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General Studies-1

130 years of Indian Railways iconic station: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus building

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (earlier Victoria Terminus) has completed 130 years of its construction on 20th May 2018.

The present day Headquarters building of Central Railway popularly known as Victoria Terminus (now Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus) is an architectural marvel.

This magnificent monument was originally planned as the office of GIP (Great Indian Peninsular) Railway.

This is the most photographed building after Taj Mahal, and was designed by Frederick William Stevens, a consulting architect.

Stevens designed the monumental Terminus which was the largest building then erected in Asia and which even today is a standing testimony of his innovative talent.

The construction started in 1878 and on jubilee Day in 1887, it was named after Queen Empress Victoria.

Later in 1996, it was renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus. It was again renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in July 2017.

In 2004, UNESCO has enlisted this building as **World Heritage Site** for its architectural splendour.

From December 2012, this heritage building has been opened for public viewing on working days.

Architecture:

- i. Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (earlier Victoria Terminus) is designed in Gothic style adapted to suit Indian context.
- ii. It is a C shaped building planned symmetrically about the east west axis.
- iii. The crowning point of the whole building is the central main dome carrying up a colossal 16'-6" high figure of lady pointing a flaming torch upwards in her right hand, and a spoked wheel low in the left hand, symbolizing 'Progress'.



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- iv. This dome has been reported to be the first octagonal ribbed masonry dome that was adapted to an Italian Gothic style building.

During Centenary celebrations of Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus Building, a postal stamp was released. In 2013, when the building celebrated quasi-centennial (125 years) anniversary, a special postal cover was released on the occasion.

General Studies-2

Strategic Petroleum Reserve

Why in News?

In a first, today, India received the 1st cargo of UAE crude oil for filling up one of the two Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) caverns built by Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Ltd (ISPRL) at Mangalore.

In February 2018, during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to UAE, ISPRL and ADNOC signed an Agreement under which ADNOC will store about 5.86 million barrels of crude oil in India's SPR facility at Mangalore at its own cost.

The filling up began with the 2 million barrels reaching Mangalore today. ADNOC will bring additional crude oil and fill up the Mangalore cavern later this year.

ADNOC's investment by way of crude oil in Indian SPR facility is the first time that a private foreign entity, is filling up an Indian SPR cavern with crude oil.

About SPR Programme:

Government of India under phase I of SPR programme has built crude oil storage facilities with total capacity of 5.33 million tonnes (around 39 million barrels) at three locations viz. Vishakhapatnam, Mangalore and Padur.

Vishakhapatnam storage has a capacity of 1.33 million tonnes (around 9.77 million barrels) of crude oil, Mangalore has a capacity of 1.5 million tonnes



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(around 11 million barrels) and Padur can stock 2.5 million tonnes (18.37 million barrels).

The entire Vishakhapatnam facility and one of the two caverns at Mangalore facility have been filled with crude oil under government funding, the second cavern at Mangalore facility is now being filled by ADNOC of UAE at its own cost under the Agreement with ISPRIL.

The Agreement stipulates that during an emergency oil shortage situation the Indian government can use the entire available crude oil stored by ADNOC in the Mangalore SPR facility for its use.

Further, as an incentive for storing crude oil at its own cost, the Agreement allows ADNOC to sell part of the crude oil to Indian refineries during normal times.

India-UAE Relations:

The historic first cargo from UAE for filling up India's SPR facility demonstrates the commitment of both India and UAE in executing strategically important agreements in a time bound manner, thereby, further strengthening the strategic relationship between the two countries, particularly in the oil and gas sector.

It is a culmination of the vision of the leaders, HRH the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Prime Minister Modi to elevate the bilateral relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership and transform the buyer-seller relations to a two-way investment relations.

UAE is the 6th largest crude oil source for India and supplies around 6 % of the petroleum requirement.

With the recent acquisition of 10% stake in UAE's Lower Zakhum offshore producing field by Indian public sector oil and gas companies and the investment by ADNOC in Indian SPR facility, the hydrocarbon sector engagements between India and UAE have transformed from buyer-seller relationship to strategic partners in the energy sector.



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INSV Tarini completes historic Circumnavigation

Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Tarini (INSV Tarini) entered Goa harbour and came alongside the INS Mandovi jetty on completion of a historic global circumnavigation voyage on 21 May 18.

About the expedition:

This is the first-ever Indian circumnavigation of the globe by an all-women crew. The vessel was skippered by Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi, and the crew comprised Lieutenant Commanders Pratibha Jamwal, P Swathi, and Lieutenants S Vijaya Devi, B Aishwarya and Payal Gupta. .

During her 254 day long voyage, the vessel has covered over 22,000 Nautical miles, visiting five countries – Australia, New Zealand, Falkland Islands (UK), South Africa and Mauritius.

The expedition titled 'Navika Sagar Parikrama' is in consonance with the National policy to empower women to attain their full potential. It has showcased 'Nari Shakti' on the world platform and helped change societal attitudes and mindset towards women in India by raising visibility of their participation in challenging environs.

During the course of her voyage, the vessel has met all criteria of circumnavigation, viz. crossing the Equator twice, crossing all Longitudes, as also the three great capes (Cape Leeuwin, Cape Horn and Cape of Good Hope).

The expedition was covered in six legs, with halts at 5 ports: Fremantle (Australia), Lyttleton (New Zealand), Port Stanley (Falklands), Cape Town (South Africa) and Port Louis (Mauritius).

The crew and the vessel encountered rough seas on numerous occasions during the voyage.

The extremely cold climate coupled with stormy weather conditions especially in the Southern Ocean made the task of circumnavigating the globe highly



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daunting and challenging. The vessel also witnessed winds in excess of 60 knots and waves up to 7 meters high, whilst crossing the Pacific Ocean.

About INSV Tarini:

The indigenously-built INSV Tarini is a 56-foot sailing vessel, which was inducted in the Indian Navy in February 2017, and has showcased the 'Make in India' initiative on the International forum.

The crew also collated and updated meteorological, ocean and wave data on a regular basis for accurate weather forecast by India Meteorological Department (IMD), as also monitored and reported marine pollution on the high seas.

They interacted extensively with the local populace, especially children, during the port halts to promote Ocean sailing and the spirit of adventure.

Successful Test Firing of Brahmos to Validate Service Life Extension

BrahMos, supersonic cruise missile was successfully test fired at 1040 hours today from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Balasore, Odisha as part of service life extension programme.

The life extension test firing of BrahMos was conducted from a Static Inclined Launcher, proving the efficacy and longevity of the system which was witnessed by the Scientist from Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and BrahMos.

The precision strike missile flew in its designated trajectory and the key components functioned perfectly.

About Brahmos:

BrahMos is a joint venture between DRDO of India and NPOM of Russia, the highly versatile BrahMos has emerged as the ultimate weapon of choice in modern warfare with its unmatched speed, precision and firepower.



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Nipah virus infection

Why in News?

The Central and State government authorities as well as the medical community have stepped up efforts to contain the threat of a possible outbreak of the Nipah virus infection, which has so far claimed at least four lives in Kozhikode district.

About Nipah Virus:

[Nipah Virus](#) is an emerging infectious disease that broke out in Malaysia and Singapore in 1998 and 1999.

It first appeared in domestic pigs and has been found among several species of domestic animals including dogs, cats, goats, horses and sheep. The infection is also known to affect human beings.

The organism which causes Nipah Virus encephalitis is an RNA or Ribonucleic acid virus of the family Paramyxoviridae, genus Henipavirus, and is closely related to Hendra virus.

Nipah virus infection gets its name from the village in Malaysia where the person from whom the virus was first isolated succumbed to the disease.

The virus has been listed in the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code and must be reported to the OIE (OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code).

How does Nipah spread or get transmitted?

The disease spreads through fruit bats or 'flying foxes,' of the genus Pteropus, who are natural reservoir hosts of the Nipah and Hendra viruses.

The virus is present in bat urine and potentially, bat faeces, saliva, and birthing fluids.



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Nipah Virus, which is a zoonotic disease, was known to affect humans in Malaysia and Singapore after coming in direct contact with the excretions or secretions of infected pigs.

Symptoms of the Nipah infection

Typically, the human infection presents as an encephalitic syndrome marked by fever, headache, drowsiness, disorientation, mental confusion, coma, and potentially death.

During the outbreak in Malaysia, up to 50 per cent of clinically apparent human cases died. There is no specific treatment for Nipah Virus. The primary treatment for human cases is intensive supportive care.

Prevention of the Nipah infection

While there is no vaccine available for the infection, preventive measures can be a key to control the spread.

With fruits bats being the primary cause of infection, the farm animals should be prevented from eating fruit contaminated by bats.

Consumption of contaminated date palm sap including toddy should also be avoided.

Physical barriers can be put in place in order to prevent bats from accessing and contaminating palm sap.

Black panther Sighted

The wildlife wing of Odisha's Forest and Environment Department has recorded the presence of a black panther in a forest in Sundargarh district.

The photographs make Odisha the ninth State in India where the elusive and rare big cat has been seen.



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“Black panther or melanistic leopard is a colour variant of the Indian leopard and the footage of this animal has been captured repeatedly by cameras installed in Garjanpahad Reserve Forest of Hemgir Range of Sundargarh Forest Division.

The leopards’ skins vary in colour and the jet black melanistic form is called black panther. It is as shy as a normal leopard and very difficult to detect.

It is mostly found in densely forested areas of southern India.

Although the presence of black panther was reported 26 years ago, no scientific or pictorial records could establish the claim.

Black panthers have also been reported from Kerala (Periyar Tiger Reserve), Karnataka (Bhadra Tiger Reserve, Dandeli-Anshi Tiger Reserve and Kabini Wildlife Sanctuary), Chhattisgarh (Achanakmar Tiger Reserve), Maharashtra (Satara), Goa (Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary), Tamil Nadu (Mudumalai Tiger Reserve), Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.