



## News Analysis (19 May, 2020)

 [drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/19-05-2020/print](https://drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/19-05-2020/print)

### Travel Bubble

---

#### Why in News

---

**Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania** **travel bubble** **Covid-19 lockdowns** Recently, the started a to help put their economies back on track after .

- **fairly successful at managing the Covid-19 outbreak** All three have been and remaining comparatively safe.
- **travel freely by rail, air and sea without quarantine measures.** In the Estonia-Latvia-Lithuania travel bubble, residents would be able to

#### **Baltic Countries**



- **northeastern region of Europe, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, eastern shores of the Baltic Sea.** Baltic countries, the include the countries of on the
- **west and northBaltic Sea, east Russia, southeastBelarussouthwestPolandexclave of Russia.** The Baltic states are bounded on the by the which gives the region its name, on the by on the by and on the by and an
- **1991, independence from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics** In their then popularly elected governments declared (USSR) with overwhelming support.
- **membersEuropean Union** All three of them are of the (EU) and are sparsely populated (Lithuania- 28 lakh, Latvia-19.2 lakh, Estonia-13.3 lakh people).
- **India and Baltic countries historical connect and common linguistic roots.technology and innovation ecosystems** have The cutting edge of the Baltic countries complement India's huge market and appetite for these technologies.

## Key Points

- **Travel Bubble:**

- **reconnecting countries or states**pandemic **good level of success in containing the Covid-19 domestically.** Creating a travel bubble involves which have shown a
- **restart trade ties**open travel and tourism. Such a bubble would allow the members of the group to with each other and
- **Gross Domestic Product**account for around 35% of the global According to a report, potential travel bubbles among better-performing countries around the world would (GDP).
- **favoured by smaller countries**Travel bubbles are because they are likely to benefit after being able to trade again with larger partners.

- **Criteria for Entering the Travel Bubble:**

- People from the outside countries, willing to join the bubble corridor, will have to go into isolation for 14 days.
- One should not have travelled outside the member countries of the travel bubble, in the past 14 days.
- One should not be infected with coronavirus and should not have come in contact with anyone who has been coronavirus infected.

- **Other Countries to Start:**

- AustraliaNew Zealandtrans-Tasman zoneTasman Sea**

- Trans-Tasman Zone:arrangement between Australia and New Zealand free movement of citizens**came into effect in 1973 to reside and work**with some restrictions.** Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement is an which allows for the of one of these countries to the other. The arrangement and allows citizens of each country in the other country,

- and reached an agreement to form a travel bubble, once it becomes safe to operate flights between them. Once it opens, the (around ) will allow travel without a quarantine period.



- **China South Korea** and have launched a fast track channel for business travellers.
- **USA** In the , travel bubbles are being suggested to group states who are doing well against the pandemic.

**Source: IE**

## Possibility of Covid-19 being Syndemic

### Why in News

**Covid-19 syndemic** World Health Organization (WHO) (i.e. may become endemic) less likely to be eliminated .The possibilities of being have been raised in the backdrop of the announcement that Covid-19

**'Pandemic'** The rapid spread of Covid-19 across the world has been characterised as by the WHO.

### Note

- **Pandemic:** A pandemic is declared when a new disease for which people do not have immunity spreads around the world beyond expectations.
- **Epidemic:** An epidemic is a large outbreak, one that spreads among a population or region. It is less severe than pandemic due to a limited area of spread.
- **Endemic:** A disease is called endemic when the presence or usual prevalence of its infectious agent is constant within a given geographical area or population group.

## Key Points

---

- **Description:**
  - **two or more epidemics interact synergistically** A syndemic is a situation when to produce an increased burden of disease in a population.
  - **Merrill Singer in the mid-1990s.** A situation of syndemic was first described by medical anthropologist
- **Possibility of Syndemic in the Current Scenario:**
  - **Covid-19 Pandemic and Presence of Dengue, Malaria:**
    - The least possibility of elimination of Covid-19 pandemic and warning about the second wave of Covid-19 infections worldwide have reinforced the presence of Covid-19 for the long term.
    - **monsoon season** Meanwhile, the alarm is being raised about diseases like dengue and malaria emerging with the upcoming in tropical South Asia.
    - Thus, there is a possibility that the world will face increased burden of the diseases and thus the situation of syndemic.
  - **Presence of Antibiotic Resistance:**
    - **weakened immunity.** The second wave of infection due to Covid-19 is suspected to be seen in those with
    - At the same time, the world already faces antibiotic resistance and if Covid-19 deepens as a syndemic in populations with antibiotic resistance, the world will face comorbidities.
    - Comorbidity is the presence of one or more additional conditions co-occurring with a primary condition.
    - **Antibiotic resistance** is the ability of bacteria or other microbes to resist the effects of an antibiotic. Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria change in some way that reduces or eliminates the effectiveness of drugs, chemicals, or other agents designed to cure or prevent infections.
- **Past Instances of Syndemic:**
  - The 1957 Asian influenza pandemic observed deaths not only due to the primary viral infection, but also due to secondary bacterial infections among influenza patients. In short, it was a viral/bacterial syndemic.
  - **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infections malaria** Meanwhile, researchers have shown that in Kenya, 5% of are due to higher HIV infectiousness of -infected HIV patients.
- **Possible Solutions:**
  - **large-scale population testing PCR and antibody testing** Whole world will need to implement for Covid-19 (such as ) to contain it at its base level.
  - **innovations in population health surveillance technology** The societies around the world will also have to consider and develop creative business models at a scale.

**Source:TH**

---

## Objections to Etalin Hydroelectric Project

---

### Why in News

---

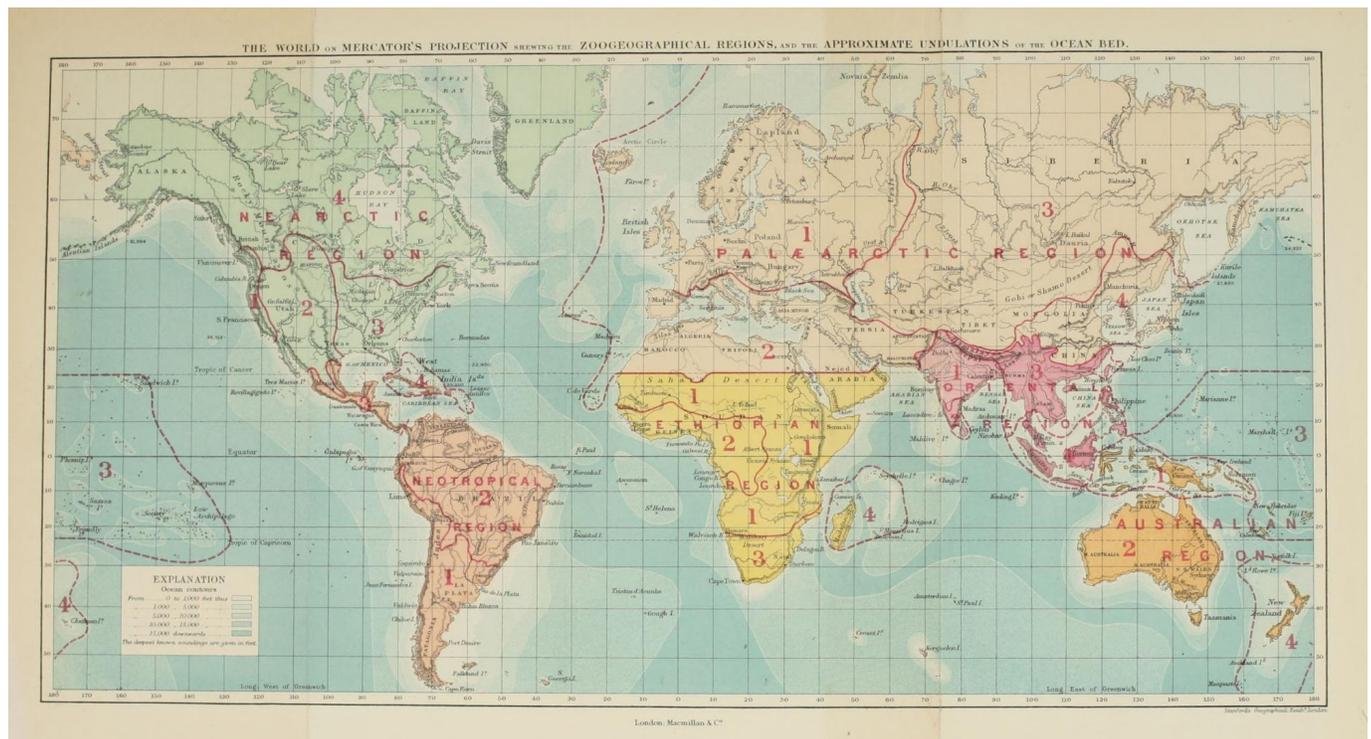
**National Board of Wildlife Etalin Hydroelectric Project Dibang Valley, Arunachal Pradesh.** Recently, some conservationists and former members of the (NBWL) have sought rejection of approval for the in the

## Key Points

- **Dibang completed in 7 years.**  
 tributary of the **Brahmaputra** Dibang is a river which flows through the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.  
 The Project is based on the river and is proposed to be
- **envisages construction of two dams Dir Tangon.** It over the tributaries of Dibang: and
- **under the richest bio-geographical province of the Himalayan zone biogeographic** The Project falls and would be located at the junction of major zones like Palaeartic Zone and Indo-Malayan Zone.
- **one of the biggest hydropower projects in India installed capacity.** It is expected to be in terms of

## Biogeographic Regions

- These are the large distinctive units of similar ecology, biome representation, community and species.
- **six biogeographic regions Palearctic Nearctic Neotropical Ethiopian/Afrotropic Oriental/Indo-Malayan Australian** Currently, **eight are recognised Oceania Antarctica.** Originally, were identified: (Europe and Asia), (North America), (Mexico, Central and South America), (Africa), (Southeast Asia, Indonesia) and (Australia and New Guinea). since the addition of (Polynesia, Fiji and Micronesia) and



## Palaeartic Zone

- This includes arctic and temperate Eurasia and all islands surrounding the continent in the Arctic, in the sea of Japan and the eastern half of the North Atlantic.
- It also includes the Macaronesian islands, Mediterranean North Africa and Arabia.

## Indo-Malayan Zone

Its natural boundaries contain tropical Asia from the Balochistan mountains of Pakistan eastward to the Indian subcontinent south of the Himalayan crest, including the tropical southern fringe of China with Taiwan, the whole of Southeast Asia and the Philippines.

## Background

---

- **Forest Advisory Committee** Ministry of Environment Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change clear 2.7 lakh trees The (FAC) of the (MoEFCC) highlighted that the project will in subtropical evergreen broad-leaved forest and subtropical rainforests.
- **may be allowed subject to the condition** Wildlife Institute of India According to a sub-committee of FAC, the project that the financial outlay of Wildlife Conservation Plan be deposited to the Forest Department by user agency on the basis of a study done by the (WII).
- **transferred the project** Power Ministry. However, there were protests by green groups due to which MoEFCC to the Union

## Criticism

---

- **ignored established tenets of forest conservation and related legal issues** Conservationists highlighted that the FAC sub-committee while recommending the proposal.
- **ignored the threat of forest fragmentation.**  
**Forest fragmentation** results from ill-planned intrusion of developmental projects into contiguous landscapes with natural forests and threatens rare floral and faunal species in a biodiversity hotspot.  
 FAC
- **site inspection report was also questioned for leaving out key details** Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 schedules of the FAC's like number of grids across an altitudinal range inspected and the status of vegetation there, direct and indirect signs of wild animals listed in the various and overall appreciation of the ecological value of the area.
- **Environment Impact Assessment** inadequacy of the report  
 Wildlife officials ignored observations which include the threat to 25 globally endangered mammal and bird species in the area to be affected.  
 The on Etalin was also highlighted.
- **mitigation measures** inadequate and insufficient. The proposed like setting up butterfly and reptile parks are

**Source: TH**

---

## Aksai Chin

---

## Why in News

---

**Galwan Valley region** Recently, Chinese media has accused India of building defence facilities in the of the contested Aksai Chin area.

## Key Points

---

- **China controls Aksai Chin area, while India claims that it is part of Indian territory** (Union territory of Ladakh).
- It also claims that India has violated China's territorial sovereignty and harmed military relations between the two countries. Chinese media claims that the actions by the Indian side have seriously violated China and India's agreements on border issues.
- India has not responded to the accusation yet.
- **NakuLa area in north Sikkim and Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh** The latest round of conflict comes days after Indian and Chinese troops clashed in the .
- **unresolved 3488 km long border dispute** India and China have an that has cast a shadow on ties for decades.
- Prolonged rounds of negotiations have failed to resolve the dispute between the two neighbours.
- **Wuhan Mahabalipuram and summits "ensure peace and tranquility in the border areas"**. However, in the , both China and India had reaffirmed that they will make efforts to
- **India and China completed their 70 years of diplomatic relations.** Also, on 1 April, 2020

## Dispute over Aksai Chin

---

- **Johnson's Line McDonald Line.**
    - **The Johnson's line (proposed in 1865) shows Aksai Chin in erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir whereas McDonald Line (proposed in 1893) places it under China's control.** (now Ladakh) i.e. under India's control
    - India considers Johnson Line as a correct, rightful national border with China, while on the other hand, China considers the McDonald Line as the correct border with India.
- During the time of British rule in India, two borders between India and China were proposed- and
- At present, Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the line separating Indian areas of Ladakh from Aksai Chin. It is concurrent with the Chinese Aksai Chin claim line.



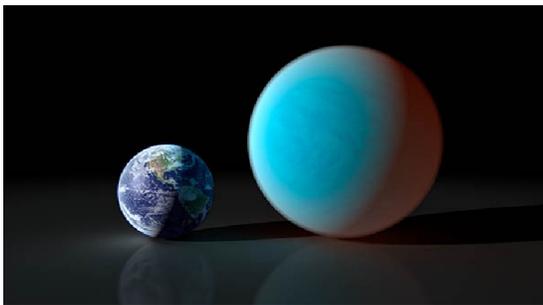
Source: IE

## New Super-Earth Planet

### Why in News

**Super-Earth planet.** extra-solar planets both sizes and orbits close to that of Earth. Recently, scientists have discovered a rare new It is among only a handful of that have been detected with

An exoplanet or extrasolar planet is a planet outside the Solar System.



### Key Points

- **Mass :**
  - **Host Star:** 10% the mass lower mass of the host star 'year' 617 days. The host star of the Super-Earth's system has about of the Sun. The makes a on the planet of approximately
  - **Super-Earth Planet:** mass between the Earth's mass and that of Neptune. The planet is expected to have a

- **Orbit:**

With reference to the Solar system, the Super-Earth planet would orbit at a radius anywhere between that of Venus and Earth in our solar system.

- **Planet Discovery:**

- **gravitational microlensing technique.** The Super-Earth planet has been discovered using the

- **range from the mass of a planet to the mass of a star,**

The microlensing effect is rare, with only about one in a million stars in the galaxy being affected at any given time.

Gravitational microlensing is an astronomical phenomenon due to the gravitational lens effect. It can be used to detect objects that regardless of the light they emit.

- **does not repeat, at the same time are extremely low.** Furthermore, such type of observation and the probabilities of catching a planet

- 

- **Radial Velocity Method: parent star to wobble around in its orbit,** The planet causes the and as the planet moves to and fro, it changes the color of the light we see.

- **Transit Method: through its atmosphere. colors of this light** When an exoplanet passes in front of its star, some of the starlight passes Scientists can analyze the in order to get valuable clues about its composition.

- **Direct Image Method : direct image can take pictures of exoplanets** The by removing the glare of the stars they orbit.

- **Astrometry: series of images of a star compare the distances between these reference stars** The orbit of the planet can cause a star to wobble around in spaces in relation to nearby stars in the sky. This method is quite similar to the Radial Velocity method. However, here scientists take a and some of the other stars that are near it in the sky. In each picture, they and the star they're checking for exoplanets.

The other methods for exoplanets discovery include:

## Exoplanet

- An exoplanet or extrasolar planet is a planet outside the Solar System. The first confirmation of detection of exoplanets occurred in 1992.
- **hidden by the bright glare of the stars** Exoplanets are very hard to see directly with telescopes. They are they orbit. So, astronomers use other ways to detect and study exoplanets such as looking at the effects these planets have on the stars they orbit.

### Source: IE

---

## Domicile Certificates in J&K

---

### Why in News

---

Recently, the Jammu and Kashmir administration notified the J&K Grant of Domicile Certificate (Procedure) Rules 2020.

- **amended the rules for issuing domicile certificates** It in the Union territory.

- **simple time-bound and transparent procedure** The new rules provide a for issuance of domicile certificates.

## Key Points

---

- **J&K Grant of Domicile Certificate (Procedure) Rules 2020:**
  - **conditions as stated in the Centre's gazette notification domicile clause amendment to the Jammu And Kashmir Civil Services (Decentralisation And Recruitment) Act, 2010.** It would provide the basis for issuing domicile certificates to those who meet the that introduced the through an
  - **Domicile certificates basic eligibility condition appointment to any post** have now been made a for under the Union Territory of J&K.
  - **eligible non-locals West Pakistan refugees, safai karamcharis and children of women who married non-locals** Under the amended rules, can also apply for the certificate. The new process will allow to apply for jobs.
- **Domicile: Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of State Laws) Order 2020** domicile as any person resided for a period of 15 years in the UT of J&K or for a period of seven years<sup>th</sup> 10 and 12 examination in an educational institution located in the UT of J&K. Under , is defined who has has studied and appeared in class It also has provisions related to migrants and government officials.
- **Time Stipulated under the Rules:**
  - **issue the certificates within a 15 days.** It sets a fast track process in motion to stipulated time of
  - If the certificate is not issued within the stipulated time, the applicant shall be free to approach an appellate authority.
  - **Rs. 50,000,** The decision of the appellate authority shall be binding upon the issuing authority and the orders to complied within 7 days, failing which the defaulting officer has to face a penalty of to be recovered from his/her salary.
- **Eligibility:**
  - **Permanent Residents:** All Permanent Resident Certificate holders and their children living outside J&K can apply for the certificates.
  - **Migrants:** Kashmiri migrants living in or outside J&K can get domicile certificates by producing their Permanent Residence Certificate (PRC), ration card copy, voter card or any other valid document.
  - **Government Officials: Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for a total period of ten years,** Central government officials, All India Service Officers, officials of Public Sector Undertakings, Autonomous bodies of the Central Government, Public Sector Banks, Statutory bodies, Central Universities and recognised research institutes of the Central Government, who have served in the are eligible for the certificate.

**Source: TH**

---

## Ashwagandha and Anti-Covid-19 Drug

---

### Why in News

---

**Covid-19 Ashwagandha has “therapeutic and preventive value” against infection.** Recently, researchers of IIT-Delhi in collaboration with Japan’s National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST) have found that the ayurvedic herb

## Key Points

- The publication of the coronavirus genome and structure have triggered drug designing, devising and development using informatics and experimental tools across the world.
- **Ashwagandha and propolis based compounds main coronavirus’s enzyme, known as the Main protease or Mpro.**
  - **viral replication.** Mpro plays a key role in mediating
  - **Enzymes** are biological molecules (typically proteins) that regulate the rate of virtually all of the chemical reactions that take place within living organisms. E.g digestion.
  - **Replication**  
In replication whenever a cell divides, the two new daughter cells contain the same genetic information, or DNA, as the parent cell.  
is the process by which a DNA molecule is copied to produce two identical DNA molecules. Researchers from IIT-Delhi and AIST have used to target the
- **Withanone (Wi-N), a natural compound derived from Ashwagandha Caffeic Acid Phenethyl Ester (CAPE), an active ingredient of New Zealand propolis, block the activity of Mpro.** The researchers have found that and have the potential to interact with and
- Recently, the Indian government has also set up a task force to launch its clinical research studies on some Ayurvedic medicines that can be used to boost the immune system and control coronavirus.
- **‘AYUSH Sanjivani’ App.** The government has also launched the
- **AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-rigpa and Homoeopathy)** The app intends to generate data on usage of advocacies and measures among the population and its impact in prevention of Covid-19.

## Ashwagandha

- **Withania somnifera medicinal herb. immunity enhancer.** Ashwagandha (scientific name- ) is a It is reputed as an
- **adaptogen,** It is classified as an which means that it can help the body to manage stress.
- **boosts brain function and lowers blood sugar, fight symptoms of anxiety and depression.** Ashwagandha also and helps
- **treating both acute and chronic rheumatoid arthritis.**
  - **autoimmune disease joint pain** Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an that can cause and damage throughout your body.
  - An autoimmune disease is a condition in which your immune system mistakenly attacks your body.Ashwagandha has shown clinical success in

## Propolis

- **resinous mixture that honey bees produce** Propolis or bee glue is a (a sticky chemical compound) by mixing saliva and beeswax with gums gathered from tree buds, sap flows, or other botanical sources.

- Propolis is used against infections caused by bacteria, viruses, fungus etc.
- It is used for boosting the immune system and for treating gastrointestinal problems.

**Source: IE**

---

## Webinar on Uttarakhand's Tourism Potential

---

### Why in News

---

**20<sup>th</sup> session Dekho Apna Desh Webinar series Ministry of Tourism "Uttarakhand Simply Heaven"**. Recently, the of the was organised by the titled

### Key Points

---

- **Uttarakhand's two regions namely Kedar Khand (Garhwal Region) and Manu Khand (Kumaon Region).** It highlighted the potential of tourism in
- **Popular Destinations:**
  - **Char Dham.** Four pilgrim destinations - Gangotri, Yamunotri, Badrinath (on the bank of River Alaknanda, dedicated to Lord Vishnu), Kedarnath (dedicated to Lord Shiva), collectively known as
  - **Hemkund Sahib:Guru Gobind Singh** Formerly known as Gurudwara Shri Hemkund Sahib Ji, it is a Sikh place of worship and pilgrimage site in Chamoli district. It is devoted to , the tenth Sikh Guru, and finds mention in Dasam Granth, a work dictated by Guruji himself.
  - **UNESCO World Heritage Site** of Valley of Flowers and Nanda Devi (National Parks).
  - **Jim Corbett National ParkRajaji Tiger Reserve.** (oldest national park of the country) and
- **Uttarakhand's Adventure Tourism Potential**
  - River rafting at Rishikesh and Pittoragarh, winter sports and skiing in Auli (hill station), Paragliding at Tehri Dam (on river Bhagirathi) and Kaushani (hill station).
  - Innumerable options for trekking available such as at Chopta and Pindari Glacier.

such as:

**Source: PIB**

---

## International Museum Day

---

### Why in News

---

**Ministry of Culture hosted a webinar on "Revitalising Museums and Cultural Spaces" to**The celebrate the International Museum Day.

The National e-Governance Division (NeGD) created by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) provided technical assistance for conducting the Webinar.

### Key Points

---

- **International Museum Day 18 May** The is celebrated every year on to raise awareness about the fact that “museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples.”
- **2020 theme “Museums for Equality: Diversity and Inclusion”**. The International Museum Day was celebrated with the
- **instituted in 1977 by the International Council of Museums (ICOM)**. International Museum Day was

### International Council of Museum

- ICOM is the main and only organisation of museums and museum professionals with global scope, committed to promotion and protection of natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.
- **headquartered in Paris, France**. It was created in 1946 and is It serves as a network of museum professionals (35,000 members in 137 countries) acting in a wide range of museum- and heritage-related disciplines.

### Administration of Museums in India

---

- Multiple ministries hold charges of various Museums.
- **Ministry of Culture**. Not all Museums are administered by the
- **under a Board of Trustees**. Some are run without government support by a handful of people
- **The Budget 2020 Institute of Heritage and Conservation** proposed the setting up of an Indian with the status of a deemed university under the Ministry of Culture.
- **The National Portal and Digital Repository for Indian Museums** (under the Ministry of Culture) have been launched for digitisation of the collections of the Museums.

### Notable Museums in India

- National Museum, New Delhi (Subordinate Office under the Ministry of Culture)
- National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru
- Victoria Memorial Hall (VMH), Kolkata
- Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), New Delhi

### Source: PIB

---

## A Rare Palm from Andamans

---

### Why in News

---

**Pinanga andamanensis** Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) based at Palode, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala). Recently, a rare palm, , has been successfully cultivated at

### Key Points

---

- **Pinanga andamanensis:**

- **Mount Harriet National Park.**

**Endemic** species are those plants and animals that exist only in one geographical region.

It is a rare palm endemic to South Andaman Island. Its entire population of some 600 specimens naturally occurs only in a tiny, evergreen forest pocket in South Andaman's

- **'Penang', means Island of the Areca Nut Palm.** The name is derived from the modern-day Malaysian state. Penang itself has its origins in Pulau Pinang which

- **resemblance with the areca palm tree** It has strong (widely used for bright interiors).

- **small gene pool** It has a which means the species is vulnerable to natural calamities such as cyclones, earthquakes.

- JNTBGRI scientists term it a critically endangered species and one of the least known among the endemic palms of the Andaman Islands.

- **Cultivation at JNTBGRI:**

- **Thiruvananthapuram second home** has been referred as its as the species has started flowering in this Institute.

- **resume seed germination experiments mass multiplication** JNTBGRI will for as part of the conservation strategy.

### **Mount Harriet National Park**

- It is located in the south of the Andaman and Nicobar islands.
- **third-highest peak in the Andaman and Nicobar Saddle Peak Mount Thuillier** Mount Harriet is the archipelago next to in North Andaman and in Great Nicobar.
- The park is covered with evergreen forest pockets.
- **andaman wild pigs, saltwater crocodiles, butterflies and palm trees.** It is rich in flora and faunal species like

**Source:TH**

---