

Mains Exam Practice (MEP): Questions of the Day

1. Discuss the significance of youth-centric initiatives like the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue in empowering young minds and fostering innovation for national development. How can such platforms contribute to achieving the vision of a "Viksit Bharat"? [BPSC General Studies I Section II:38marks]
2. Discuss the significance of the Kumbh Mela in promoting cultural heritage and social harmony in India. Analyze the role of modern initiatives, such as the introduction of insurance policies for devotees, in ensuring the safety and well-being of participants during such large-scale religious gatherings [BPSC General Studies I Section II:38 marks]

Bihar Special

Bird Night Heron

Why in the news?

After China and Vietnam in Asia, the Night Heron bird has been seen in the Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR) of Bihar.

- ❖ More than 100 species of animals and more than 350 species of birds are already present in VTR.

- ❖ This bird was first seen in VTR on 24 November 2016.
- ❖ In the year 2000, it was included in the category of endangered birds.
- ❖ The scientific name of Night Heron is *Oronotos magnifica*



22 इव लंबाई होती है पक्षी को। दुनिया भर में मात्र एक हजार ही हैं संख्या

■ नाइट हेरोन (रात्रि बगुला) दुर्लभ प्रजाति के पक्षी मिलने से वीटीआर प्रशासन मदद
■ रफेद कान व खासियत के कारण रात्रि बगुला को कहा जात है मायावी पक्षी

वीटीआर में पहली बार नाइट हेरोन 2016 में दिखाया

इस पक्षी को पहली बार नवंबर 2016 नवंबर को जानवरों के लिए लगाए गए कैमरा ट्रैप में रात के समय भोजन के लिए निकलने के दौरान देखा गया था। आठ वर्षों बाद इसका दिखना वीटीआर प्रशासन के लिए सुखद है। जैव विविधता के कारण वीटीआर के जंगल व अनुसूचित जातों की वजह से यहां दुर्लभ प्रजाति के पक्षी मिले हैं।

खासियत

- नर पक्षी का रंग काला और भूरा होता है
- गर्दन पर वेस्टवर्ट (भूरा लाल अक्षर) जैसा व चौंके का रंग काला होता है
- मादा पक्षी एक बार में 3 से 5 अंडे देती है
- 15 से 20 दिनों के अंडे से बच्चे बाहर निकलते हैं

National Affairs

Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2025

Why in the news?

The Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2025 kicked off at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on January 10, 2025, with a mission to encourage youth participation in nation-building.

- ❖ **Organized By:** Department of Youth Affairs under Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya.
- ❖ **Objective:** Encourage youth participation in nation-building and empower young minds to contribute to a "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India).

key themes

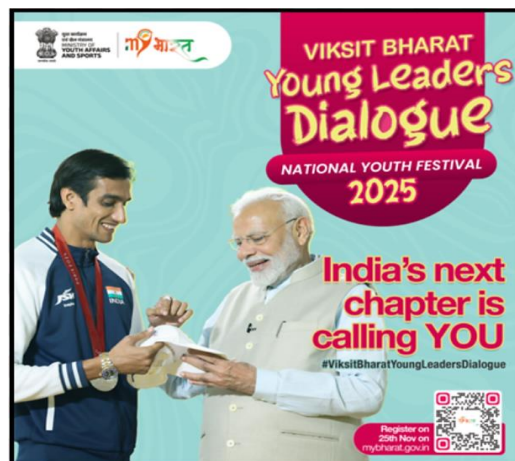
- ❖ "Tech for Viksit Bharat"
- ❖ "Empowering Women"

Key Announcements

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a Coffee Table Book featuring the top essays from the event and unveil a Youth Anthem designed to inspire unity and action among India's young leaders.

Participants

- ❖ Total Participants: 3,000 young leaders.
 - Viksit Bharat Track: 1,500 participants from the top 500 State Championship teams.
 - Traditional Track: 1,000 participants selected via state-level cultural programs.
 - Pathbreakers: 500 individuals recognized for groundbreaking contributions across ten thematic tracks.
- ❖ The day will conclude with "Colours of Viksit Bharat," a cultural celebration showcasing India's diversity.
- ❖ The dialog will conclude on January 12, celebrated as National Youth Day to honour the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.



Haryana's sex ratio

Why in the news?

Haryana's sex ratio at birth has dropped to 910 females per 1,000 males in 2024, marking an eight-year low with a six-point decline from 2023. This is the lowest figure since 2016 when it was 900.

- ❖ The data, from the Civil Registration System (CRS) up to December 2024, highlights the state's declining gender balance. Nationally, India's average sex ratio at birth was 933 in 2022-23, down from 943 in the 2011 Census and 929 in the 2019-2021 National Family Health Survey.
- ❖ The sex ratio at birth, which measures the number of female births per 1,000 male births, reflects a concerning downward trend in the state's gender balance.

Sex Ratio in India Census 2011:

- ❖ The sex ratio at all India levels was 943 and the same for rural and urban areas are 949 and 929 respectively.
- ❖ The sex ratio for the 0-19 age group was 908 while that of the 60+ age group was 1033.
- ❖ The sex ratio in the economically active age group (15-59 years) was 944.
- ❖ The sex ratio was highest in Kerala (1084) followed by Puducherry (1037) and lowest in Daman & Diu (618) followed by Dadar & Nagar Haveli (774) and then Chandigarh (818).

International Relations

AI Summit in France

Why in the news?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Action Summit.

- ❖ **Date & Venue:** The Summit will take place at the Grand Palais in Paris on February 10-11, 2025.

Participation

- ❖ Heads of State from the US, China, Gulf countries, and 90 other nations were invited.
- ❖ CEOs, academics, NGOs, artists, and members of civil society.

The event will focus on five key themes: public interest in AI, the future of work, innovation and culture, trust in AI, and global AI governance.



Miscellaneous

PhonePe & ICICI Lombard

Why in the news?

For the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 in Prayagraj, PhonePe has partnered with ICICI Lombard to introduce a ground-breaking insurance policy specially designed for devotees.

- ❖ The initiative aims to provide financial security and peace of mind to millions of people attending the world's largest religious gathering.

The insurance plan is offered in two affordable variants:

- ₹59 per person for travelers by bus or train.
- ₹99 per person for domestic flight passengers.

- ❖ This policy provides extensive coverage, including hospitalization, outpatient treatment, personal accident cover, and even loss of checked-in baggage.
- ❖ Other benefits include trip cancellation protection, missed connecting flight cover, and repatriation of remains, ensuring comprehensive support for travelers.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Exhibition

Why in the news?

The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Exhibition at Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar, is now open to the general public, including students, and will remain accessible until the evening of 12 January 2025.

- ❖ The exhibition showcases Odisha's rich heritage, highlighting key aspects such as Jagannath culture, festivals like Manabasa Gurubar and Dol Purnima, and its maritime legacy.
- ❖ It offers insights into classical and folk dances, traditional crafts, and the state's history, from the Kalinga War to the Paika Rebellion and its formation in 1936.
- ❖ Iconic symbols like the Rath Yatra, Sunabesha, and Konark Wheel are featured, alongside artefacts such as Pipili Chandua, Pattachitra, Sambalpuri sarees, and handlooms.

- ❖ Odisha's tribal culture, local crafts, and music are also showcased, with a digital representation of ancient maritime trade journeys.



Persons In News

Justice BN Srikrishna

Why in the news?

Retired Supreme Court judge BN Srikrishna has been appointed chairman of the advisory board of identity verification firm Equal and its investee, data-sharing platform OneMoney on January 9, 2025.

- ❖ Justice B.N. Srikrishna, known for his pivotal role in shaping India's data protection framework, brings decades of legal expertise and a profound understanding of how to harmonize individual rights, economic growth and national interests.



About Equal and OneMoney:

- ❖ Equal, founded in 2022 by Keshav Reddy and Rajeev Ranjan, provides identity authentication services by integrating over 50 databases and 4,000+ API providers. Serving clients like WeWork, L&T, and TVS, Equal processes over 75 million monthly transactions for 250+ clients.
- ❖ In August 2024, it invested in One-Money, an RBI-licensed account aggregator, enhancing its consent-based financial data-sharing capabilities.

Obituary

P. Jayachandran

Why in the news?

Renowned playback singer P. Jayachandran, affectionately called "Bhava Gayakan" passed away on January 9, 2025.

- ❖ The singer who recorded over 16,000 songs in Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Hindi, was widely recognised for his contribution to Indian music, having won several awards for a best playback singer.

- ❖ He won the Kerala State Film Award five times and the Tamil Nadu State Film Award twice, and his performance of "Shiva Shankara Sharana Sarva Vibho" from the film Sree Narayana Guru earned him the National Award.



News in Short

- ❖ H Lakshmanan, former executive director of Sundaram-Clayton (now TVS Holdings Ltd), passed away at 91.
- ❖ East India Science and Engineering Fair 2025 was organized at BITM Kolkata on 7-10 January 2025.
 - Child scientist Arya Prasun from Bhagalpur, Bihar received the State Best Model Award.
- ❖ Under the Regional Connectivity Scheme, efforts have been intensified to build new airports in four cities of Bihar namely Gopalganj, Begusarai, Munger and Dehri-on-Sone.



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