

20.04.21

WORLD LIVER DAY



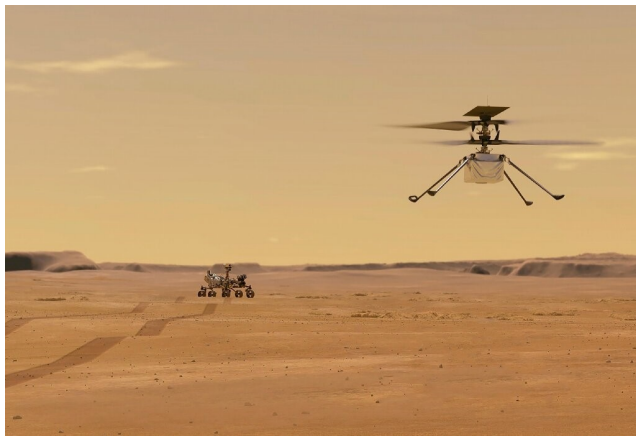
- World liver day is observed on April 19 every year, to spread awareness about the liver-related disease.
- The liver is the second largest and the most complex organ in the body, except the brain. It is a key player in your body's digestive system.
- The theme for this year is 'Keep your liver healthy and disease-free.'

Miguel Diaz-Canel.



- Cuba marked the end of an era on with the transfer of power from the Castro clan, in charge for six decades, to the communist country's first-ever civilian leader, Miguel Diaz-Canel.
- As Raul Castro, 89, enters retirement, he handed the all-powerful position of first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba to Mr. Diaz-Canel, 60, already Cuba's president.
- Miguel Díaz-Canel is a Cuban politician serving as the president of Cuba since 2019 and the first secretary of the Communist Party, the most senior position in Cuba, since 2021.
- His two predecessors in the role were brothers, by blood, and notably his succession from Raúl Castro represents a clearly non-dynastic form of succession for the Communist Party as well as the Republic of Cuba.
- Díaz-Canel is therefore the first president to not be a Castro family member since Osvaldo Dorticós in 1976 and the first leader of the government who is not a Castro since José Miró Cardona in 1959.

INGENUITY



- NASA announced that Ingenuity had performed its first flight. “...the first flight of a powered aircraft on another planet!”
- Ingenuity, the first helicopter to fly on Mars was carried by NASA’s rover called Perseverance that was launched in July last year and will help collect samples from the surface from locations where the rover cannot reach.

- Perseverance landed at the Jezero Crater of Mars in February year.
- It will remain on the Red Planet for about two years and look for finding past signs of life.
- The rover is designed to study signs of ancient life, collect samples that might be sent back to Earth during future missions and test new technology that might benefit future robotic and human missions to the planet.
- Ingenuity is able to fly using counter-rotating blades that spin at about 2,400 rpm.
- It has a wireless communication system, and is equipped with computers, navigation sensors, and two cameras. It is solar-powered, able to charge on its own.
- Taking to the air would give scientists a new perspective on a region’s geology and even allow them to peer into areas that are too steep or slippery to send a rover.
- In the distant future, they might even help astronauts explore Mars.
- NASA will try and demonstrate rotorcraft flight in the extremely thin atmosphere of Mars with this helicopter, which is why the mission is so crucial.

INDIA - GERMANY AGREEMENT ON ‘CITIES COMBATING PLASTIC ENTERING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT’



- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India and German Federal Ministry of Environment signed an agreement on Technical Cooperation titled ‘Cities Combating Plastic Entering the Marine Environment’.

- The project’s outcomes are in line with the objectives of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban focusing on sustainable solid waste management and Hon’ble Prime Minister’s vision to phase out single use plastic by 2022”.
- This project is envisaged under the contours of the Joint Declaration of Intent regarding cooperation in the field of ‘Prevention of Marine Litter’ signed between India and Germany in 2019.

- The project, aimed at enhancing practices to prevent plastic entering the marine environment, will be undertaken at the national level (at MoHUA), select states (Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands) and in the cities of Kanpur, Kochi and Port Blair for a period of three and a half years.

The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS)



- The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), an autonomous think tank, under the patronage of Indian Army has established a joint initiative with Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Mangalore to conduct PhD programme for Army Officers.
- The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi, is an independent think tank on strategic studies and land warfare in the Indian context.
- CLAWS is registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- CLAWS has taken this initiative to further enhance professional military education (PME) of officers which will eventually benefit the country with better equipped military leaders with in-depth knowledge in respective domains.
- Under the initiative, CLAWS has been recognised as a sub-centre of MAHE by virtue of which five of CLAWS faculties will serve as co-supervisors.
- CLAWS will also initiate the selection process and conduct mandatory research methodology classes, as per guidelines given by the UGC and MAHE, Mangalore.

Godzilla Shark



- Seven years after the discovery of its “dragon-like jawline” in Mexican territory, an ancient, distinct shark species was given a formal name.
- Seven years after the discovery of its “dragon-like jawline”, an ancient, distinct shark species was given a formal name.
- A bulletin that was published in the New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science identified the marine species as *Dracopristis hoffmanorum*, or Hoffman’s Dragon Shark, in honour of the New Mexico family that owns the land in Albuquerque where the fossil of its teeth was first found in 2013.
- The name was given to the ancient species by John Paul-Hodnett who teamed up with a slew of other researchers for the process.
- Over seven years ago, Hodnett unearthed the remains of the 300 million-year-old shark’s teeth.

- Describing the fossil, that the chompers were squatter and shorter, which made him believe that it belonged to a previously undiscovered species.
- Analyzing the structure of the teeth further, asserted that it was “great for grasping and crushing” prey rather than “piercing” it.
- Reckoned that it was the ancient teeth, which marked the first sign that it might belong to a distinct species.
- Name also harkens to the dragon-like jawline and 2.5-foot (0.75-meter) fin spines that inspired the discovery’s initial nickname, “Godzilla Shark.”
- Following the unearthing of 12 rows of teeth on the shark’s lower jaw, the researchers made subsequent discoveries, leading to the completion of the skeleton last week.
- Hodnett and his colleagues believe that Hoffman’s dragon shark most likely lived in the shallows along the coast, stalking prey like crustaceans, fish and other sharks.

Pangolin



- A live pangolin was rescued by the Special Task Force (STF), a specialised team of the Odisha crime branch that deals with wildlife crimes from a village in Cuttack district April 16, 2021.
- The Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) and the Chinese Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*) are two of the eight pangolin species found in India.
- A large anteater with 11-13 rows of scales on its back, the Indian Pangolin is a large anteater.
- The Indian Pangolin also has a terminal scale on the lower side of its tail, which the Chinese Pangolin lacks.
- The Indian Pangolin is found across India, with the exception of the arid regions, the high Himalayas, and the north-east. Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka are also home to the species.
- The Chinese Pangolin can be found in the Himalayan foothills of Eastern Nepal, Bhutan, Northern India, North-East Bangladesh, and Southern China.
- IUCN Red List
- Indian Pangolin: Endangered
- Chinese Pangolin: Critically Endangered
- Both these species are protected and are listed under the Schedule I Part I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

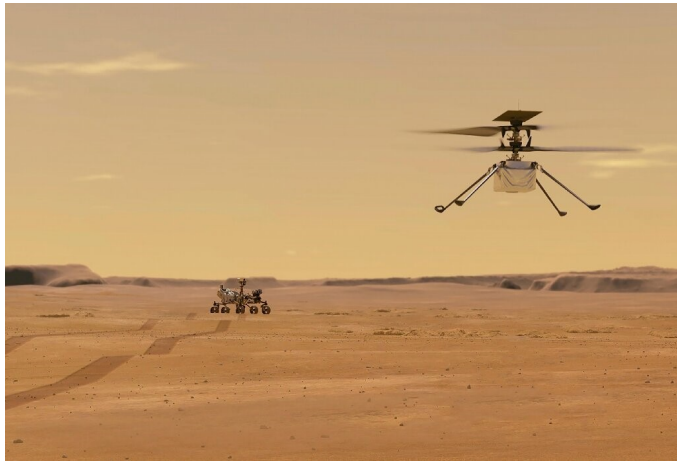
- Eight species of pangolins
- Eight species of pangolins are found on two continents. They range from Vulnerable to Critically Endangered.
- Four species live in Africa: Black-bellied pangolin (*Phataginus tetradactyla*), White-bellied pangolin (*Phataginus tricuspis*), Giant Ground pangolin (*Smutsia gigantea*) and Temminck's Ground pangolin (*Smutsia temminckii*).
- The four species found in Asia: Indian pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*), Philippine pangolin (*Manis culionensis*), Sunda pangolin (*Manis javanica*) and the Chinese pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*).

Sri Ramanujacharya



- 1004th birth anniversary of Sri Ramanujacharya was observed on April 18, 2021.
- Born in 1017 CE in Tamil Nadu.
- He is the most respected Acharya in the philosophy of Sri Vaishnavism.
- He was also referred to as Ilaya Perumal which means the radiant one.
- His philosophical foundations for devotionalism were influential to the Bhakti movement.
- He is famous as the chief proponent of Vishishtadvaita subschool of Vedānta.
- He wrote influential texts, such as bhāṣya on the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita, all in Sanskrit.
- It is a non-dualistic school of Vedanta philosophy. It is non-dualism of the qualified whole, in which Brahman alone exists, but is characterized by multiplicity.
- It can be described as qualified monism or qualified non-dualism or attributive monism.
- It is a school of Vedanta philosophy which believes in all diversity subsuming to an underlying unity.

NASA successfully flies small helicopter on Mars



- American space agency NASA has successfully flown a small helicopter on Mars.
 - The drone helicopter, called Ingenuity, was airborne for less than a minute on a historic flight on Mars.
 - It marks the first powered controlled flight by an aircraft on another planet.
 - The Confirmation of the flight came via a satellite at Mars which relayed the chopper's data back to Earth.
- Ingenuity will be commanded to fly higher and further as engineers seek to test the limits of the technology. The rotorcraft was carried to Mars in the belly of Nasa's Perseverance Rover, which touched down in Jezero Crater on the Red Planet in February.

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