

# UPSC GATEWAY

PRELIM SNIPPETS

12<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2019

## 1. VIKRAM SARABHAI

**Context:** Google Doodle celebrates Vikram Sarabhai's 100th birth anniversary

- He is considered as the **Father of India's space program.**

### About:

- Born in Ahmedabad in 1919, Dr. Sarabhai earned his doctorate at Cambridge.
- He founded the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) in Ahmedabad in 1947.
- After Russia's Sputnik launch, he managed to convince the Indian government on the need for India, a developing country, to have its own space program.
- He established the **Indian National Committee for Space Research in 1962**, which was later renamed the **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)**.
- He helped set up the **Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station** in **Thiruvananthapuram**, with its inaugural flight in 1963.
- He had worked on **India's first satellite, Aryabhata**, but he never lived to see its launch in 1975, which happened four years after his death.
- Apart from ISRO and PRL, he pioneered the setting up of several institutions, such as the-
  - Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad
  - Community Science Centre
  - Darpan Academy for Performing Arts (which he set up with his wife Mrinalini, a renowned dancer).

### Awards and honours:

- He received the **Padma Bhushan in 1966** and was conferred the **Padma Vibhushan** posthumously in 1972.
- In 1973, a crater on the moon was named after him.

## 2. EID AL-ADHA

**Context:** Eid ul-Adha 2019: History of the Holy Festival of Muslims Across the World

### About:

- Eid-ul-Zuha is also known as Eid-ul-Adha, Eid-ul-Azha and Bakr-Id.
- It is also referred to as the **festival of sacrifice**.
- The word 'Eid' in Arabic means 'festival' and 'zuha' means 'sacrifice'.
- It is a festival that Muslims celebrate with special prayers, greetings and gifts.

- They may sacrifice a sheep or goat and share the meat with family members and others.
- Because of the tradition of **sacrificing a goat** ('bakri' in Urdu) it is known as **Bakr-id**.

#### **When:**

- It is celebrated on the **10th day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah** (in Islamic Calender).
- Eid al Adha is that it also marks the end of the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, which is a mandatory religious journey undertaken by Muslims to the holy place of Kabbah.

### **3. TARDIGRADES**

**Context:** An Israeli spacecraft called Beresheet crashed onto the Moon in April.

- Now it's been revealed that the mission was carrying a cargo of dehydrated microscopic lifeforms known as **tardigrades** and it was reported that they may still be alive.



#### **About:**

- Tardigrades are also known as water bears or moss piglets.
- They are a phylum of water-dwelling eight-legged segmented micro-animals.

#### **Appearance:**

- Tardigrades are usually about 0.5 mm (0.02 in) long when fully grown. They are short and plump, with four pairs of legs, each ending in claws (usually four to eight) or sucking disks.
- Tardigrades are prevalent in mosses and lichens and feed on plant cells, algae, and small invertebrates.

#### **Distribution:**

- They have been found everywhere, from mountaintops to the deep sea and mud volcanoes, from tropical rain forests to the Antarctic.
- Tardigrades are among the most resilient animals known, with individual species able to survive extreme conditions and have survived exposure to outer space.

### **4. NEHRU TROPHY BOAT RACE**

**Context:** The Kerala government has put off 2019 edition of Nehru Trophy Boat Race (NTBR) scheduled for Saturday following heavy rains and wind.

#### **About:**

- Nehru Trophy Boat Race is a popular Vallam Kali (boat race) held in the Punnamada Lake near Alappuzha, Kerala on the second Saturday of August every year.

- The most popular event of the race is the competition of **Chundan Vallams (snake boats)**. Hence the race is also known as Snake Boat Race in English.
- Other categories of boats such as **Churulan Vallam, Iruttukuthy Vallam, Odi Vallam** etc. also participates in the competition.
- It is **organized by the Nehru Trophy Boat Race Society** under the guidance of the district administration.

### **About Vembanad Lake:**

- Vembanad is the longest lake in India, which spans several districts in Kerala.
- It is known as Punnamada Lake in Kuttanad, Kochi Lake in Kochi.

## **5. SOIL WORMS**

**Context:** A team of over 50 researchers collected over 6,500 soil samples from all seven continents of the world and found that there are about 57 billion nematodes for every human being on Earth.

### **Findings:**

- There are about 57 billion nematodes for every human being on Earth.
- Their total biomass comes to around 300 million tonnes which is about 80% of the combined weight of Earth's humans.
- These nematodes are responsible for 2.2% of the total carbon emission from soils.
- At 38% of the total, sub-Arctic regions have the highest abundance of nematodes.
- The temperate region has the next highest abundance followed by the tropical regions

### **About Soil Worms:**

- Soil worms or Nematodes are roundworms and their size can vary from a tiny 0.2 millimetre to a few metres. These nematodes play a crucial role in the environment as they are responsible for production of about 19% of ammonia of the soil.
- They are also important bioindicators of soil ecosystem health.

## **6. KAJIN SARA LAKE**

**Context:** Kajin Sara lake, a newly-discovered lake in Nepal is likely to set a new record of being the world's highest lake replacing Tilicho Lake

### **About:**

- The Kajin Sara lake in Manang district was discovered about a few months ago by a team of mountaineers,
- It is located at **Singarkharka area of Chame rural municipality in Manang district of Nepal.**

- It is located at an **altitude of 5,200 metres**, which is yet to be officially verified. It is estimated to be 1,500-metre-long and 600-metre-wide.
- The lake would be the **world's highest lake if its altitude of 5000-plus metres**

#### Tilicho Lake:

- Currently **Tilicho Lake** holds the title of the **world's highest lake**.
- It is situated at an altitude of 4,919 metres in Nepal.

## 7. INDIA BANGLADESH WATER COOPERATION

**Context:** India, Bangladesh to set up committee for **optimum utilisation of water resources** during Secretary-level meeting

#### About:

- India and Bangladesh have agreed to set up a Joint Technical committee for optimum utilisation of Ganges water as being received by Bangladesh under the Ganga Water Sharing Treaty 1996.
- Both the countries also agreed to prepare a framework for interim water-sharing agreement for eight rivers including Feni, Gumti and Teesta.
- The Secretary-level meeting was held after a gap of more than 8 years.
- It is an **important step in enhancing bilateral cooperation** in the water resources sector between **India and Bangladesh**.

#### Facts:

- The **Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna mega-basin** is the second largest hydraulic region in the world.
- Within this basin, 54 rivers cross the border between upstream **India and downstream Bangladesh**.

## 8. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES / WORLD ADIVASI DAY

#### Context:

- The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is observed on 9 August each year to protect the rights of the world's indigenous population.

#### Highlights:

- This event also recognizes the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.
- It was first pronounced by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1994.

- The day is observed as the international day of Indigenous people across the world and World Adivasi Day in India, to promote and safeguard the interest, culture, customs and traditions of Indigenous people.
- There are 370 million indigenous people in the world.
- In Indian the indigenous people are recognised constitutionally as scheduled tribes under Article 342 and the word ‘scheduled tribe’ is defined in Art 366(25) of the of Indian Constitution.
- The forums like world tribals day have to be used as platform for intellectual debates, discussions, policy advises, vision and resolutions. There is a need to take up massive awareness creation activities among the tribal to make them realise their development potential.

