



Important Facts for Prelims (9th November 2018)

Bandi Chhor Divas

- Bandi Chhor Divas is celebrated a day after Deepavali to mark the arrival of **the sixth Sikh Guru Hargobind** (1595-1644) in Amritsar after his release from Gwalior Fort.
- The Mughal emperor Jahangir (1605-1627) viewed the buildup of Sikh power as a threat and jailed Guru Hargobind in the Gwalior Fort.
- Guru Hargobind developed a strong Sikh army and gave the Sikh religion its military character, in accord with the instructions of his father, Guru Arjan, the first Sikh martyr, who had been executed on the order of the Mughal emperor Jahangir.

Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities, 2018

- Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities, 2018 is being organised by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- India is hosting the event **in collaboration with the Government of Korea and Rehabilitation International (RI)**.
- The Global IT Challenge for disability is a **capacity building project** that helps youth with disabilities to overcome their limitations and challenges for a better future through access to ICT.
- It will alleviate the digital divide and expand the participation of youth with disabilities in the society.
- It propagates implementation of the **United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** (Article 21 of UNCRPD relates to access to information).
- The Global IT Challenge started in the year 1992 in Korea. Subsequently, it expanded to the neighbouring countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region and since 2011 it has become a global event.
- In 2011 the event was held in Hanoi, Vietnam followed by Incheon (South Korea in 2012), Bangkok (Thailand in 2013), Busan (South Korea in 2014), Jakarta (Indonesia in 2015), Jiangsu, (China in 2016) and Hanoi (Vietnam in 2017).

Indian Star Tortoises

- Customs officials have seized Indian Star Tortoises which were believed to be smuggled to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.
- Star Tortoises are protected under **Schedule IV of Wild Life Protection Act, 1972** and **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) has listed it under the **vulnerable category**.
- Indian star tortoise is found across the Indian sub-continent, more specifically, in the central and Southern parts of India, in West Pakistan and in Sri Lanka.
- Indian star tortoise is most commonly found in **semi-arid scrub forest, along with thorny and grassland habitats**, where there is plenty of vegetation both to hide in and feed upon.
- The tortoises are traded for food, used in traditional medicines and also kept as exotic pets.
- They are in great demand in the international market and command premium prices. Consumer demand is growing among middle-classes of countries like Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore.
- Malaysia is a major hub of growing illegal wildlife trade as the country's law does not allow

effective implementation of the CITES.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

- CITES is an **international agreement between governments**.
- It was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of **IUCN** (The World Conservation Union).
- Its aim is to ensure that **international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival**.
- Although CITES is **legally binding** on the Parties but it **does not take the place of national laws**. Rather it provides a framework to be respected by each Party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level.
- The species covered by CITES are listed in **three Appendices**, according to the degree of protection they need.
- **Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction**. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances.
- **Appendix II includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction**, but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.
- **Appendix III contains species that are protected in at least one country**, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade.
- A specimen of a CITES-listed species may be imported into or exported (or re-exported) from a State party to the Convention only if the appropriate document has been obtained and presented for clearance at the port of entry or exit.

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