Prelim Bits 12-04-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Amolops siju

Scientists of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have named the new species, Amolops siju after the Siju cave system of Meghalaya.

- **Frog genus** - Amolops
- **Ecosystem** - It is a new species of the marmoratus group from a cave ecosystem.
- This is an uncommon habitat for this group of frogs, which is commonly found around cascades.
- It is the *second time that a frog was discovered from inside a cave* in the country after the discovery of the *Micrixalus spelunca* in 2014 from a cave in Tamil Nadu.
- The team had also discovered three other new species of cascade frog (Amolops) in Arunachal Pradesh and those include the
  - Amolops chanakya,
  - Amolops terraorchis and
  - Amolops tawang

Siju Cave

- The cave is a natural limestone cave located in the South Garo Hills District of Meghalaya, Northeast India.
- The cave contains the twilight zone, an area with limited light.
- This 'dark zone' has consistent 'temperature and humidity' all year long.

Reference

1. The Hindu | Cave dweller frog named after Siju cave

Corrugation Ridges

A team of scientists mapped more than 7,600 small-scale landforms called 'corrugation ridges' across the seafloor near Norway.

- The corrugation ridges found are less than 2.5 m high and are spaced between about 25 and 300 metres apart.
- These landforms are understood to have formed when the ice sheet's retreat.
- **Formation -** The retreating margin of the ice sheet moved up and down with the tides,

pushing seafloor sediments into a ridge every low tide.
- Two ridges would have been produced each day (under 2 tidal cycles per day),
- **Retreating Rate -** The researchers were able to calculate how quickly the ice sheet retreated from the number of ridges formed.
- Their results show the former ice sheet underwent pulses of rapid retreat at a speed of 50 to 600 metres per day.
- This is the fastest ice sheet retreat that has been ever observed from satellites or inferred from similar landforms in Antarctica.

References

1. The Hindu - How fast can ice sheets retreat?

Kuttamperoor River

Rejuvenation of Kuttamperoor river in Alappuzha is completed recently

- Kuttamperoor is a west-flowing river originating in the western ghats.
- It is a tributary of both the Pamba and the Achankovil rivers in Kerala.
- It forms a link between the two rivers.
- The river has its northern end in the Pamba and the southern end in the Achenkovil river.
- When the water level at the Pamba is higher it flows from Pamba to Achankovil and when the Achenkovil river has a higher water level it flows from Achankovil to Pamba.
- Country boats, which were called ‘palliyodams’, were raced on it during the popular *Aranmula boat race*.
- **Main threats** - Sand mining and Waste dumping

Reference

1. The Hindu | Kuttamperoor River

Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project

External Affairs Minister launched the 'Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project' of Varanasi, during his visit to Uganda's Kampala.

- Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project is the restoration and conservation of Varanasi.
- It is the initiative of Overseas Friends of BJP-Uganda (BFBJP-Uganda).
- The project contributes to further beautifying Varanasi, the oldest living city in the world.
- **Tulsi Ghat -** Tulsi ghat is one of the famous ghats in Varanasi and is part of Lolark Ghat (earlier).
- It is named after poet Tulsidas who wrote Ramacharitamanas.
- Poet Tulsidas spent his last days in Tulsi ghat.

References

1. The Hindu - EAM launches 'Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project' in Uganda

2. Times of India - Tulsi Ghat

National Party Status Criteria

The Election Commission recognised the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as a national party, while revoking that status of the TMC, NCP and CPI.

• **New National Party -** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)
• **Lost National party status -** The Trinamool Congress (TMC), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Communist Party of India (CPI)
• **National Parties in India -** At present, there are 6 national parties in India.
1. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
2. Congress
3. CPI(M)
4. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)
5. National People's Party (NPP) (recognised in 2019)
6. Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)

- **National Party -** The Election Commission of India (ECI) has laid down the technical criterion for a party to be recognised as a national party.
- A party may gain or lose national party status from time to time, depending on the fulfilment of these laid-down conditions.
- **Criteria -** The ECI's Political Parties and Election Symbols, 2019 handbook lays down the criteria for a party to be recognised as National Party.
- First a political Party has to be registered with ECI to be recognised as National or State party.

Criteria for National Party Status
A party will be considered as a national party, • If it is 'recognised' in four or more states; or • If its candidates polled at least 6% of total valid votes in any four or more states in the last Lok Sabha or Assembly elections and has at least four MPs in the last Lok Sabha polls; or • If it has won at least 2% of the total seats in the Lok Sabha from not less than three states.

- **State Party -** The Commission also revoked the state party status granted to 6 parties from different state.
- They are: RLD in Uttar Pradesh, BRS in Andhra Pradesh, PDA in Manipur, PMK in Puducherry, RSP in West Bengal and MPC in Mizoram.

Criteria for State Party Status
A party will be recognised as a state party, if • at least 6% vote-share in the last Assembly election and have at least 2 MLAs; or

have 6% vote-share in the last Lok Sabha elections from that state and at least one MP from that state; or
- at least 3% of the total number of seats or three seats, whichever is more, in the last Assembly elections; or
- at least one MP for every 25 members or any fraction allotted to the state in the Lok Sabha; or
- have at least 8% of the total valid votes in the last Assembly election or Lok Sabha election from the state.

References

1. IE - AAP now national party; NCP, Trinamool lose tag
2. Live Mint - TMC, NCP, CPI lose national party status