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## Prelim Bits 20-11-2022 & 21-11-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### Vostro Account

*Nine special Vostro accounts between India and Russia were opened for trade in rupee after RBI's approval.*

- Only authorised dealer (AD) banks in India have been permitted to open rupee Vostro accounts by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The RBI allowed 9 special Vostro accounts, including IndusInd Bank and Uco Bank between India and Russia.
- **Vostro account** - A Vostro account (*Vostro* means 'yours' in Latin) is an account that a domestic bank holds for a foreign bank in the domestic bank's currency.
- In this case between India and Russia, Indian banks hold an account for Russian banks in rupee (INR).
- **Special Vostro Accounts** - Normal Vostro accounts act only as transit accounts whereas in Special Vostro Accounts INR (Indian Rupee) balances can be held.
- This enables payments in rupee for the export and import of goods in the case of trade with Russia.
- This payment in rupee will go into these Vostro accounts and the banks will keep the record of money transferred.
- The RBI has allowed these special Vostro accounts to invest the surplus balance in Indian government securities to help popularise the new arrangement.

*The Reserve Bank of India had announced [guidelines](#) on overseas trade in Indian Rupee in July 2022.*

### References

1. [Indian Express - India pushes Rupee trade beyond Russia](#)
2. [The Hindu - Vostro accounts opened for trade in rupee](#)

### Loss and Damages Fund

*In the COP27 U.N. climate summit in Egypt, the parties agreed to create a loss and damage fund.*

- Loss and Damage (L&D) Fund is a financing mechanism to compensate the most

vulnerable countries from climate-linked disasters.

- Financing or a new fund to deal with loss and damage was a long-pending demand of poor and developing countries, including India.
- The [G-77](#) (India is part of this group) and China had called for the immediate creation of an L&D fund at COP 27

*Three decades ago [Vanuatu](#), an island in Oceania, first asked nations to set up an insurance fund to help island countries cope with the rising seas.*

- Countries agreed at the COP27 Summit to set up a fund to help vulnerable countries being battered by climate disasters
- A '**Transitional Committee**' would be established which will decide the modalities, sources and governance of the fund, which will be considered at COP28.
- The Transitional Committee will have 23 members, comprising 10 members from developed country Parties and 13 members from developing country Parties.
- The Committee will consider
  1. Establishing institutional arrangements, modalities, structure, governance and terms of reference of the fund;
  2. Defining the elements of the new funding arrangements;
  3. Identifying and expanding sources of funding;
  4. Ensuring coordination and complementarity with existing funding arrangements.
- [Global Shield](#) is another funding mechanism which was also launched at the COP27 U.N. climate summit.

*The 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UN's Framework Convention for Climate Change will be held in the UAE in 2023.*

## Loss and Damage

- Loss and Damage (L&D) refers to impacts of climate change that cannot be avoided either by mitigation or adaptation.
- They also include not only economic damage to property but also loss of livelihoods, and the destruction of biodiversity and sites that have cultural importance.

## References

1. [The Hindu - COP27 | India hails compensation fund](#)
2. [Indian Express - COP27: Loss and damage fund lone bright spot](#)

## Nicobari Hodi Craft

*The Nicobari Hodi craft is the first application seeking GI tag from Andaman & Nicobar Islands.*

- The hodi is the Nicobari tribe's traditional craft (a boat).
- Hodi is an outrigger canoe, very commonly operated in the Nicobar group of islands.

- The hodi is built using either locally available trees or from nearby islands, and its design varies slightly from island to island.
- The technical skills for building a hodi are based on indigenous knowledge inherited by the Nicobarese from their forefathers.



- **Specifications** - The length of the finished canoe has to be 12 times that of its width.
- A 60 to 80 year old tree with a straight trunk or one having a slight incline to one side is preferred.
- The trunk selected has to be free of branches along the required length of 15 times of this width.
- Hodis are used for transporting people and goods (like coconuts) from one island to another and also used for fishing and racing purposes.
- Hodi races are held between islands and villages in Nicobar.

### Geographical Indication Tag

- A geographical indication (**GI Tag**) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years.
- Geographic Indication (GI) is defined under Article-23 and 24 of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

### References

1. [The Hindu - Andaman & Nicobar's first application for GI tag](#)

### Ivory Trade

*For the first time since joining the CITES in 1976, India did not vote against a proposal seeking to re-open the ivory trade.*

- Namibia, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe proposed at the CITES Conference of the Parties meetings to re-open the ivory trade by delisting [African elephants](#).
- This delisting will allow a regular form of trade in ivory to sell their stockpile to other countries.
- For over three decades, India has opposed the international ivory trade but abstained from voting this proposal at the 19th meeting of the CITES Conference of the Parties ([CITES - CoP19](#)) in Panama.
- India's change in stance won't make a difference to the outcome of a vote and the proposal was defeated.

## Ivory Trade Ban by CITES

- Ivory trade was globally banned in 1989 and all African elephant populations were put in CITES Appendix I.
- The populations of Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe were transferred to Appendix II in 1997 and South Africa's in 2000.
  1. CITES Appendix I - No trade is allowed in species in this list
  2. CITES Appendix II - Trade is strictly regulated in those in this list
- In 1999 and 2008, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa were permitted by CITES to conduct one-off sales of ivory stockpiled from natural elephant deaths and seizures from poachers.
- Namibia's proposal for allowing a regular form of controlled trade in ivory by delisting the elephant populations of the 4 countries from CITES Appendix II was rejected at the CoP17 (2016) and CoP18 (2019) as well.

## Ivory Trade Ban in India

- India illegalised trade in ivory from Asian elephants in 1986 by amending the **Wildlife Protection Act 1972** and including a '**Chapter VA**'.
- The 1992 amendment included ivory imported into India as illegalised trade in ivory.
- The Asian elephant is listed in **Schedule I** of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

*Chapter VA prohibits trade and commerce in trophies and items or animal articles derived from species listed in Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II of the Act.*

	African Elephants	Asian Elephants
IUCN	Vulnerable	Endangered
CITES	Appendix II	Appendix I
Wildlife Protection Act 1972.	-	Schedule I

## References

1. [Indian Express - India abstains on ivory trade vote](#)
2. [Hindustan Times - Namibia wants to lift ivory trade ban](#)

## Sangai Festival 2022

*The Sangai festival for the first time organised in at least 13 places to make it an all-Manipur festival and showcase culture of all communities.*

- The 10-day-long Sangai Festival is an **annual** cultural extravaganza in Manipur.
- The Manipur's biggest tourism festival helps to promote Manipur as a world class tourism destination.
- The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of Sangai festival (2022), themed as '**Festival of Oneness**' is celebrated after 2 years of hiatus due to the pandemic.
- This time the festival will be held in 13 venues across 6 districts, making it an all-Manipur festival and showcase culture of all communities.
- **Sangai deer** - The festival has been named after Sangai deer, Manipur's state animal.
- The Sangai is an endemic and endangered subspecies of brow-antlered deer found only in Manipur, India.
- It is found in its natural habitat only at [KeibulLamjao National Park](#) over the floating biomass in the south eastern part of Loktak Lake.

*The indigenous sagol kangjei, a sport that has now evolved into the modern game of polo, will also be featured during the festival.*

## References

1. [Indian Express - Manipur's biggest tourism festival](#)
2. [Northeast Today - The cultural extravaganza Sangai Festival 2022](#)
3. [Deccan Herald - Sangai festival as an image makeover](#)



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