



drishti

News Analysis (15 Jul, 2019)

drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/15-07-2019/print

Visa-Free Access to Kartarpur Corridor

Recently, Pakistan has agreed to give year-long visa-free access for Indian pilgrims to the Gurdwara of **Kartarpur Sahib**.

- It allows visa-free travel for the Indian passport-holders and **Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI)** card-holders seven days a week.
- India proposed that the holy shrine be open to Indian citizens of all faiths, acceding to this demand Pakistan "in-principle agreed" to allow all people with Indian passport and Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) card-holders.
- India also asked Pakistan to prevent **Khalistan** supporters from misusing this historic initiative.
- India also urged Pakistan to allow '**Nagar Kirtan**' from Delhi to Nankana Sahib in Pakistan in July and during October-November 2019 as part of the celebrations to mark the **550th birth of Guru Nanak dev**, the first Sikh Guru.

Guru Nanak Dev

- Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti is observed on the full-moon day in the month of Katak to celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539).
- He was the first of the 10 Sikh Gurus and the founder of Sikhism.
- The Kartarpur corridor will be implemented as an integrated development project with Government of India funding. The development comes ahead of the 550th Prakash Purab or 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak in 2019.

Nagar Kirtan

- Nagar Kirtan is a Punjabi term which literally means "Neighbourhood Kirtan".
- The term refers to the possession of Sikh Sangat (Congregation) through the town singing holy hymns.
- The concept of a Nagar Kirtan is to bring the message of God to the doorstep of the

community.

- It is common during the month of Vaisakhi(April-May) and take place all over the globe.

Khalistan

The Khalistan movement is a Khalsa nationalist movement that wants to create an independent state for Sikh people, inside the current north-western region of India.

Midday Meal Scheme

The Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry has received 35 complaints from 15 States and Union Territories (UTs) regarding substandard food quality in mid-day meals in the past three years.

- The Midday Meal Scheme comes under the HRD Ministry's Department of School Education and Literacy.
- Launched in the year 1995 as a **centrally sponsored scheme**, it provides that every child within the age group of six to fourteen years studying in **classes I to VIII** who enrolls and attends the school, shall be provided **hot cooked meal** having nutritional standards of 450 calories and 12 gm of protein for primary (I- V class) and 700 calories and 20 gm protein for upper primary (VI-VIII class), free of charge every day except on school holidays.
- The scheme covers all **government and government aided schools** and also Madarsa and Maqtabas supported under the **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**.
- The last Mid Day Meal Rules were notified in the year 2015 under the **National Food Security Act, 2013** but amendments have been made from time to time.
- The rules provide that
 - The place of serving meals to the children shall be school only.
 - The meal shall be prepared in accordance with the Mid Day Meal guidelines issued by the Central Government from time to time.
 - The latest guidelines provide instructions on procuring **AGMARK** quality items for preparation of midday meals, tasting of meals by two or three adult members of the school management committee, including at least one teacher, before serving to children.
 - If the Mid-Day Meal is not provided in school on any school day due to non-availability of food grains or any other reason, the State Government shall pay **food security allowance** by 15th of the succeeding month.
 - The School Management Committee mandated under **Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009** shall also monitor implementation of the Mid-day meal Scheme.
 - The **State Steering-cum Monitoring Committee (SSMC)** shall oversee the

implementation of the scheme including establishment of a mechanism for maintenance of nutritional standards and quality of meals.

- The government provides **financial support** to the eligible schools/implementing agencies in the form of free food grains and by bearing cooking related costs.
-

Next Dalai Lama

Recently, China has urged India not to recognize a successor to the Tibetan spiritual leader that it doesn't endorse.

- China has held that it will reject any reincarnation of the Dalai Lama born among Tibetan exiles in India or elsewhere.
- The reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is a historical and controversial issue.

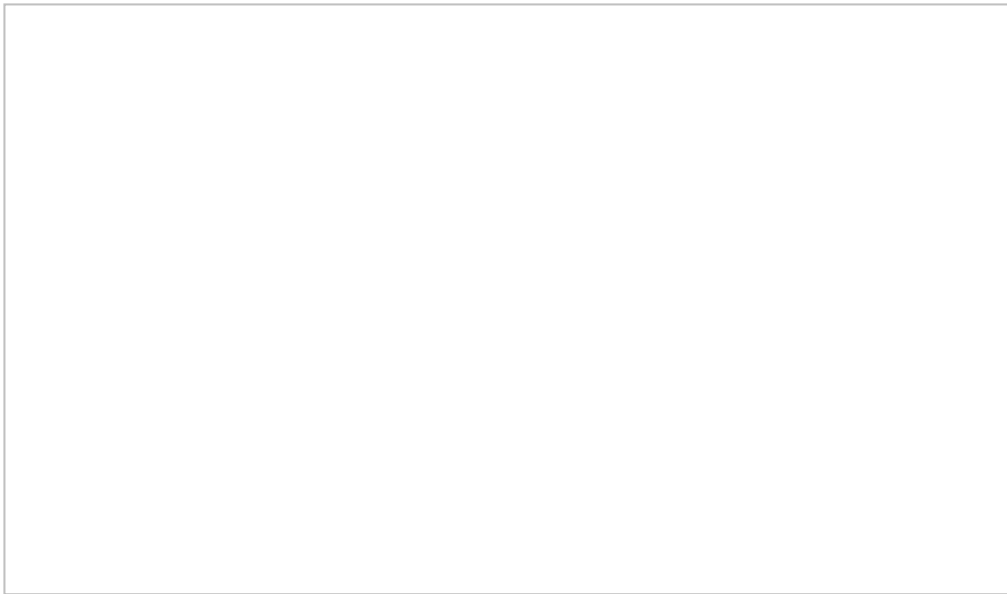
Dalai Lama

- Dalai Lama is a title given by the Tibetan people for the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or "Yellow Hat" school of Tibetan Buddhism, the newest of the classical schools of Tibetan Buddhism.
- The 14th and current Dalai Lama is Tenzin Gyatso.
- The Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of Avalokiteshvara or Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and the patron saint of Tibet.
- Bodhisattvas are realized beings inspired by a wish to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings, who have vowed to be reborn in the world to help humanity.
- Following the Buddhist belief in the principle of reincarnation, the current Dalai Lama is believed by Buddhists to be able to choose the body into which he is reincarnated.
 - That person, when found, will then become the next Dalai Lama.
 - According to Buddhist scholars it is the responsibility of the High Lamas of the Gelugpa tradition and the Tibetan government to seek out and find the next Dalai Lama following the death of the incumbent.
 - If more than one candidate is identified, the true successor is found by officials and monks drawing lots in a public ceremony.
 - Once identified, the successful candidate and his family are taken to Lhasa (or Dharamsala) where the child studies the Buddhist scriptures in order to prepare for spiritual leadership.
- But , According to China, there was a well-established procedure for recognizing the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama,
 - One of the conditions was that the name of the successor was pulled out of golden urns found in the Jokhang Temple (one of the most sacred monasteries of Tibetan Buddhism situated in Lhasa) and the Potala Palace which was the

- residence of the Dalai Lama till he fled to India in 1959.
 - The second was the reincarnation getting the approval of the Chinese government.
-

Shark Awareness Day

The World Wide Fund for Nature has released a report highlighting the risks to Sharks in the Mediterranean region on the occasion of Shark Awareness Day which is observed on July 14th every year.



- Theme for the year 2019 is "**The sharks in crisis: a call to action for the Mediterranean.**"
- The risks highlighted by the report are:
 - **Overfishing:** While some species are targeted for food, many of the sharks fished in the Mediterranean are bycatch caught up in nets set for other fish.
 - **Plastic pollution:** The explosion of plastic pollution is endangering shark populations, either through the animals ingesting or becoming enmeshed in refuse items.
- More than half of shark and ray species in the Mediterranean were under threat, and almost a third of them have been fished to the brink of extinction.
- The report singled out **Libya and Tunisia** as the worst culprits, with each country's fishery hauling in about 4,200 tonnes of sharks a year — three times that of the next biggest Mediterranean fisher, Italy.
- The IUCN Red List of **endangered species** counts 79 endangered shark and 120 endangered ray species.

World Wide Fund for Nature

- The World Wide Fund for Nature is an international non-governmental organization founded in 1961, working in the field of wilderness preservation, and the reduction of humanity's footprint on the environment.
 - It was formerly named the World Wildlife Fund, which remains its official name in Canada and the United States.
 - **Headquarters:** Gland, Switzerland.
 - The group's mission is "**to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature**".
 - The **Living Planet Report** published every two years by WWF is based on a Living Planet Index and ecological footprint calculation.
-

Central Equipment Identity Register

Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under the Ministry of Communications has initiated a Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) for mobile service providers.

The National Telecom Policy of 2012 calls for the establishment of a **National Mobile Property Registry** to address the issue of **security, theft**, and other concerns including **reprogramming** of mobile handsets.

Central Equipment Identity Register

- It will be a **central depository** or database of all mobile phones connected to networks across India.
 - Every mobile network provider in India has an **Equipment Identity Register** (EIR), or a database of the phones connected to its network.
 - These EIRs will now share information with a single central database, i.e CEIR.
- CEIR will have information on the Device's :
 - International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number.
 - Model
 - Version

International Mobile Equipment Identity

- Every phone or mobile broadband device has this unique **15 digit code** that precisely identifies the device.
- Mobile phone **manufacturers** assign IMEI numbers to each device based on ranges allotted to them by the Global System for Mobile Communications Association.
- **Dual SIM phones** will have **two** IMEI numbers.

Objective of CEIR

- Such centralized databases are meant to **identify** and **block stolen or illegal mobile** phones across networks.
 - Presently, when a customer reports a mobile phone as missing or stolen, mobile service providers have the ability to blacklist the phone's IMEI in their EIRs and block it from accessing their network.
 - But if the SIM is changed to a new network, it can continue to be in use whereas in case of CEIR all network operators will be aware that the phone is blacklisted.
- The CEIR will also access the GSMA's database of IMEI numbers to check whether the phone is authentic.
 - There are cases of phones being in use with duplicate IMEI numbers, or with all zeros instead of an authentic IMEI number.
- CEIR will be able to block services to subscribers unlike present system that allows only individual networks to block services in case of theft and or stolen mobiles.

Concerns

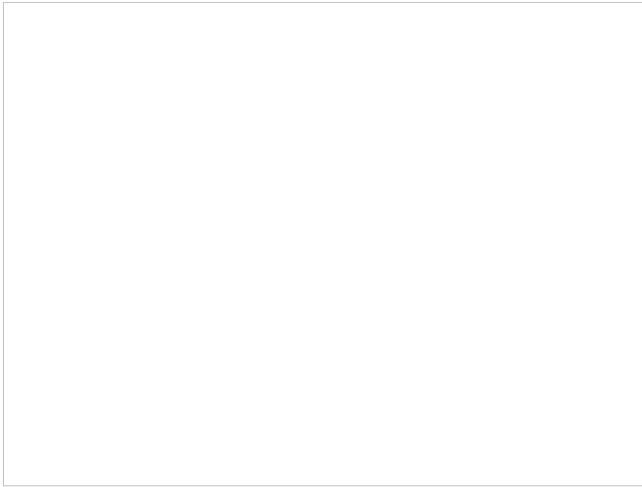
- Major issue with CEIR is to identify the **authority** that should maintain such a high-value database (whether **service provider** or a **neutral third party**).
- Another major issue is **cloning** or **reprogramming stolen** or unauthorized mobile phones to attach existing genuine IMEI numbers.
 - As blocking cloned IMEI numbers could result in the authentic ones also being blocked.

World Heritage Committee's Concerns

The World Heritage Committee (WHC) has flagged some concerns related to the conservation of the **heritage site** of Hampi and the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR).

- The WHC has regretted the lack of response from local authorities on concerns raised about developmental projects in the world heritage site of Hampi.
- The Indian Railways, despite requests, have not furnished information between the years 2017 and 2019 regarding the lack of monitoring and general maintenance, and encroachment and waste dumping along the tracks – all considered violation of global heritage conservation norms.

Hampi



- The site of Hampi comprise mainly the remnants of the capital city of **Vijayanagara Empire** (14th-16th Cent CE), the last great Hindu Kingdom.
- It encompasses an area of 4187, 24 hectares, located in the **Tungabhadra** basin in Central **Karnataka**, Bellary District.
- Hampi's spectacular setting is dominated by river Tungabhadra, craggy hill ranges and open plains, with widespread physical remains.
- The sophistication of the varied urban, royal and sacred systems is evident from the more than 1600 surviving remains that include forts, riverside features, royal and sacred complexes, temples, shrines, pillared halls, Mandapas etc.

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway



- The **Mountain Railways of India**, the world heritage site, includes **three railways**:
 - Darjeeling Himalayan Railway located in the foothills of the Himalayas in West Bengal (Northeast India),
 - Nilgiri Mountain Railways located in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu (South India) and
 - Kalka Shimla Railway located in the Himalayan foothills of Himachal Pradesh (Northwest India).
- The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway is the most outstanding example of a hill passenger railway. Opened in 1881, its design applies bold and ingenious engineering solutions to the problem of establishing an effective rail link across a mountainous terrain of

great beauty.

UNESCO World Heritage Committee (WHC)

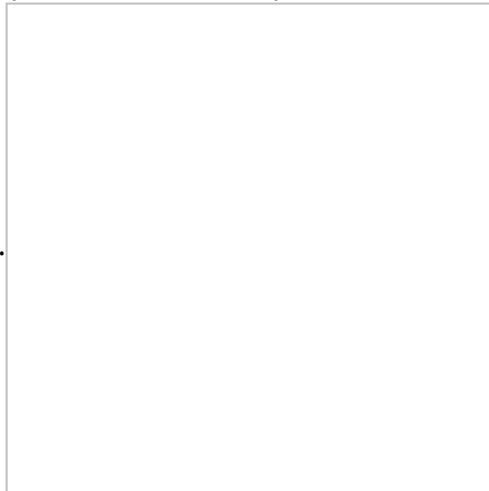
- The World Heritage Committee is composed of representatives of **21 States Parties** to the **World Heritage Convention** who meet annually.
 - The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is an **international agreement** that was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972.
 - It is based on the premise that certain places on Earth are of outstanding universal value and should therefore form part of the common heritage of humankind.
 - It basically **defines the kind of natural or cultural sites** which can be considered for inscription on the **World Heritage List**.
 - The **Committee is in charge of implementing the Convention**.
-

Desalination without Electricity

Recently, researchers at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai, have been able to desalinate seawater to produce drinking water without using electricity.

- Unlike the conventional reverse osmosis that is energy-intensive, the researchers used gold nanoparticles which required no external energy to produce potable water from

seawater.



- Using gold nanoparticles that absorb sunlight over the entire visible region and even the near-infrared light, researchers were able to use sunlight to heat the water up to 85 degrees Celsius and generate steam to produce drinking water from seawater.
 - Alternatively, gold nanoparticles can also be used to convert carbon dioxide into methane.
 - However, This is only a preliminary study. The next step should be to replace gold with some inexpensive metal to make it sustainable,
-

Spektr-RG

Russia has launched a **space telescope**, named Spektr-RG, in a joint project with Germany.

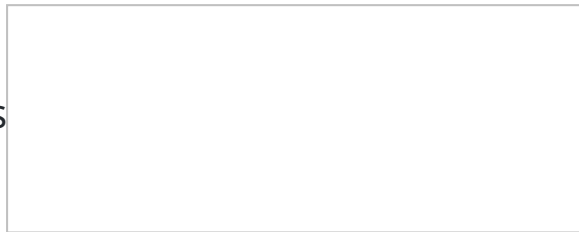
- It is intended to **replace Spektr-R**, known as the Russian **Hubble**. The Russian Space Agency, Roscosmos, lost control of the Spektr-R in January 2019.
 - Spektr-R was launched in the year 2011 to observe **black holes**, neutron stars and magnetic fields, aiding understanding of cosmic expansion.
 - Spektr-RG will take up similar duties but will also work on mapping X-Rays across the sky.
-

Cape Verde Turtles and Climate Change

Recent study has warned that Loggerhead turtles born at a key breeding ground in Cape Verde (an island country in the central Atlantic Ocean) will all be turned **female** because of **climate change**.

- The sex of turtles is determined by the **temperatures** at which they are incubated and warm temperatures favour females.
- If high emissions continue, over **90%** turtles could be incubated at lethally high temperatures, killing youngsters before they hatch.
 - Even under a low emissions scenario, **99.86%** of hatchlings would be **female** by **2100**.
 - Currently 84% of hatchlings at Cape Verde are female.
- Cape Verde has the third largest population of nesting loggerhead turtles.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) status of Loggerheads turtle is **vulnerable**

Loggerhead Turtles



- Loggerhead sea turtles are named for their **large heads** that support powerful jaw muscles, allowing them to crush hard-shelled prey like clams and sea urchins.
- Unlike other sea turtles they are less likely to be hunted for their meat or shell.
- The accidental capture of marine animals in **fishing gear**, is a serious problem for loggerhead turtles because they frequently come in contact with fisheries.
 - Many of their nesting beaches are under threat from tourism development.
- Loggerheads are the most common turtle in the **Mediterranean**, nesting on beaches from **Greece** and **Turkey** to **Israel** and **Libya**.

- **Sea turtles** are not only living representatives of a group of reptiles that has existed on Earth for the last 100 million years but are also a **fundamental link** in **marine ecosystems** and help maintain the health of **coral reefs** and **seagrass beds**.
-