

BHITARKANIKA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

The Odisha government has cancelled leases granted to two aquaculture companies for shrimp culture over a sprawling area inside Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary, which is famous for crocodile conservation and thick mangrove forests.



About:

- Bhitarkanika National Park is located in Kendrapara district in Odisha.
- The area has been designated as second Ramsar site of the State after the Chilika Lake.
- It is surrounded by Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary. Gahirmatha Beach and Marine Sanctuary are to the east, separating swamp region and mangroves from the Bay of Bengal.
- The national park and wildlife sanctuary is inundated by the rivers Brahmani, Baitarani, Dhamra, Pathsala.
- It is the second largest mangrove ecosystem in India.

11% OF CLASS 3 KIDS LACK BASIC MATHS SKILLS: NCERT STUDY

In News:

- According to a study, 11% of Indian children in Class III lack basic mathematics skills when compared to the global benchmark proficiency level.
- This was revealed in the national report on 'Benchmarking for oral reading fluency with reading comprehension and numeracy 2022' of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

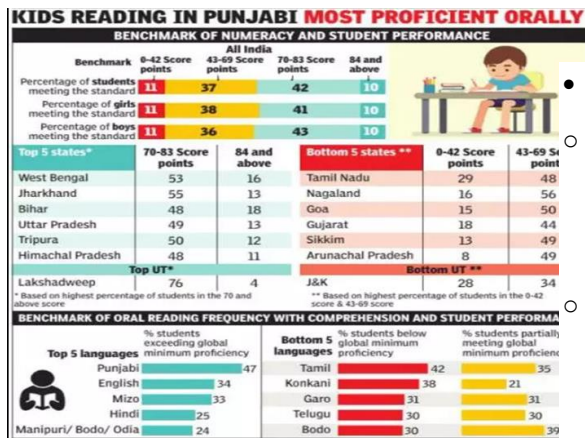
The study undertaken by NCERT:

Background:

- A large-scale foundational learning study (FLS) was recently undertaken jointly by the Ministry of Education and the NCERT.

- Foundational learning, which is the children's ability to read with meaning and do basic math calculations by Class III, forms the basis of all future learning.
- The study aims to provide reliable data about Class III students in order to determine what they are capable of doing in foundational literacy and numeracy, as well as the extent to which learning outcomes are achieved.
- The survey categorizes learners based on their knowledge and skills into four groups: **those who lack them**, those who have **limited proficiency**, those who have **sufficient competency**, and those who are **superior**.
- The survey results will assist the government in establishing benchmarks in 20 languages and numeracy.
- The national report on 'Benchmarking for oral reading fluency with reading comprehension and numeracy 2022' published by the NCERT is the result of this study.

Findings of the study:



- **In the foundational numeracy** (skills in maths),
 - The study discovered that 48% of Class III students lacked or had limited basic numeracy knowledge and skills.
 - As many as 11% of students were unable to complete the most basic grade-level numeracy tasks, and 37% could only partially complete basic grade-level tasks.
- **Tamil Nadu** was the worst performer among the states, with 77% of students lacking or having only limited numeracy skills.
- In total, 11 states had more than 50% of students who lacked or had limited numerical skills.
- **In the language proficiency**,
 - Students' foundational learning in **Hindi** is poor, but their performance in **regional languages** is even worse in some states.

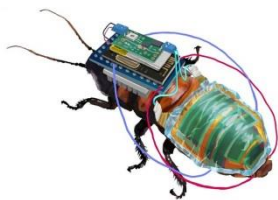
- In 18 states, approximately 53% of Class III students surveyed for Hindi proficiency lacked or had limited knowledge and skills in reading and comprehending the language.
- Regional language proficiency was lower in states such as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala, with 59% of students either lacking or displaying limited skills.

Some government initiatives:

- **The National Education Policy 2020:**
 - It advocates for a 3-language formula in which two of the languages are indigenous to India.
 - It states that the medium of instruction should be in the mother tongue until at least Class V, and preferably until Class VIII, after which it can be taught as a language.
 - The Policy also emphasizes the significance of foundational learning.
- **The National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN) Bharat:**
 - The Union Ministry of Education launched the NIPUN Bharat in 2021 as a national mission to enable all children at the end of Class III to attain foundational skills by the year 2026-2027.

CYBORG COCKROACHES

An international team of researchers led by Japan's scientific institution, RIKEN's Cluster for Pioneering Research (CPR), have devised a system that can create cyborg cockroaches, that are part insect and part machine.



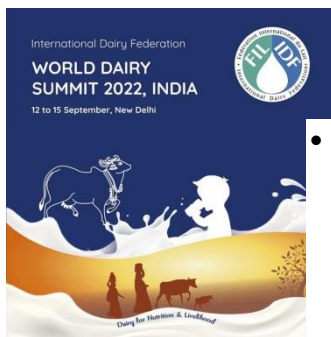
About:

- They claim that these insects, whose movements are controlled by tiny integrated circuits, will be able to conduct surveillance in procedures like urban search and rescue, environmental monitoring and inspection of areas dangerous to humans.
- The researchers claim that by equipping the cockroaches with small wireless control modules, handlers will be able to control the insect's legs remotely for long periods of time.

- The team used Madagascar cockroaches, which are not only the largest species of cockroaches, reaching an estimated 6 cm, but are also known for making hissing sounds when disturbed, which they make by expelling air from the openings on their back.
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WORLD DAIRY SUMMIT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the World Dairy Summit on 12th September in Noida.



About:

- India is organising the summit after almost a 48-year gap bringing together approximately 1500 participants from all over the world including CEOs and employees of dairy processing companies, dairy farmers, and other stakeholders.
 - Remembering the “Father of White Revolution”, Dr Verghese Kurien, it must be pointed out that India currently is the largest milk producer in the world, contributing 21 percent of the total global milk production.
 - It was under the guidance of former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri that the National Dairy Development Board was formed in 1965 in Gujarat with Dr Verghese Kurien as its first chairman.
 - Operation Flood programme was implemented across country in various phases with a mandate to support the creation of the ‘Anand pattern’ of dairy cooperatives.
 - The daily milk consumption in the country was 107 grams per person in 1970 which rose to 427 grams per person in 2020-21.
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NEERAJ CHOPRA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated Neeraj Chopra for scripting history yet again by becoming the first Indian to win the prestigious Diamond League Trophy.



About:

- Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian to win the Dimond Trophy, the prestigious title in the finale of the Diamond League series in men's javelin.
 - The 24-year-old, the Olympic champion from Tokyo, threw 88.44m to finish on the top step of the podium.
 - Neeraj finished ahead of Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch and Germany's Julian Webber to script history.
 - Neeraj has won the Olympic Gold in 2021, the Asian Games Gold in 2018, the Commonwealth Games Gold in 2018, the World Athletics Championships silver in 2022.
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PRIVATE SECTOR IN RAILWAYS

Indian railways for the first time has floated a tender to invite private players to build high-speed wheel plant under the Make in India initiative.



About:

- Under this move, the Railway will procure 80,000 wheels per year with a total cost of 6,00 crore rupees and manufacturing will take place in the country only.
 - Manufacturing is expected to start within next 18 months and once India achieves high standard of manufacturing of wheels, it will eye at exporting wheels mostly to European countries.
 - Trial and testing of Vande Bharat train have been completed and manufacturing is expected to start from October this year. This train can attain its speed from 0 to 100 kilometres per hour in just 52 seconds, three seconds less than bullet train's pickup speed.
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