

Current Affairs: 12/13.12.2021

KASHI VISHWANATH CORRIDOR



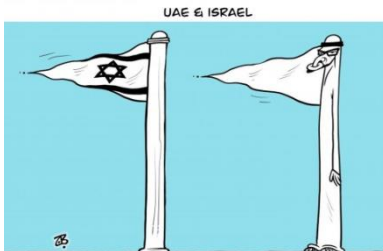
On December 13, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor connecting the ancient Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi to the ghats of the Ganga.

About:

A total 23 buildings will be inaugurated, including a Tourist Facilitation Centre, Mumukshu Bhavan, Bhogshala, City Museum, Viewing Gallery and Food Court. The corridor, said to be the PM's dream project, has been built over an area of 5,000 hectares, and seeks to not only decongest but to also transform the temple complex.

The Rs-800-crore project was launched by the PM in his parliamentary constituency in March 2019, with the aim of restoring the "lost glory" of the spiritual centre. The Kashi Vishwanath temple lacked direct access to the Ganga, and a 20-foot-wide corridor was envisaged to connect Lalita Ghat on the holy river to Mandir Chowk on the temple premises.

ISRAEL-UAE RELATIONS



Israel's Naftali Bennett arrived in the United Arab Emirates for the first official visit by a Prime Minister of the Jewish state, after they established diplomatic ties last year.

About:

The trip announced by Mr. Bennett's office comes amid Israel's renewed diplomatic push against resumed international talks with its arch foe Iran over the Islamic republic's nuclear programme. Iran and world powers have resumed negotiations on the frayed 2015 nuclear deal that offered Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme, which Tehran says is civilian in nature. Bennett will meet Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan to discuss "deepening the ties between Israel and the UAE, especially economic and regional issues."

Background

The UAE last year became the third Arab nation to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel after Egypt and Jordan.

Bahrain and Morocco then followed as part of a series of deals brokered by former U.S. President Donald Trump.

Sudan also agreed to normalise ties with Israel under the so-called Abraham Accords, but full relations have not yet materialised.

BANKING REFORMS

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Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das indicated that the banking regulator will ring in sweeping regulatory changes to reform urban cooperative banks that have been plagued by a spate of failures, and warned people against parking their savings in banks offering high returns.

About:

While describing the Government's decision to raise the insured limit for bank deposits to ₹5 lakh from ₹1 lakh with a 90-day time limit to pay out such deposits as 'landmark' developments, Mr. Das stressed that the payment of deposit insurance should be seen as a "measure of last resort". There are institutions that are offering higher interest rates which are viable, but depositors should always be very careful," he reiterated at an event to mark the payment of nearly ₹1,300 crore to over 1 lakh depositors whose funds were stuck in distressed banks for years. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed a function on "Depositors First: Guaranteed Time-bound Deposit Insurance Payment up to Rs. 5 Lakh" in New Delhi.

NATIONAL HELPLINE AGAINST ATROCITIES (NHAA)

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is scheduled to launch a National Helpline Against Atrocities (NHAA) on 13th Dec 2021.

About:

Aim is to ensure proper implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {PoA} Act, 1989 which was enacted with a view to, inter-alia, preventing atrocities on members of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

The NHAA will be available round the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country. It can be accessed by making a voice call /VOIP either from a mobile or land line number of any Telecom Operator across the country. This service will be available in Hindi, English and regional language of the State/UTs. Its Mobile application will also be available. Available as a web based self-service portal also, the NHAA will generate awareness about the Protection of Civil Right (PCR) Act, 1955 and its rules as well. A Docket number shall be given for each complaint received from Victim/Complainant/NGOs regarding non-compliance of the POA Act, 1989 and the PCR Act, 1955. The status of the grievance can be tracked by complainant/NGOs online. Any inquiry shall be replied by IVR or operators in Hindi, English and Regional languages.

NEW CALEDONIA

Voters in the French island territory of New Caledonia chose overwhelmingly to remain part of France, in a referendum boycotted by pro-independence forces and closely watched around the South Pacific.



About:

New Caledonia is a sui generis collectivity of overseas France in the southwest Pacific Ocean, south of Vanuatu, about 1,210 km east of

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Australia, and 17,000 km from Metropolitan France.

The archipelago, part of the Melanesia subregion, includes the main island of Grande Terre, the Loyalty Islands, the Chesterfield Islands, the Belep archipelago, the Isle of Pines, and a few remote islets. The Chesterfield Islands are in the Coral Sea. French President Emmanuel Macron hailed the result as a resounding confirmation of France's role in the Indo-Pacific, and announced negotiations on the territory's future status. Separatist activists expressed disappointment.

They had urged a delay in the vote because of the pandemic, and were angry over what they said were French government efforts to sway the campaign. So they called on their supporters to stay away from voting stations.

NATIONAL HIGHWAY 334B



Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has said the project, NH-334B is nearing completion with ~93% progress and is targeted for an early completion by 3 months in January 2022.

About:

The NH-334B which starts at UP/Haryana border (Baghpat) and ends at Rohna will provide seamless connectivity from UP to Rajasthan border via Haryana ensuring users can bypass Delhi traffic. The NH-334B also crosses NH-44 providing direct access to commuters to Chandigarh and Delhi.

CELEBRATING INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM



As a part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, a week-long event, "Celebrating Innovation Ecosystem", to be hosted by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), is proposed to be held in January 2022.

About:

The event will mark the 6th anniversary of the launch of the Startup India initiative. The key objectives of the Innovation Week will be to bring together the country's key Startups, entrepreneurs, investors, policy makers and other national/ international stakeholders for a specially curated event on innovation and entrepreneurship. The event will feature a dedicated exhibition area for select Startups (including DPIIT-recognised Startups, National Startup Awards Finalists, Startups supported by Fund of Funds for Startups, beneficiary Startups of Government of India Ministries/ States). Mentoring and incubation support at the

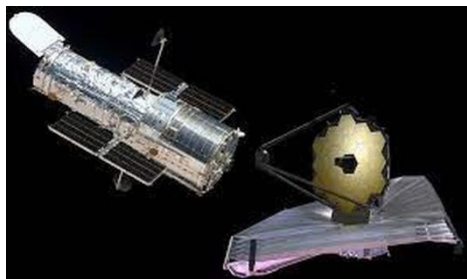
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event will also be provided in collaboration with partnering agencies such as AIM NITI Aayog, DST, DBT, MeitY, DPIIT, Invest India and more.



WEBB VS HUBBLE TELESCOPES



The James Webb Space Telescope, NASA's most powerful telescope, is scheduled to be rocketed into orbit no earlier than December 22. Though Webb is often called the replacement for the Hubble Space Telescope, NASA said it prefers to call it a successor.

Differences between Webb and the Hubble Telescope

Wavelength: The James Webb Space Telescope will observe primarily in the infrared range and provide coverage from 0.6 to 28 microns. The instruments on Hubble see mainly in the ultraviolet and visible part of the spectrum. It could observe only a small range in the infrared from 0.8 to 2.5 microns.

Size: Webb's primary mirror has a diameter of 6.5 metres. Hubble's mirror was much smaller – 2.4 metres in diameter. So, Webb will have a larger field of view compared to the camera on Hubble.

Orbit: Hubble orbits around the Earth at an altitude of ~570 km. Webb will not orbit the Earth. It will orbit the sun at about 1.5 million kilometres away from Earth.

BUXA TIGER RESERVE (BTR)



An increase in the forest density and the big cat prey base, especially deer, had attracted a Royal Bengal tiger, a first such sighting in 23 years, to the Buxa Tiger reserve.

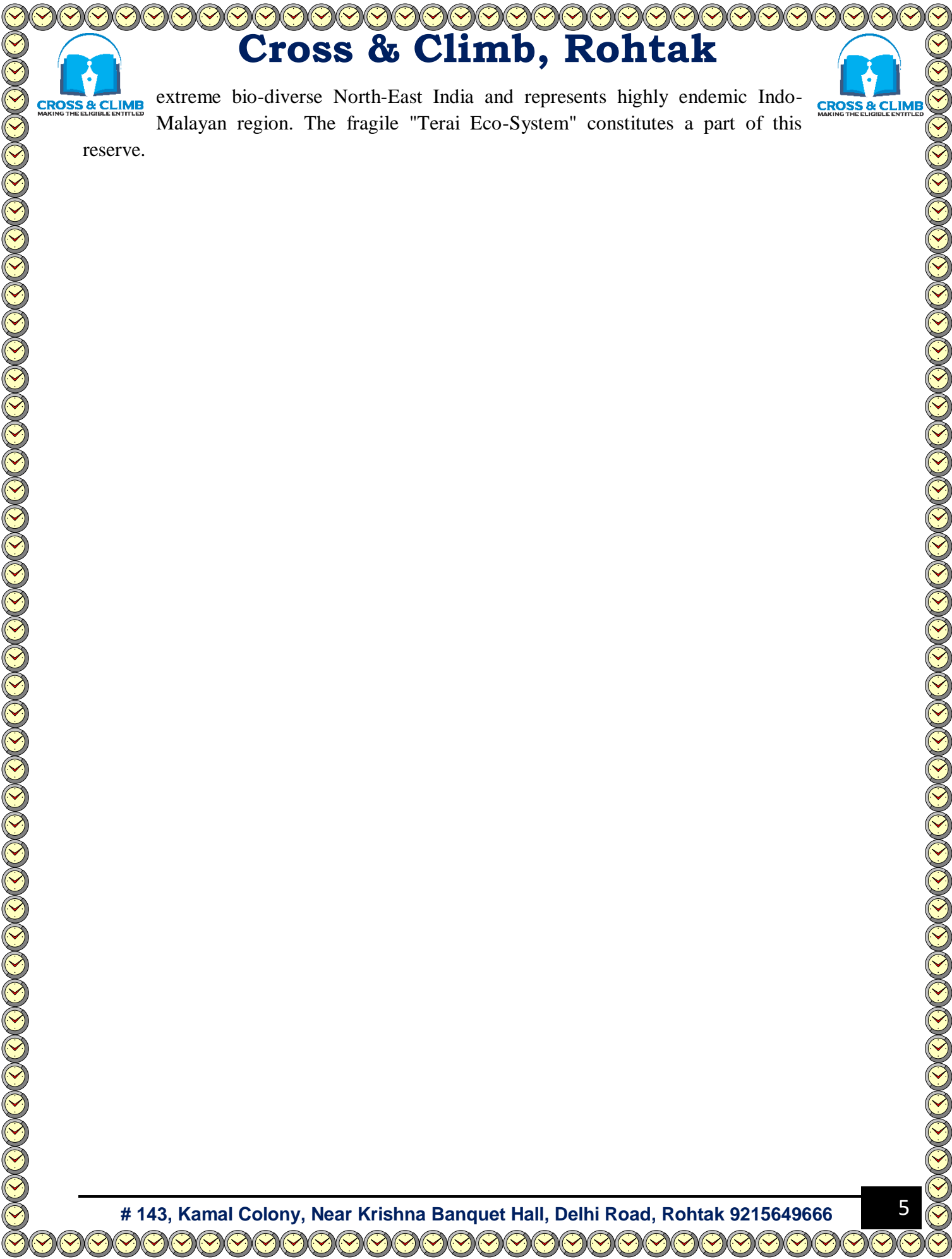
About:

They believed that a favourable habitat at the tiger reserve would invite more tigers, which had migrated to neighbouring Bhutan. The state shares a contiguous range of the protected area with Bhutan. The forest department shared

a camera trap picture of the tiger spotted at the East Damanpur range of the tiger reserve.

Geography

Buxa Tiger Reserve lies in Alipurduar district of West Bengal. Its northern boundary runs along the international border with Bhutan. The Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary of Bhutan is contiguous to the north of BTR. The Sinchula hill range lies all along the northern side of BTR and the eastern boundary touches that of the Assam state. Manas National Park lies on east of BTR. BTR, thus, serves as international corridor for Asian elephant migration between India and Bhutan. National Highway No.31 C roughly runs along its southern boundary. It is the easternmost extension of



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extreme bio-diverse North-East India and represents highly endemic Indo-Malayan region. The fragile "Terai Eco-System" constitutes a part of this reserve.

