

Science & Technology

Discovery of 1.5-Billion-Year-Old "Giant" Viruses in Yellowstone

Context: Scientists have recently uncovered a significant discovery in Yellowstone National Park: "giant" viruses estimated to be around 1.5 billion years old. The term "giant" refers to the unusually large gene size of these viruses compared to most known viruses.



Importance of Giant Viruses

The discovery of these ancient viruses is crucial for understanding the period when Earth's first single-cell organisms were emerging. Studying these giant viruses provides researchers with valuable insights into the environmental conditions and biological processes that influenced the early stages of life's development.

Yellowstone National Park

- ❖ Established in 1872, Yellowstone National Park is the world's first national park.

- ❖ Spanning over 2.2 million acres, the park is located in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho.
- ❖ Yellowstone sits atop a supervolcano, which fuels its extensive geothermal activity.
- ❖ The park boasts over 10,000 thermal features, including more than 500 geysers such as the renowned Old Faithful.
- ❖ Yellowstone hosts a diverse range of wildlife, with more animal species than any other park in the contiguous United States.
- ❖ Notable inhabitants include the Canadian lynx and grizzly bears.
- ❖ One of the largest high-altitude lakes in North America, Yellowstone Lake is a prominent feature of the park.

International News & Events

Blockout 2024: An Online Movement for Social Change

Context: Blockout 2024 is a new online movement encouraging people to unfollow celebrities and influencers on social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok.

- ❖ This movement gained significant traction following the Met Gala, a high-profile fashion event, which took place amid the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza.



Consumer Activism: Comparative Examples

- ❖ Similar to Blockout 2024, other forms of consumer activism have demonstrated the power of collective action in driving social change.
- ❖ For instance, boycotts against brands like Zara, prompted by controversial advertisements, highlight how consumer solidarity can address ethical issues and influence corporate behaviour.
- ❖ These examples underscore the significant impact that coordinated consumer efforts can have in advocating for social and moral concerns.

UNESCO Recognition: Feminist Utopian Novel "Sultana's Dream" as Part of "Memory of the World"

Context: "Sultana's Dream" by Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has been recently added to UNESCO's prestigious "Memory of the World" list. This recognition was announced at the 10th General Meeting of the Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific, held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on May 7-8, 2024.



Significance of Inclusion in UNESCO's Register

- ❖ The inclusion of "Sultana's Dream" in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register underscores its immense cultural and historical importance.
- ❖ This novel is not only a pioneering work in feminist literature but also notable for its visionary ideas, predicting future technologies such as solar panels and helicopters.

Notable Works by Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain

- ❖ Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain has authored several significant works, including: Pipasha, Matichur (1st Vol), Matichur (2nd Vol), Saurajagat, Delicia Hatya, Jnan-phal, Nari-Srishti, Nurse, Nelly, Mukti-phal, Sultana's Dream, Padmarag, Abarodhbasini, Boligarto, Narir Adhikar, God Gives, Man Robs, Education Ideas for the Modern Indian Girl.

Environment

Venezuela Becomes First Country to Lose All Glaciers

Context: Venezuela has become the first modern country to lose all its glaciers, marking a significant environmental shift. The Sierra Nevada de Mérida mountain range in Venezuela once boasted six glaciers.

- ❖ By 2011, five of these had already melted away, leaving only the Humboldt glacier. Experts initially estimated that Humboldt would persist for another decade, but recent studies reveal it has melted much faster than anticipated.



Humboldt Glacier in Venezuela

New research highlights that the Humboldt glacier in the Andes, previously expansive, has now shrunk to less than 2 hectares. This reduction means it is no longer classified as a glacier but merely an ice field.

Humboldt Glacier in Greenland

Contrary to the Humboldt glacier in Venezuela, the Humboldt Glacier in northwest Greenland is the longest and largest tidewater glacier in the Northern Hemisphere, stretching about 110 kilometers. Flowing from the Greenland Ice Sheet into the Kane Basin, satellite data indicates significant retreat in recent years, underscoring the impact of climate change.

Sports

Sunil Chhetri Announces Retirement

Context: Sunil Chhetri, the renowned captain of the Indian national football team and Kolkata FC, has announced his retirement. This marks the end of a distinguished and successful career for one of India's most celebrated footballers.



International Trophies Won for India

Throughout his career, Sunil Chhetri significantly contributed to India's success in international football. He played a pivotal role in:

Winning four Nehru Cups

- ❖ Securing five South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championships
- ❖ Clinching the AFC Challenge Cup in 2008, which enabled India to qualify for the AFC Asian Cup for the first time in 27 years



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