



Kashmir Papier Mache | Jammu & Kashmir | 26 Dec 2024

Why in News?

- Recently, **The dodo** has become a popular [papier mache](#) product in **Srinagar**. It was once **native to Mauritius** and a [national emblem](#).



Key Points

- **Craftsmanship and Production:**
 - Creating large papier mache dodos in Kashmir's workshops takes 5-10 days.
 - The colourful designs, featuring floral and forest motifs, highlight the **ecological causes of the dodo's extinction**.
- **History of Papier Mache in Kashmir:**
 - **Papier-mâché** is a [traditional handicraft in Kashmir](#) that involves the **use of paper pulp** to create colorful, intricately decorated objects.
 - **Origin:**
 - The tradition of papier-mâché in Kashmir is said to have **begun in the 15th century** when **Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin invited artists and craftsmen from Central Asia** to teach the locals their skills.

- **Objects:**
 - Papier-mâché objects in Kashmir can include vases, bowls, cups, boxes, trays, and lamp bases. They are **often coated in lacquer to protect them from water** and make them more durable.
- **Designs:**
 - Popular designs include the **Hazara pattern, which is meant to depict every type of flower**, and the **Gul-i-wilayat pattern, which features flowers, stems, foliage, and sometimes birds.**
- **Protection:**
 - The **Government of India protects papier-mâché under [the Geographic Indication Act of 1999.](#)**

Dodos



- **Scientific name:** *Raphus cucullatus*
- **Characteristics:** It had **grayish feathers** and a distinctive **large, hooked beak.**
- **Habitat:** Endemic to the **island of Mauritius** and lived in forests.
- **Evolutionary History:** It evolved to be **flightless due to the absence of predators** on Mauritius.
 - The dodo likely **had strong running abilities.**
- **Extinction:** **Extinct** in 1681.

Efforts to Mitigate Risks Due to Glacial Lake | Jammu & Kashmir | 26 Dec 2024

Why in News?

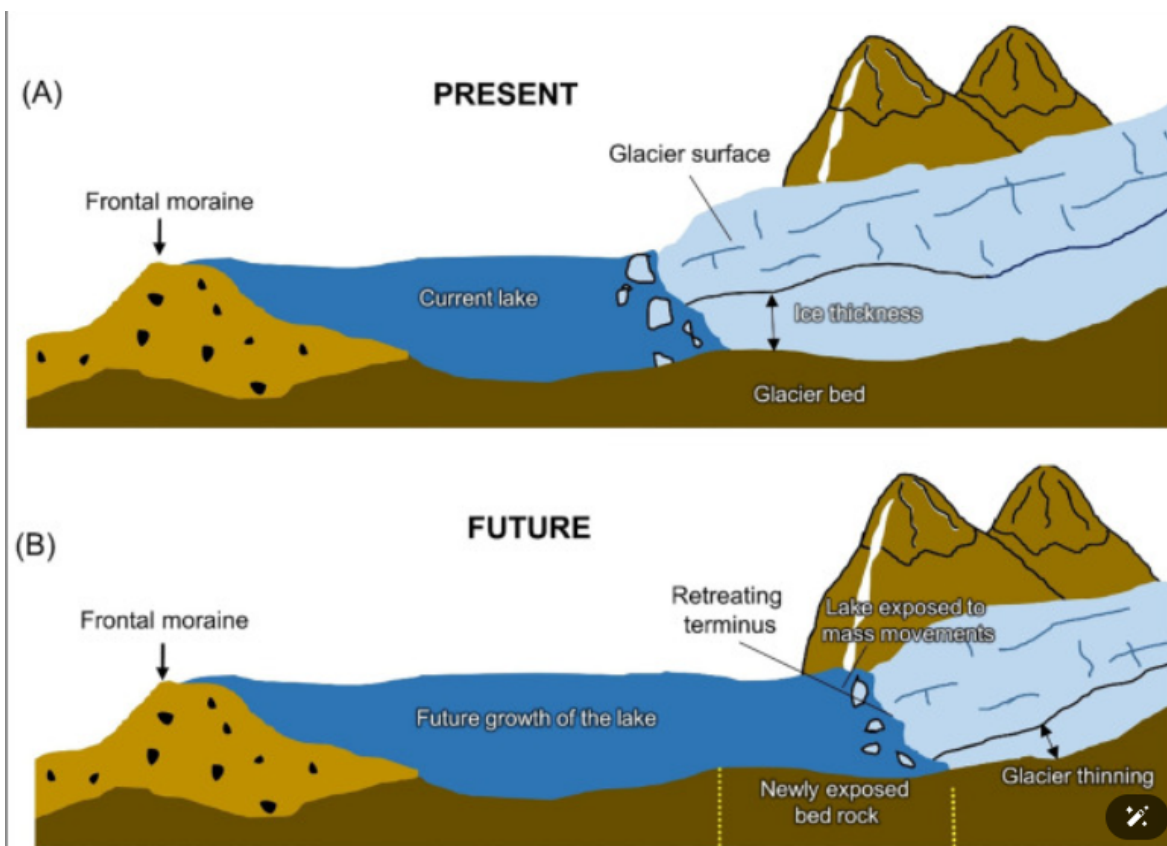
The **Jammu & Kashmir government** has intensified efforts to monitor and mitigate the risks of **Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs)** in response to the growing threats posed by **glacial lake overflows.**

Key Points

- **Scientific Expeditions for Hazard Preparedness:**
 - [The Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction](#) has initiated scientific expeditions to enhance preparedness and understanding of **GLOF hazards**.
 - These expeditions are collecting valuable data on **lake conditions, environmental factors, and potential GLOF risks**.
- **Study of Glacial Lakes in Kishtwar District:**
 - The Department of Environmental Sciences at the Central University of Jammu, led a comprehensive study on **three critical glacial lakes: Mundiksar, Hangu, and an unnamed lake**.
 - These lakes have been flagged as **high-risk areas for GLOFs**.
 - [Geological Survey of India \(GSI\)](#) conducted a detailed study of Bram Sar Lake in Kulgam district to assess its potential GLOF risks.
- **Kashmir Field Expeditions:**
 - In June 2024, the University of Kashmir's Department of Geography & Disaster Management studied two additional glacial lakes in the region.
 - The **expeditions aim to formulate risk mitigation strategies and enhance early warning systems** based on the data collected.
 - **Phase-Wise Implementation:**
 - **Phase One:** Focuses on identifying high-risk glacial lakes using assessments from the [National Disaster Management Authority \(NDMA\)](#), [National Remote Sensing Centre \(NRSC\)](#), and [Central Water Commission \(CWC\)](#).
 - **Phase Two:** Develops and implements specific mitigation measures, including lake-lowering techniques.
 - **Early Warning System (EWS):**
 - A fully functional **GLOF Early Warning System** will be established to enhance preparedness and ensure effective responses to potential GLOF events.
 - In April 2024, the government constituted the [Focused Glacial Lake Outburst Flood Monitoring Committee \(FGMC\)](#) to implement targeted mitigation measures for glacial lake overflows.

Glacial Lake Outburst Flood

- A GLOF is a type of **flood** occurring when **water dammed** by a **glacier** or a **moraine** is released suddenly.
- When glaciers melt, the **water** in these glacial lakes **accumulates** behind loose naturally formed '**glacial/moraine dams**' made of ice, sand, pebbles and ice residue.
- Unlike earthen dams, the weak structure of the moraine dam leads to the **abrupt failure** of the moraine dam on top of the **glacial lake**, which holds a large volume of water.
- A catastrophic failure of the dam can release the water over periods of minutes to days causing **extreme downstream flooding**.



Blackbuck Killed in Sirsa | Haryana | 26 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, a [blackbuck poaching](#) incident in **Jandwala Bishnoiyan village, Sirsa district**, has outraged [the Bishnoi community](#).

- The community, known for its commitment to [wildlife conservation](#), is demanding **stronger action to safeguard endangered species** and prevent further poaching.

Key Points

- **About the Incident:**
 - On 23rd December 2024, the **carcass of a five-year-old male blackbuck was found** with cut marks, indicating poaching.
 - Veterinary surgeon conducted the post-mortem, identifying a punctured wound as evidence of poaching.
 - Other animals, such as a [nilgai](#) and calves, might have also been poached in the area.
- **Conservation Concerns:**
 - Local conservationists are alarmed by the declining blackbuck population in the region.
 - **The Akhil Bhartiya Jeev Raksha Bishnoi Sabha**, highlighted the **impact of de-notification of sanctuaries in 2017** on wildlife in villages like **Jandwala Bishnoiyan, Ganga, and Bhaukhera**.

- **Blackbucks and chinkara deer** populations have significantly decreased since de-notification.
- A case has been registered under **Sections 9, 39, 49, 51, and 54** of **[the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.](#)**

Blackbucks



▪ About:

- The Blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*), or the **Indian Antelope**, is a species of antelope **native to India and Nepal.**
 - It is widespread in **Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha**, and other areas throughout peninsular India.
- It is considered as the **epitome of grassland.**
- The **blackbuck is a diurnal antelope** (active mainly during the day).

▪ Recognition:

- It has been **declared as the State Animal of Punjab, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh.**

▪ Cultural Importance:

- It is a **symbol of purity for Hinduism** as its skin and horns are regarded as sacred objects. For **Buddhism**, it is a **symbol of good luck.**

▪ Protection Status:

- **[Wildlife Protection Act 1972](#)**: Schedule I
- **[IUCN Status](#)**: Least Concern
- **[CITES](#)**: Appendix III

▪ Threat:

- Habitat Fragmentation, **[Deforestation](#)**, **[Natural Calamities](#)**, Illegal Hunting.

▪ Related Protected Areas:

- Velavadar Blackbuck Sanctuary - Gujarat
- Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary - Tamil Nadu
- In 2017, the Uttar Pradesh State Government approved the plan of setting up the **[Blackbuck Conservation Reserve](#)** in the trans-Yamuna belt near Prayagraj. It **would be the first conservation reserve dedicated to the blackbuck.**
- **[Tal Chhapar Sanctuary](#)**- Rajasthan

Geospatial Survey to Combat Illegal Mining | Haryana | 26 Dec 2024

Why in News?

- Recently, **Haryana** has ordered a [geospatial survey of the Aravallis](#) near the **Rajasthan border**. The survey will **demarcate banned mining areas** in Haryana and identify licensed mines in Rajasthan to [curb illegal mining](#).

Key Points

- **About the Survey:**
 - Conducted by **Haryana Space Applications Centre (HARSAC)**, the survey aims to **define the jurisdiction of Haryana and Rajasthan over various hills** and update revenue records.
- **Addressing Jurisdictional Issues:**
 - **Illegal mining** mafias exploit the jurisdictional ambiguity over the Aravalli hills.
 - The **Enforcement Bureau registered an [First Information Report \(FIR\)](#)** for the illegal mining of 6,000 metric tonnes of hill in Rava village.
- **Illegal Mining:**
 - **About:**
 - Illegal mining is the extraction of minerals, ores, or other valuable resources from land or water bodies **without the necessary permits, licenses, or regulatory approvals** from government authorities.
 - It can also involve the violation of environmental, labor, and safety standards.
 - **Issues:**
 - **Environmental Degradation:**
 - It can lead to deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution and can result in the **destruction of habitats for [wildlife](#)**, which can have serious ecological consequences.
 - **Hazards:**
 - Illegal mining often involves the **use of hazardous chemicals such as [mercury](#) and [cyanide](#)**, which can pose serious **health risks to miners** and nearby communities.
 - **Loss of Revenue:**
 - It can lead to a **loss of [revenue](#) for governments** as miners may not pay appropriate taxes and royalties.
 - This can have significant economic impacts, particularly in countries where natural resources are a major source of revenue.
 - **Human Rights Violations:**
 - Illegal mining can also result in **[human rights violations](#)**, including forced labor, child labor, and exploitation of vulnerable populations.

The Aravallis

- **About:**
 - The Aravalli Range extends from Gujarat to Delhi through Rajasthan, 692 km in length and varies between 10 to 120 km in width.
 - The range acts as a natural green wall, **with 80% located in Rajasthan and 20% in Haryana, Delhi, and Gujarat**.
 - The Aravalli mountains are divided into two main ranges - **the Sambhar Sirohi Range and the Sambhar Khetri Range in Rajasthan**, where their extension is about 560 km.
 - It serves as an **ecotone** between the [Thar Desert](#) and [the Gangetic Plain](#).
 - Ecotones are areas where **two or more ecosystems, biological communities,**

or biotic regions meet.

- **Gurusikhar (Rajasthan)**, the highest peak in the range, reaches an elevation of 1,722 meters.
- **Significance of Aravallis:**
 - The Aravallis **prevent the Thar Desert from encroaching** on the Indo-Gangetic plains, historically serving as a catchment for rivers and plains.
 - The range **supports 300 native plant species**, 120 bird species, and exclusive animals like jackals and mongooses.
 - During **monsoons**, the Aravallis **direct monsoon clouds eastward**, benefiting sub-Himalayan rivers and North Indian plains. In winter, they **shield fertile valleys from cold westerly winds**.
 - The range **aids in groundwater replenishment** by absorbing rainwater, thus reviving groundwater levels.
 - The Aravallis act as the **“lungs” for Delhi-NCR**, mitigating some effects of the **region's severe air pollution**.

State Level Awards on Good Governance Day | Haryana | 26 Dec 2024

Why In News?

Recently, **state-level awards** were organised on **Good Governance Day** in Gurugram district of Haryana.

Key Points

- **Top Performing Districts in Haryana:**
 - **Kaithal secured the first position** among top-performing districts in Haryana.
 - **Fatehabad and Jhajjar** were placed **second and third**.
- **State Flagship Scheme Awards:**
 - **Mukhya Mantri Shehri Awas Yojana:**
 - **Mukhya Mantri Shehri Awas Yojana** secured top honours in the category.
 - It was launched to fulfill the **housing aspirations of poor families**, to provide housing for every impoverished individual.
 - Under the state scheme, **15,250 beneficiaries were given land plot allotment** certificates.
 - **Tohana Paddy Stubble Management Project:**
 - **The Crop Residue Management scheme** was placed second in the category.
 - This is aimed at making the **collection and storage of crop residues more convenient**. Additionally, officials are working on establishing partnerships with industries to purchase these crop residues.
 - **Haryana Project Monitoring System (HPMS) Portal:**
 - **HPMS Portal** secured the third prize.
 - It is a **web-based information Dashboard** which will help to **monitor and evaluate the implementation progress** of infrastructure-based projects
 - **Ambala Municipal Corporation's Initiatives:**
 - **Monthly Pass System** and awarded fourth prize.
- **Special Departmental Awards:**
 - **Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam:**
 - Recognized for its **waiver of monthly minimum charges scheme**.

- **NIPUN Haryana Mission Monitoring System:**
 - Awarded second prize under [Haryana Shiksha Paroyojna Parishad](#).

Good Governance Day

- It is celebrated on **25th December** to raise awareness among citizens about **government accountability and effective administration**.
 - The **theme** for 2024 is “**India’s Path to a Viksit Bharat: Empowering Citizens through Good Governance and Digitalisation.**”
- It was started in the year **2014** to honor the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister [Atal Bihari Vajpayee](#).
- The birth anniversary of **Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya** is also observed on 25th December.

PM Laid Foundation Stone of Ken-Betwa Project | Madhya Pradesh | 26 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the [Ken-Betwa river linking project](#) at **Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh**.

- It is the **first such initiative** under the [National river interlinking policy](#).

Key Points

- **The Ken-Betwa Link Project:**
 - The project aims to provide drinking water to 44 lakh people of Madhya Pradesh and 21 lakh people in Uttar Pradesh.
 - 7.18 lakh farmer families in 2,000 villages will benefit from **improved irrigation**.
 - The project will generate **103 MW of hydropower** and **27 MW of solar energy**.
 - The project embodies cooperation between the central government, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, realising the late PM [Atal Bihari Vajpayee](#)’s river-linking vision.
- **Economic and Environmental Impact:**
 - Ensures ample water for irrigation, drinking, and industrial uses.
 - Promotes economic growth, **tourism**, and employment opportunities in [Bundelkhand](#).
 - Addresses groundwater scarcity in the **drought**-hit Bundelkhand region.
- **Conservation Efforts:**
 - Focus on restoring Chandela-era heritage ponds in Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, and Niwari districts.
 - Continuous water supply to wild animals in the [Panna Tiger Reserve](#).
 - Flood relief for Banda district in Uttar Pradesh.

National Interlinking of Rivers Authority

- The **national interlinking of rivers (ILR)** is the idea that rivers should be inter-connected, so that water from the surplus rivers and regions could be transferred to deficient regions and rivers to address the issue of [water scarcity](#).
- This led to the setup of the [National Water Development Agency \(NWDA\)](#) in 1982.

