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8 November 2023

West Bengal News

<p><b>Rhododendron park is to be set up at Darjeeling's Mungpoo</b></p>	<p><b>Context</b> A rhododendron park is being set up at <b>Mungpoo</b>, which is famed for its <b>cinchona plantation</b></p> <p><b>Key points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project is being undertaken by the directorate of cinchona and other medicinal plants which comes under the horticulture department.</li> <li>• The fruit processing and horticulture department of the state government has sanctioned a sum of Rs 68 lakh for the project to be set up across 5 acres of land.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rhododendrons</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are a diverse genus of about <b>1,000 species of woody flowering</b> plants in the heath family (Ericaceae), notable for their attractive flowers and handsome foliage.</li> <li>• <b>Distribution:</b> They are native to the temperate regions of Asia, North America, and Europe, as well as to the tropical regions of southeast Asia and northern Australia.</li> <li>• <b>Habitat:</b> They occur in a variety of habitats, including alpine regions, coniferous and broadleaved woodlands, temperate rain forests, and even tropical jungle</li> <li>• They also <b>require slightly acidic soil to grow well.</b></li> <li>• They exhibit an enormous diversity of size and shape, from prostrate ground covers growing no more than a few inches high to trees more than 100 feet tall.</li> <li>• There are <b>132 taxa (80 species, 25 subspecies, and 27 varieties)</b> of rhododendrons found in India.</li> <li>• Rhododendron, also known as "<b>Lali Guras</b>" in a local language, is the national flower of Nepal and the state tree of the state of Uttarakhand in India.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary plans to hold a bird festival</b></p>	<p><b>Context</b> The recent visit of former Team India cricketer <b>Anil Kumble</b>, also an avid birdwatcher and a keen wildlife photographer, to Darjeeling hills has given the forest department the <b>impetus to resume the annual bird festival at the Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary.</b></p> <p><b>About WLS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Located in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal</b> established as a wildlife sanctuary in 1976.</li> <li>• This is situated between the Mahananda and Teesta rivers in the Terai plains of Darjeeling.</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nine major forest ranges, i.e. Kalijhora, Latpanchork, Punding, Sukuna, Gulma, Toribari, Sevoke, Seventh Mile and latlong.</li><li>• The <b>Terai belt of the sanctuary</b> is an important corridor for elephants migrating from Nepal through West Bengal to Assam.</li><li>• <b>Fauna:</b> Bengal Tiger, elephants, bison, spotted deer, rare mountain goats, porcupines, hornbills, swallows, swift, sunbird, etc. are found here.</li></ul>
<p><b>Sundarbans</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sundarbans is a vast contiguous <b>mangrove forest ecosystem</b> in the coastal region of the Bay of Bengal spread over India and Bangladesh on the delta (world's largest) of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers.</li><li>• It contains the <b>world's largest mangrove forests</b>.</li><li>• It is the <b>only mangrove forest</b> in the world inhabited by tigers.</li><li>• <b>Sundarbans Tiger Reserve</b> was created in 1973.</li><li>• Sundarbans National Park, established in <b>1984</b>, constitutes a core region within the tiger reserve.</li><li>• It was designated a <b>UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987</b>.</li><li>• Sunderbans was designated as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 2001.</li><li>• Sundarban Wetland, India was recognized as the '<b>Wetland of International Importance</b>' under the Ramsar Convention in January 2019.</li></ul>

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