



Rapid Fire Current Affairs

Horseshoe Crabs Disappearing off Odisha Coast

Horseshoe crabs, **medicinally priceless** and **one of oldest living creatures** on the earth, appear to be **disappearing** from their familiar spawning grounds due to destructive fishing practices along Chandipur and Balaramgadi coast in **Odisha's Balasore** district.

India has two species of Horseshoe crabs- **the coastal horseshoe crab** (*Tachypleus gigas*), **the mangrove horseshoe crab** (*Carcinoscorpius rotundicauda*) and major concentration of the animal is found in Odisha. Both these species are not listed on **IUCN** red list yet but are part of **Schedule 4** of **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.

The **blood of Horseshoe crab** is very **important for preparation of rapid diagnostic reagent**. All injectable and medicines are tested with the help of Horseshoe crabs. A molecule has been developed from reagent of Horseshoe crab that would **help treat pre-eclampsia**, a disease affecting pregnant women.

Palaeontological studies say the **age of Horseshoe crabs is 450 million years**. The creature has lived on earth without undergoing any morphological change due to its strong immune system.

India moots Action Plan to Mark 2023 as Year of Tourism Development at SCO Meet

India mooted an action plan to mark 2023 as the year of tourism development in the Shanghai **Cooperation Organization** (SCO) region at the tourism ministers' conference.

A joint action plan for implementing the agreement between the Member States on cooperation in the tourism sector was approved. It comprises **promotion of the SCO tourism brand, promotion of the cultural heritage of member states; sharing of information and digital technologies in tourism;** and **promotion of mutual cooperation** in medical and health tourism. **Kashi** has been declared as the **first tourism and cultural capital of SCO**. The meeting also adopted the **Action Plan for 'Year of Tourism Development in the SCO Space in 2023'**.

SCO is a permanent **intergovernmental international, Eurasian, political, economic and military organization** aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region. Its members include Kazakhstan, China, **Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan and Iran**.

President's Colour to INS Dronacharya

The President of India presented the **President's Colour to INS Dronacharya**. It is the highest award bestowed on a military unit in India in recognition of its exceptional services to the nation. It is also known as 'Nishaan' which is an emblem that is **worn by all unit officers on the left-hand sleeve of their uniform**.

Out of the three defence forces, the **Indian Navy** was the **first Indian Armed Force to be awarded** the President Colour by Dr. Rajendra Prasad **in 1951**.

In India, as well as many Commonwealth nations, the **tradition of Colours has been drawn from the British Army. Traditionally**, there have been **four kinds of symbols** associated with Colours —**Standards, Guidons, Colours and Banners.**

The Indian Navy's INS Dronacharya is a prestigious **gun nery school** located in **Kochi, Kerala.** is **responsible for training officers and ratings** in various fields such as small-arms, naval missiles, artillery, radar, and defensive countermeasures.

Research, Education and Training Outreach (REACHOUT) Scheme

An umbrella scheme Research, Education and Training Outreach (REACHOUT) is being implemented by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences for capacity building.** It consists of the following **sub-schemes:**

- R&D in Earth System Science (**RDESS**)
- International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (**ITCOcean**)
- Program for Development of Skilled manpower in Earth System Sciences (**DESK**)

The scheme is being **implemented for entire country and not State/UT-wise.** The main **objectives** of the above sub-schemes are:

- **Supporting various R & D activities** in the thrust areas of different components of Earth System Sciences that are theme and need based and that would help in attaining the National goals set up for MoES.
- Develop useful **collaborations with international organizations for mutual transfer of advanced knowledge** in science and technology in Earth Sciences and to provide services to developing countries.
- **Develop skilled and trained manpower** in Earth Sciences with the support of academic institutions in the country and abroad.