

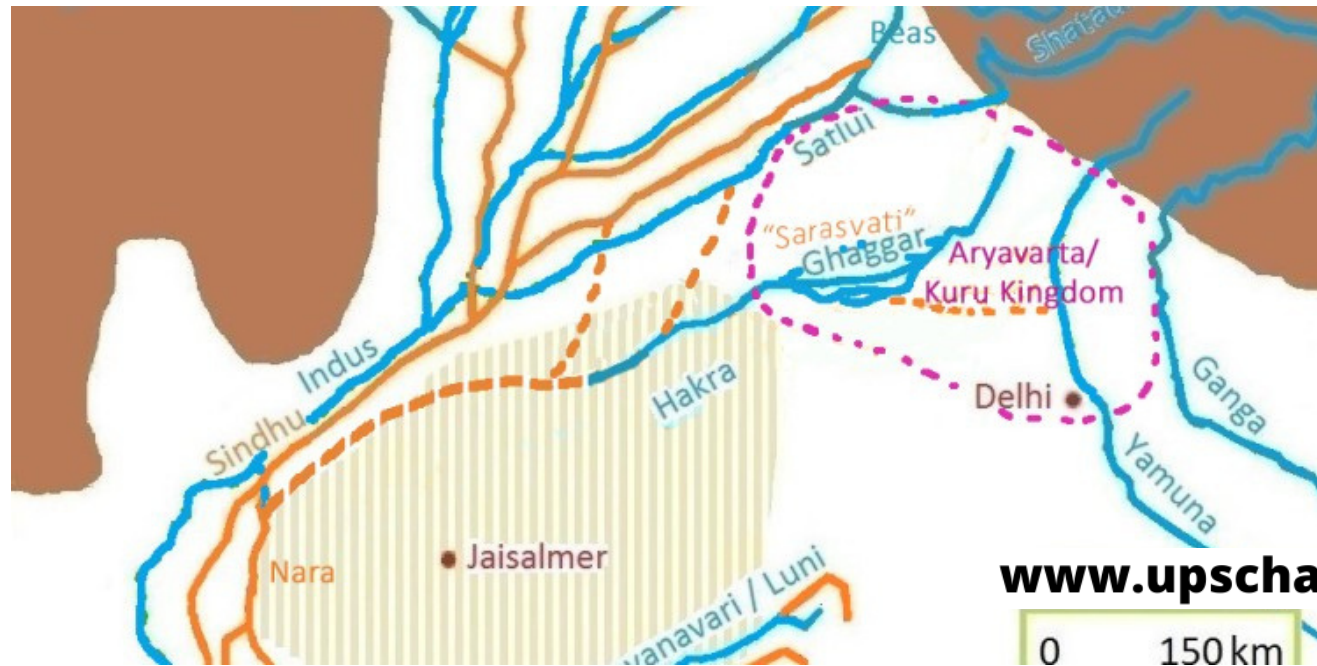
An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road that curves through a dense, lush green forest. Several cars are visible on the road, including a white car, a blue car, and a white van. The road has white dashed lines for lane markings. The overall scene is vibrant and scenic.

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DAILY NEWS DECODE

28.01.22

Haryana, Himachal plan to revive Saraswati river



- A MoU was signed for the construction of a dam in Himachal Pradesh on 77 acres, near the Adi Badri area of Haryana's YamunaNagar district.
- As per the Haryana government, the extinct Saraswati river will get revived with the construction of Adi Badri dam.
- It also claimed that the presence of Saraswati river has been proved through satellites.
- For conducting research on it, a chair has been set up at the Kurukshetra University. Besides, the Haryana Saraswati Heritage Development Board has also been established.

- The Haryana government has notified an area of 200 km from Adi Badri to Ghaggar river via Kaithal for Saraswati river.
- The objective of this project is to revive Saraswati as well as increasing the groundwater level. With commissioning of the dam, the flood situation arising out of excessive rainfall during rainy days will also be dealt with.
- The project would also be of use for Himachal Pradesh as 3.92 hectare meters water per annum would be earmarked for the State for its drinking water requirements, and 57.96 hectare meters for irrigation water demand in project-affected habitations.
- A portion of the Somb river — a tributary of the Yamuna that passes through Adi Badri — will be diverted to the Rs 215-crore dam from where it will flow into the stream of the Saraswati river.
- Both states have believed that the course of the Ghaggar river is believed to be the course of the Saraswati river.
- With the construction of the dam, the Saraswati river would flow throughout the year with 20 cusecs of water all the time.

Fungi associated with basal stem rot found



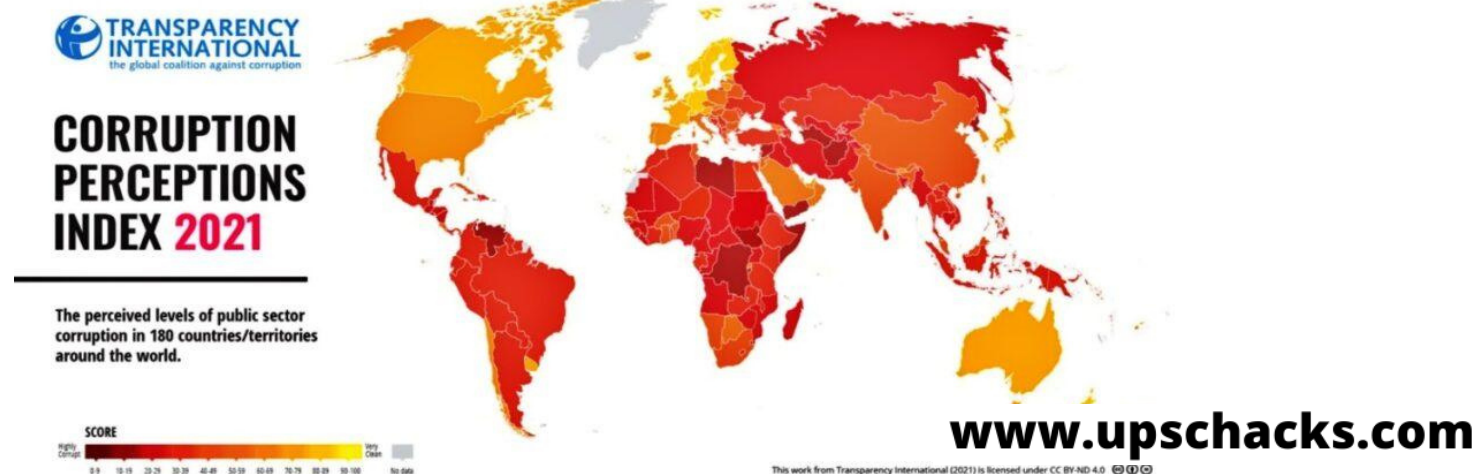
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- Researchers from Kerala have identified two new species of fungi from the genus *Ganoderma* – *Ganoderma keralense* and *G. pseudo applanatum*, that are associated with coconut stem rot.
- Basal rot, also called bulb rot, is a widespread plant disease caused by a variety of fungi and bacteria that can infect all flower and crop bulbs.
- Basal stem rot of coconut is known by several names in different parts of India: *Ganoderma* wilt (Andhra Pradesh), Anabe Roga (Karnataka) and Thanjavur wilt (Tamil Nadu), to mention a few.

- The infection begins at the roots, but symptoms include discolouration and rotting of stem and leaves.
- In the later stages, flowering and nut set decreases and finally the coconut palm (*Cocos nucifera*) dies.
- A reddish brown oozing has been reported only in India.
- Once infected, recovery of the plants is not likely.
- Another sign of infection is presence of shelf-like “basidiomata,” which are the fruiting or reproductive structures of the fungus, on the tree trunks.
- The basidiomata bear spores which are dispersed through wind and sometimes with the help of insects and this is how the pathogen spreads from one host to the other.
- Since the fungus is microscopic, it is only detected after the symptoms start manifesting or when the reproductive structures are borne, which can be too late.

Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

2021: India ranks 85th



- Transparency International has released the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2021 in which India has been ranked at 85th spot (Score of 40). The ranking has been topped jointly by three countries- Denmark, Finland and New Zealand (Score of 88). This ranking measures how corrupt each country's public sector is perceived to be. The results are given on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). 180 countries are ranked in it.
- Last year (for 2020) India was ranked 86th with a score of 40. This year's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) reveals that corruption levels are at a worldwide standstill. The global average remains unchanged for the tenth year in a row, at just 43 out of 100 points

Russia-China-Iran conducts joint naval exercise CHIRU-2Q22



- The Russian, Chinese and Iranian navies undertook naval exercises CHIRU-2Q22 in the Gulf of Oman. The maritime drills conducted in the northern parts of the Indian Ocean aimed at deepening practical cooperation among the navies of the three countries.
- The participants practised various tactics and operations, such as rescuing ablaze vessels, saving hijacked vessels, shooting at targets, nocturnal shooting at aerial targets, and other tactical manoeuvres as a part of the drill.
- At least 140 warships and over 60 aircraft with nearly 10,000 military personnel would be taking part in the military exercises.

Ramgarh Wildlife Sanctuary set to be notified as 4th tiger reserve of Rajasthan



- **Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary, which is among the proposed five sites in the country, is expected to be formally notified as tiger reserve (TR) soon before the Global Tiger Summit, which is to be held at Vladivostok, Russia.**
- **The Centre also announced the development during the 4th Asia ministerial conference on tiger conservation.**
- **The Centre has already given its approval of granting tiger reserve status to Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary, along with MM Hills in Karnataka, Guru Ghasidas National Park in Chhattisgarh.**

- **The Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary will be spread across 1,071 sq kms.**
- **A 302 Sq Km area in the proposed tiger sanctuary will be left as critical habitat for Tigers and the rest of the area will act as a buffer zone for the Ranthambore National Park.**
- **Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary was established in 1982.**
- **The core areas of the sanctuary have 8 villages and are home to large numbers of wild animals like sambhars, caracals, wild boars, nilgai, and striped Hyena.**

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TIWA COMMUNITY



- Almost 250 members of two extremist organisations in Assam laid down their arms before Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at a formal programme in Guwahati.
- The organisations are the Tiwa Liberation Army (TLA) and the United Gorkha People's Organisation (UGPO).
- Formed in 2014 to cater to the aspirations of the Tiwa community, the TLA was active in Morigaon, Nagaon and West Karbi Anglong districts of central Assam.
- The UGPO, formed in 2007, was mostly active in the Bodoland Territorial Region and Biswanath district.
- Tiwa (Lalung) is an ethnic group mainly inhabiting the states of Assam and Meghalaya in north-eastern India.
- They are also found in some areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland.

- They are recognized as a Scheduled tribe within the State of Assam.
- They were known as Lalungs in the Assamese Buranjis and in Colonial literature and in the Constitution of India, though members of the group prefer to call themselves Tiwa (meaning "the people who were lifted from below").

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SPOT-BILLED PELICANS



- A nematode infestation has led to mass mortality of spot-billed pelicans (*Pelicanus philippensis*) at Telineelapuram Important Bird Area (IBA) in Naupada swamp of Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh.
- Over 150 spot-billed pelicans have succumbed to the infestation since December. Only adult birds have succumbed to the infestation till date.
- Until now, in South India, the Telineelapuram IBA is the prime winter sojourn for the spot-billed pelican for breeding. The same IBA is also a breeding habitat for the painted stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*).
- The nematode infestation would not spread from one species to another species as per the studies carried out by the experts in Karnataka State.

- The spot-billed pelican is capable of hunting huge fish from the water bodies and swamps and thus, it is vulnerable to infestation.
- Thousands of spot-billed pelicans and a few hundred painted storks migrate from the Siberian region to breed in the Telineelapuram IBA and a majority of them prefer to stay here instead of going back home.

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INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA VIRTUAL SUMMIT



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the first India-Central Asia Summit in virtual format on 27 January 2022, which was attended by Presidents of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan.
- This first India-Central Asia coincided with the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Central Asian countries.
- During the Summit, the Leaders agreed to institutionalize the Summit mechanism by deciding to hold it every 2 years.
- They also agreed on regular meetings of Foreign Ministers, Trade Ministers, Culture Ministers and Secretaries of the Security Council to prepare the groundwork for the Summit meetings.

- **An India-Central Asia Secretariat in New Delhi would be set up to support the new mechanism.**
- **The Leaders discussed far-reaching proposals to further cooperation in areas of trade and connectivity, development cooperation, defence and security and, in particular, on cultural and people to people contacts.**
- **These included a Round-Table on Energy and Connectivity; Joint Working Groups at senior official level on Afghanistan and use of Chabahar Port; showcasing of Buddhist exhibitions in Central Asian countries and commissioning of an India-Central Asia dictionary of common words, joint counter-terrorism exercises, visit of 100 member youth delegation annually from Central Asian countries to India and special courses for Central Asian diplomats.**