



drishti

CURRENT AFFAIRS

ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

10th February - 15th February



BusinessLine



1. Van Vihar National Park

- Van Vihar National Park is located in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.
- It is situated adjacent to the **Upper Lake of Bhopal** also known as the “**Bada Talab**”.
 - Bada Talab is a **Ramsar Site** and one of the two lakes of **Bhoj Wetland**.
- It has the unique distinction of being a **combination of National Park, a Zoo, Rescue Centre** wild animals and **Conservation Breeding Centre** for selected vital species.
 - It is also a designated co-ordinating zoo and Conservation Breeding Centre for the Hard Ground Barasingha and two species of Gyps Vultures.
 - It is home to Bengal Tiger, Asiatic Lions, Indian Wolf, Sloth Bear, Red Fox, Indian Jackal, Wild Dog, Mongoose, Striped Hyena, Blue Kingfisher, Phakta, Snakes, Python, etc.

2. River Wainganga

- The Wainganga rises in the **Mahadeo Hills** in the Seoni District of **Madhya Pradesh**.
 - Wainganga River is the **tributary of the Godavari River**.
- It drains **Madhya Pradesh** and **Maharashtra**.
- **Kanhan River** is the longest tributary of Wainganga river.
 - Kanhan River rises in the hills at the southern edge of the **Satpura Range** in the Chhindwara District (**Madhya Pradesh**).
- The river forms the boundary between **Maharashtra** and **Telangana** states and is known as the **Pranhita**.
- **Gosikhurd irrigation project** is being constructed on the Wainganga River.

3. Mt. Aconcagua

Why in News?

Kaamya Karthikeyan, a twelve year old Indian student, has become the youngest girl in the world to summit **Mt. Aconcagua**.

Mt. Aconcagua

- At 6962 metres, Mt. Aconcagua is the **highest peak outside Asia**.
- Aconcagua is a mountain in the Principal Cordillera of the Andes mountain range Argentina.
- It lies in the **Southern Andes**.
 - Andes is the world's longest mountain range that is located along the entire western coast of South America.
- Aconcagua is of volcanic origin, but it is not itself an active volcano.

4. Nilgiri Tahr

- Recently, Nilgiri tahr's population has increased from 568 in 2018 to 612 in 2019 in the Mukurthi National Park, Tamil Nadu.
- There has been almost a 27% **increase in the population of the tahr in the Nilgiris over the last three years.**
- Factors responsible for maintaining an increase in the population of Nilgiri Tahr are:
 - Keeping the national park closed to tourists and free from poaching
 - Fighting the spread of invasive flora

Nilgiri Tahr

- Nilgiri Tahr is also known as Nilgiri Ibex.
- IUCN Red list Status = **"Endangered"**
- It has been listed under **Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.**
 - **Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act** provides absolute protection and offences under these are prescribed the highest penalties.
- The **Adult males of Nilgiri Tahr** species develop a light grey area or **"saddle" on their backs** and are hence called **"Saddlebacks"**
- It is the **state animal of Tamil Nadu.**
- It is found in **open montane grassland** habitat of rain forests ecoregion.
- It is **endemic to the Nilgiri Hills and the southern portion of the Western Ghats** in
 - Tamil Nadu
 - Kerala

Mukurthi National Park

- Mukurthi National Park (MNP) is a protected area located in Tamil Nadu state in the Western Ghats mountain range of South India.
- It is home to an array of endangered wildlife, including Royal Bengal tiger and Asian elephant, but its main mammal attraction is the Nilgiri tahr.
 - The park was previously known as Nilgiri Tahr National Park.
- The park is a part of Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.
 - As part of the Western Ghats, it has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1 July 2012.

5. Pangolins

Why in News?

The Madhya Pradesh forest department, for the first time, has radio-tagged an **Indian Pangolin.**

- The third Saturday of February (February 15) is observed as the World Pangolin Day.
- There are a total of eight pangolin species across Africa and Asia.

Pangolins in India

- Out of the eight species of pangolin, the **Indian Pangolin (Manis crassicaudata)** and the **Chinese Pangolin (Manis pentadactyla)** are found in India.
- **Habitat:**
 - Indian Pangolin is widely distributed in India, except the arid region, high Himalayas and the North-East.
 - Chinese Pangolin is found in the Himalayan foothills.
- **Threats:**
 - Hunting
 - Poaching for local consumptive use and international trade for its meat and scales.

Characteristics:

- Pangolins or scaly anteaters are mammals of the order Pholidota.
- They have large, protective keratin scales covering their skin, and they are the only known mammals with this feature.
- IUCN Red List
 - Indian Pangolin: Endangered
 - Chinese Pangolin: Critically Endangered
- Both these species are listed under **Schedule I, Part I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.**
- All pangolin species are currently listed under **Appendix I of CITES** which prohibits international trade.

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