Samyak
An Institute For Civil Services

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For UPSC CSE

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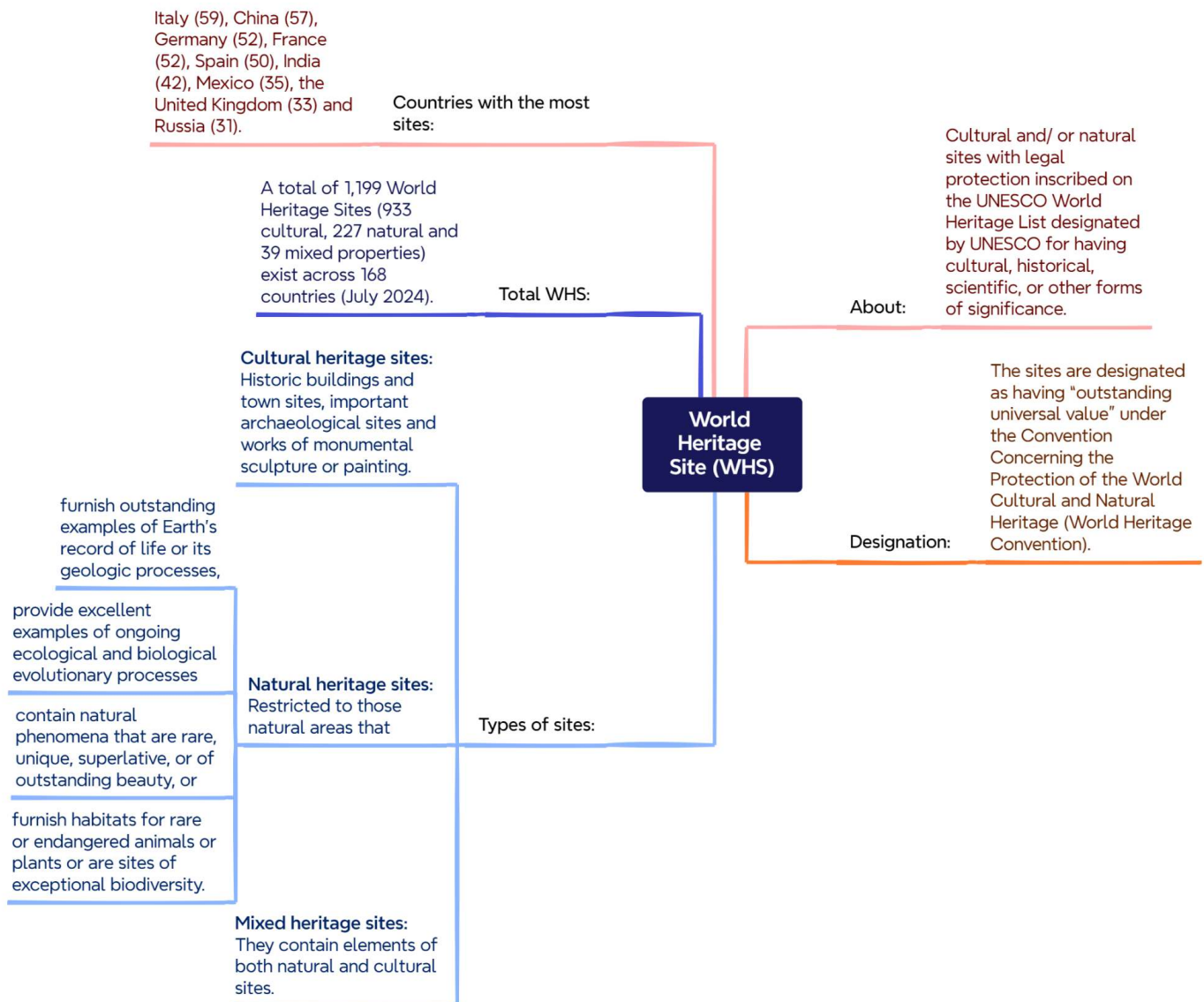
📍 **SAMYAK IAS, NEAR RIDDHI-SIDDHI, JAIPUR**

Art and Culture

1. Supreme Court Dismisses Plea To Declare Agra As 'World Heritage Site' – The Hindu

Context »

The Supreme Court recently dismissed an application seeking to declare the city of Agra as a "World Heritage Site."
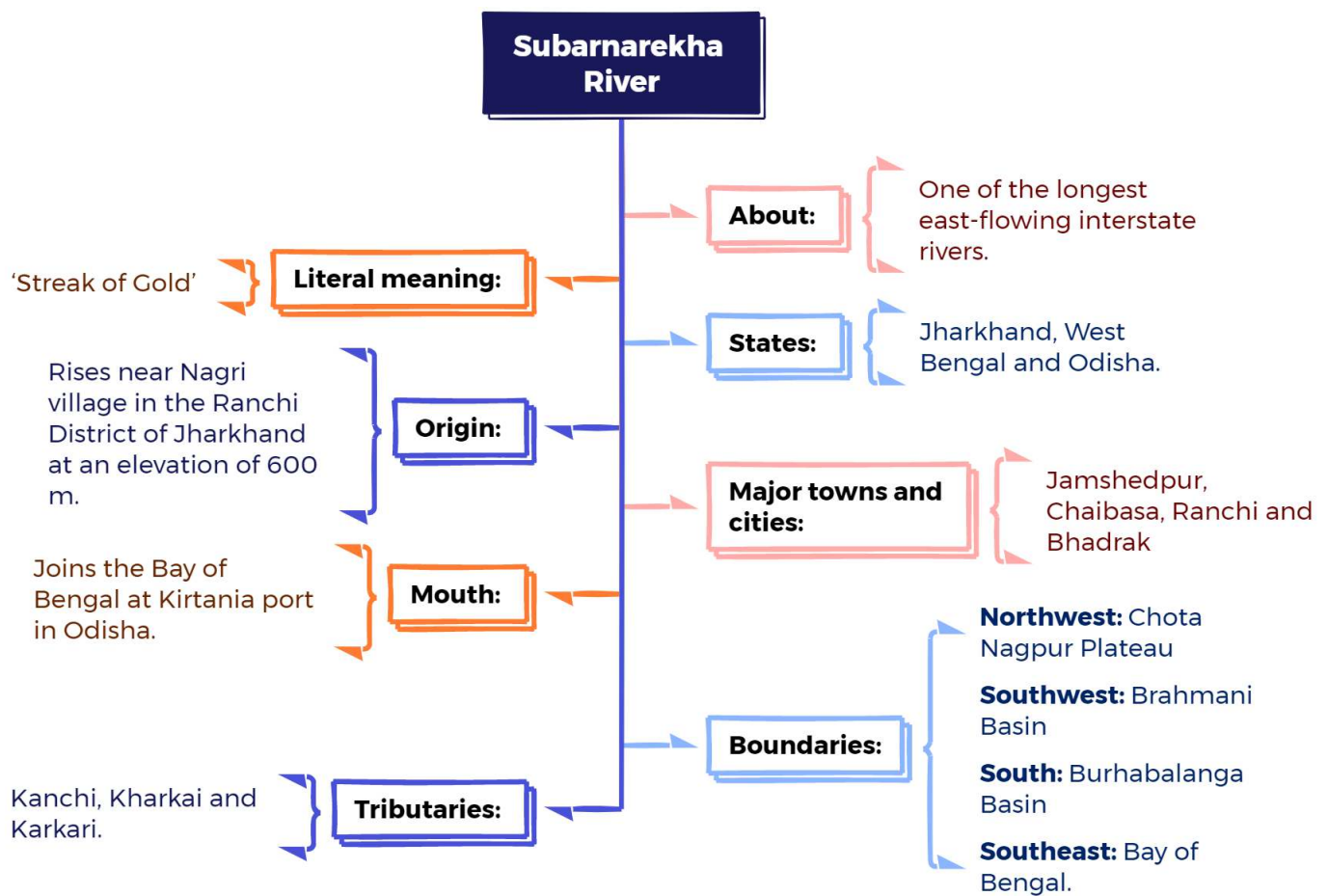
World Heritage Site (WHS) »

Countries with the most sites:
Italy (59), China (57), Germany (52), France (52), Spain (50), India (42), Mexico (35), the United Kingdom (33) and Russia (31).

Total WHS:
A total of 1,199 World Heritage Sites (933 cultural, 227 natural and 39 mixed properties) exist across 168 countries (July 2024).

World Heritage Site (WHS)

About:
Cultural and/ or natural sites with legal protection inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List designated by UNESCO for having cultural, historical, scientific, or other forms of significance.

Designation:
The sites are designated as having "outstanding universal value" under the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention).

Types of sites:

Cultural heritage sites:
Historic buildings and town sites, important archaeological sites and works of monumental sculpture or painting.

Natural heritage sites:
Restricted to those natural areas that
- furnish outstanding examples of Earth's record of life or its geologic processes,
- provide excellent examples of ongoing ecological and biological evolutionary processes
- contain natural phenomena that are rare, unique, superlative, or of outstanding beauty, or
- furnish habitats for rare or endangered animals or plants or are sites of exceptional biodiversity.

Mixed heritage sites:
They contain elements of both natural and cultural sites.

Geography

2. Subarnarekha River – Indian Express

Context »

A large python was rescued from the Subarnarekha River at Jhargram in West Bengal, causing a stir in the area. Forest department personnel arrived at the scene upon receiving the news and safely relocated the python to a secure place.

Subarnarekha River

- **About:** One of the longest east-flowing interstate rivers.

- **Literal meaning:** 'Streak of Gold'

- **States:** Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

- **Origin:** Rises near Nagri village in the Ranchi District of Jharkhand at an elevation of 600 m.

- **Major towns and cities:** Jamshedpur, Chaibasa, Ranchi and Bhadrak

- **Mouth:** Joins the Bay of Bengal at Kirtania port in Odisha.

- **Boundaries:**
  - **Northwest:** Chota Nagpur Plateau
  - **Southwest:** Brahmani Basin
  - **South:** Burhabalanga Basin
  - **Southeast:** Bay of Bengal.

- **Tributaries:** Kanchi, Kharkai and Karkari.

Polity

3. Central Information Commission (CIC) – The Hindu

Context »

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has advised the Thiruvananthapuram division of the Southern Railway to disclose the list of employees who have secured jobs under the category of people with disabilities, amid concern about fake disability certificates.

Central Information Commission (CIC)

About: A statutory body established under the provisions of the Right to Information Act (2005).

Aim: Overseer for implementing the RTI Act in the organizations of the Central Government & UTs & looks into the complaints made to it and decides the appeals regarding matters related to the RTI Act.

Headquarters: New Delhi.

Composition: A Chief Information Commissioner and not more than ten Information Commissioners.

Appointment: Appointed by the President on the recommendation of a Committee consisting of:
- Prime Minister as the Chairperson,
- Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and
- a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.

Qualifications of Members: They should be persons of eminence in public life with wide knowledge and experience in
- Law
- Science, and Technology
- Social service
- Management
- Journalism
- Mass media
- Administration and governance

Restrictions: They should not be
- a Member of Parliament or Member of the Legislature of any State or Union Territory.
- holding any other office of profit
- connected with any political party
- carrying on any business or pursuing any profession.

Tenure: They hold office for such term as prescribed by the Central Government or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

Reappointment: Not eligible for reappointment & an Information Commissioner is eligible for appointment as CIC for a tenure such that the total tenure including his/her term as Information Commissioner does not exceed five years.

Removal of Members: By the President if he/she:
- is adjudged insolvent.
- has been convicted of an offense which, in the opinion of the President, involves moral turpitude.
- engages, during his term of office, in any paid employment outside the duties of his office.
- is, in the opinion of the President, unfit to continue in office due to infirmity of mind or body.
- has acquired such financial or other interest as is likely to affect prejudicially his official functions.
- on the grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.

Salary and Service Conditions: As prescribed by the Central Government & cannot be varied to their disadvantage during the service.

Society

4. Why Commons matter, how community is key to their well-being – Indian Express

Context »

Delhi, last month, hosted a first-of-its-kind dialogue on the conservation, restoration and governance of common resources such as forests, community lands, and water bodies like lakes or rivers, all usually referred to just as Commons.

Commons »

Governance mechanisms to manage Commons:

International agreements: For instance, for the use and management of polar regions, outer space, and high seas.

Paris Agreement on climate change

Threats:

Over-exploitation and damage. Since no one owns Commons, the responsibility of maintenance and upkeep often becomes a problem.

Commons have also come under increased stress due to climate change.

Commons

About: A term used to refer to resources that are not owned by any individual or group or the government, but belong to, and are shared by, the community as a whole.

Examples: Forests, local ponds, grazing lands, rivers, and sacred sites, parks and lakes.

Can be intangible too: For example, language, folk art or dance, local customs, and traditional knowledge are all shared resources, and thus are Commons.

Commons at the international level: For example, polar regions, the Arctic and Antarctica, moon, and other planetary bodies. No country is allowed to take ownership of these areas, even though everyone can use them for certain kinds of activities.

Significance: They provide a variety of ecological and other services that are beneficial for the entire community. But they need to be maintained, preserved, and used sustainably.

Digital resources: Most Internet and open-source.

World Affairs

5. Destruction from Israeli strike on UNRWA school-turned-shelter - The Hindu

Context »

An Israeli strike on an UNRWA school-turned-shelter has killed at least 18 people and injured over a dozen others in Nuseirat, Gaza. Video from the scene shows bags of food with the UNRWA logo amid the rubble from which rescuers were removing bodies.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Chief officer: The commissioner-general - the only leader of a UN agency to report directly to the General Assembly (appointed by the UN secretary-general with the approval of an Advisory Commission).

Funding: Almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN Member States & some from the Regular Budget of the UN, which is used mostly for international staffing costs.

5 fields of operations: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank, including the East of Jerusalem.

About: A subsidiary agency created by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1949 that began operations in 1950

Aim: To provide relief, health and education services for Palestinians who lost both their homes and their means of livelihood during the Arab-Israeli wars following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

Headquarters: Originally headquartered in Beirut & later moved to Vienna in 1978.

Services: Education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance, and emergency assistance, including in times of armed conflict.

6. India sends supplies to typhoon-hit Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam - The Hindu

Context »

India recently launched Operation Sadbhav to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) to Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam that have been hit by severe flooding caused by Typhoon Yagi.

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Operation Sadbhav »

- **India's commitment:** India has committed $1 million worth of flood relief assistance to Vietnam and $1,00,000 worth of assistance to Laos.

- **Other aids:** Dry ration, clothing and medicines left for Myanmar onboard INS Satpura.

- **IAF's contribution:** Carrying 35 tonnes of aid comprising water purification items, water containers, blankets, kitchen utensils, solar lanterns for Vietnam.

- **Ten tonnes of aid to Laos:** Comprises genset, water purification items, hygiene supplies, mosquito nets, blankets and sleeping bags.

Economy

7. Union Minister Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh Launches 'Rangeen Machhli' App – PIB

Context »

Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, recently launched the "Rangeen Machhli" mobile app at ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar.

Rangeen Machhli App »

Rangeen Machhli App

About: An app to meet the growing needs of the ornamental fisheries sector, providing crucial knowledge resources for hobbyists, aquarium shop owners and fish farmers.

Development: By the Indian Council of Agricultural Research(ICAR)- Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA) with support from the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).

Features:
- Provides multilingual information on popular ornamental fish species in 8 Indian languages.
- Offers comprehensive details on care, breeding, and maintenance practices to both farmers and hobbyists.
- "Find Aquarium Shops" tool which allows users to locate nearby aquarium shops through a dynamic directory updated by shop owners.
- Includes educational modules for both newcomers and professionals in the ornamental fish industry.

Sci. and Tech .

8. Nipah death confirmed in Malappuram; 150 contacts asked to isolate themselves – The Hindu

Context »

Health authorities in Kerala confirmed the Nipah virus as the reason for the death of a 24-year-old man from Wandoor in Malappuram district.

Nipah »

Virus scare returns to Kerala

The state has prepared a contact list of over 160 high-risk individuals with the help of grassroots health workers and has also set up isolation wards

SPECIES THAT SPREAD INFECTION
Pteropus giganteus, Eonycteris spelaea, Cynopterus sphinx, Scotophilus kuhlii and Hipposideros larvatus are species of fruit bats found in India and have been known to be infected with the Nipah virus

The natural host of the virus are fruit bats

HOW IT SPREADS

1 FOOD, FLUIDS
Consuming food and fluids contaminated with saliva and droppings of infected bats

2 DATE PALM SAP
Eating fruits and drinking raw date palm sap contaminated with saliva of infected bats

3 ANIMALS
Infection of domestic animals (cattle, pigs, goats) from eating food contaminated by infected bats' saliva or droppings

4 PEOPLE
Human-to-human, through contaminated body fluids of an infected person

SYMPTOMS

Fever

Headache because of encephalitis (inflammation of the brain)

Drowsiness

Disorientation and mental confusion for 3-14 days

Epilepsy or respiratory illness may occur

Coma Infected may slowly slip into coma

PREVENTING INFECTION
- Avoid fruits bitten by birds or animals
- Scrub hands after being in close contact with the sick
- Wear double masks and gloves while looking after the sick
- Wear PPE kits if visiting hospital

TREATMENT
- No vaccine for animals or humans
- Primary treatment for humans is supportive care

9. AI-powered SaaS platforms revolutionize business operations: Expert - Indian Express

Context »

AI-powered Software as a Service (SaaS) platforms are changing industries by improving efficiency and driving innovation.

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) »

Significance:

- Provides a complete solution that enhances accessibility and convenience, allowing users to connect and use these apps on a pay-as-you-go basis.
- Shifts the burden of maintaining and hosting the software to the SaaS provider.
- Allows businesses to focus on their core activities without worrying about the technical complexities of software management.

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS)

About: A cloud-based method of delivering software where users subscribe to access applications on the Internet rather than purchasing them outright located on external servers rather than on servers located in-house.

SaaS examples: email, calendaring and cloud-based collaborative tools like Slack.

Operation: This model operates similarly to streaming services, offering flexible, subscription-based access from any compatible device.