



Snake Island

Why in News?

Ukraine has caused significant losses to the Russian military in airstrikes on Zmiinyi Island, also known as **Snake Island**, in the **Black Sea**.

- The hit on the island is believed to be the second major military success using missiles given to Ukraine by the West.



Where is Snake Island?

- **Features:**
 - **Zmiinyi Island**, also known as **Snake or Serpent Island**, is a small piece of rock less than 700 metres from end to end, that has been described as being **X-shaped**.
- **Location:**
 - It is located 35 km from the coast in the **Black Sea**, to the east of the mouth of the **Danube** and roughly southwest of the **port city of Odesa**.
 - The Danube is the **second longest river in Europe after the Volga**. It rises in the Black Forest mountains of western Germany and flows for some 2,850 km to its

mouth on the Black Sea.

- The island is marked on the map by the tiny village of Bile that is located on it, belongs to **Ukraine**.

Where is the Black Sea?



▪ Surrounded by:

- Black Sea is bound by **Ukraine to the north and northwest, Russia and Georgia to the east, Turkey to the south, and Bulgaria and Romania to the west.**

▪ Straits:

- **Black Sea** links to the **Sea of Marmara** through the **Bosphorus** and **then to the Aegean Sea through the Dardanelles**, has traditionally been Russia's warm water gateway to Europe.
- The Black Sea is also connected to the **Sea of Azov** by the **Strait of Kerch**.

▪ Significance for Russia:

◦ Strategic Buffer:

- **Black Sea** is both a stepping stones to the **Mediterranean** as well as a **strategic buffer** between **NATO** Countries and Russia.

◦ Geostrategic Significance:

- Domination of the Black Sea region is a **geostrategic imperative for Moscow, both to project Russian power in the Mediterranean and to secure the economic gateway to key markets in southern Europe.**
 - **Russia** has been making efforts to **gain complete control over the Black Sea since the Crimean crisis of 2014.**
 - The domination of the Black Sea has been a major Russian objective of the ongoing war, along with the land bridge to connect Russia and Crimea.
 - **Cutting Ukrainian access to the Black Sea** will reduce it to a **landlocked country** and deal a crippling blow to its trade logistics.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Consider the following pairs: (2019)

	Sea Bordering	Country
1.	Adriatic Sea	Albania
2.	Black Sea	Croatia
3.	Caspian Sea	Kazakhstan
4.	Mediterranean Sea	Morocco

5.	Red Sea	Syria
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Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (b) 1, 3 and 4 only
- (c) 2 and 5 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Ans: (b)

Exp:

- The **Adriatic Sea is a part of the Mediterranean Sea** positioned between the eastern coastline of Italy, and countries of the Balkan Peninsula, from Slovenia, through Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and to Albania. Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.
- The **Black Sea** is an inland sea located between far southeastern Europe and the far western edges of the continent of Asia and the country of Turkey. It is bordered by **Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia**. Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.
- The **Caspian Sea** is an enclosed body of water between Asia and Europe. It is bordered by **Iran, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Russia**. Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.
- There are 21 countries which border the Mediterranean Sea. These are Spain, France, Monaco, Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.
- Morocco's Mediterranean coast represents the westernmost edge of the Northern African coast. The coastline features the Strait of Gibraltar that marks the link between the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Hence, pair 4 is correctly matched.
- There are six countries (Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, and Djibouti) bordering the Red Sea. Hence, pair 5 is not correctly matched.
- **Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.**

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