxygenation, threatening marine ecosystems and human economies dependent on them. ● Ocean Acidification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ocean acidification is rising globally, especially in the open ocean. ● Sea Level Rise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sea levels have risen consistently since 1993. ● Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal (mCDR):



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is growing interest in mCDR technologies. ○ Their ecological impacts and effectiveness remain uncertain.
<p>Zircon mineral</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study of zircon crystals reveals Earth had conditions to support life earlier than previously thought. ● Findings show early interaction of water and land. ● This challenges the theories of a water-covered Earth. <p>About Zircon mineral:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Type: Nesosilicate mineral ○ Chemical Name: Zirconium silicate ○ Chemical Formula: ZrSiO₄ ● Properties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High refractive indices ○ Strong lustre ○ Occurs in various colours: clear, green, red, yellow, and brown ● Significant Findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oxygen Isotopes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reveal fresh water and dry land on early Earth. ■ Challenge theories of an entirely water-covered early Earth. ■ Indicate a functioning water cycle at least 4 billion years ago, possibly creating conditions conducive to life.
<p>The Air of the Anthropocene project</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The "Air of the Anthropocene" project uses light painting to visualize air pollution in India, Ethiopia, and the UK, highlighting severe health risks and sparking global discussions on air quality. <p>About The Air of the Anthropocene project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The "Air of the Anthropocene" project is an international initiative that combines art and science to visualize air pollution. ● Artists and researchers collaborated, using digital light painting techniques and low-cost air pollution sensors, to create photographic evidence of air pollution.



Kerala Regional News

<p>Koodiyattam</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A special event organised recently in Kerala to honour Margi Sajeev on his 60th birthday turned into an occasion to focus on preserving Koodiyattam ancient Sanskrit theatre. <p>About Koodiyattam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koodiyattam is a traditional form of Sanskrit theatre performed in Kerala. • It is recognized as one of the oldest living theatrical traditions. • Origin: The art form has origins dating back over 2,000 years. • UNESCO Recognition: Koodiyattam was declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2001. • Classical Sanskrit Texts: Stories are primarily drawn from classical Sanskrit texts, epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, and Puranas.
<p>Periyar river</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mass fish kill occurred in the Periyar River, Kerala, on May 20, 2024, causing widespread destruction and public outrage. • Industrial pollution from the Edayar Industrial Area is suspected to be the cause. <p>About Periyar river:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location: The Periyar River is located in Kerala. • Length: It is the longest river in Kerala, stretching approximately 244 kilometers. • Origin: The river originates from the Sivagiri Hills of the Western Ghats, in the Idukki district. • Tributaries: Major tributaries include Muthirapuzha, Mullayar, Cheruthoni, Perinjankutti, and Edamalayar. • Idukki Dam: This dam, located on the Periyar, is one of the highest arch dams in Asia.
<p>Paristhithi Mithram award</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabu Joseph, Head of the Department of Environmental Sciences at Kerala University, has won the Paristhithi Mithram award for his outstanding contributions to environmental research. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Paristhithi Mithram award is an honor given by the Directorate of Environment and Climate Change. • It is awarded to organizations or institutions that excel in the field of environmental protection. • Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan presented the award, which includes a cash prize of ₹1 lakh, on World Environment Day. • With a 23-year academic career, Joseph has been involved in six major national projects and an Indo-Israel international project on the ecosystem service evaluation of Kerala's wetlands.
<p>Peringottukara Devasthanam</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bihu dancers from Assam captivated the audience at the 100-day dance festival at Peringottukara Devasthanam. <p>About Peringottukara Devasthanam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location: Peringottukara, Thrissur District, Kerala. • Deity: The main deity worshipped is Bhadrakali, a form of Goddess Kali. • Festivals: Major festivals celebrated include Bharani and Meena Bharani, which attract thousands of devotees from across the region.
<p>Kerala Responsible Tourism Mission Society (KRTMS)</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerala Responsible Tourism Mission Society (KRTMS) celebrated World Environment Day with the theme "No Plastic While Travelling," emphasizing women-friendly tour packages and eco-friendly programs. <p>About KRTMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment: Kerala Responsible Tourism Mission Society (KRTMS) was established to promote responsible tourism practices in Kerala. • Objective: The primary objective is to ensure tourism development benefits local communities and preserves cultural and environmental sustainability.



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