

## Current Affairs of the Day

### PAPER 1:

#### ➤ Art & Culture:

1. Amarnath Yatra cancelled
2. What is the significance of Amaranth yatra?
3. What are the other pilgrimages in Jammu and Kashmir?

### PAPER 2:

#### ➤ International Relations:

1. 'Close to limited trade deal with U.S.'
2. China repeats claim on Bhutan's east
3. Vulnerable groups petition global fund
4. What is Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM)?



## ‘Close to limited trade deal with U.S.’

- India and the U.S. have “almost” finalised a limited trade deal.
- the longer term plan is to work towards a comprehensive trade deal.
- As an intermediate step between the imminent limited deal and the comprehensive deal, Mr. Goyal proposed a preferential trade agreement that would cover 50 to 100 goods and services.
- India and the U.S. have apparently been close to finalising a limited trade deal several times over the past year, including when both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump were in New York last year for the United Nations General Assembly session.
- Again, in February this year, the two sides scrambled — unsuccessfully — to finalise a mini deal that was to be announced during Mr Trump’s India visit.

## Amarnath Yatra cancelled

- The Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) on Tuesday decided to cancel the annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine in Kashmir.

### Value Added Information

#### What is the significance of Amaranth yatra?

- The Amaranth cave deep is in the Himalayas in south Kashmir.
- The cave is 3,888 m above sea level, can be reached only on foot or by pony.
- Each year, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims make the trek up to the shrine.

#### How the deity in the shrine is formed?

- The ice lingam is formed by a trickle of water from a cleft in the cave’s roof.
- The Shiva lingam gets its full shape in May, after which it begins to melt by August.



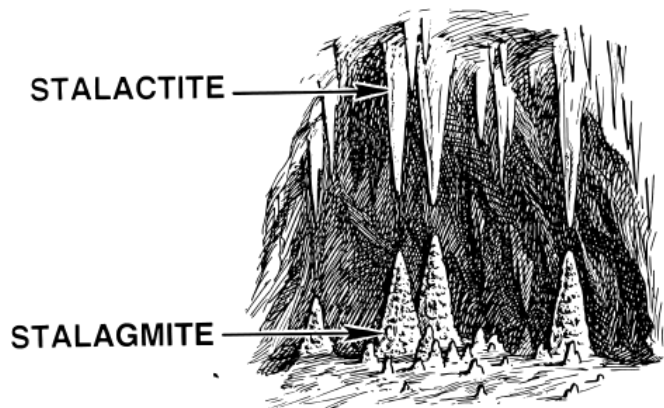


- The water freezes as it drips, forming, over time, a tall, smooth ice stalagmite.
- A stalactite is an icicle-shaped formation that hangs from the ceiling of a cave, and is produced by precipitation of minerals from water dripping through the cave ceiling.
- stalactites have pointed tips.
- A stalagmite is an upward-growing that have precipitated from Most water dripping onto the floor of a cave.
- Most stalagmites have rounded or flattened tips.

## What are the other pilgrimages in Jammu and Kashmir?

### Vaishno Devi

- Vaishno Devi Mandir is a very popular Hindu temple dedicated to the Hindu Goddess
- It is located in the Trikuta Mountains of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It is at an altitude of 5200 ft above the sea level.
- The Temple is 13.5 km from Katra.
- Various modes of transportation are available from katra including Ponies, Electric vehicles.
- People who visits Amarnath also visits this shrine.



### Shankracharya Temple

- Situated on the Zabarwan Mountain in Srinagar, Kashmir.
- Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva.
- Visiting this temple involves the devotees to trek to the top of the hill on which it stands, about 1100 feet above the plains.
- Built in 371 BC, the great saint Shankracharya is said to have stayed there during Shankracharya his visit to Kashmir.



## Raghunath Temple

- Raghunath Temple is one of the largest temple in North India and is located in Jammu.
- It was built by Maharaja Gulab Singh (founder of the kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir) and his son Ranbir Singh.
- There are seven shrines, each having its own Shikhara, present at the site of the temple.
- Raghunath Temple enshrines many idols of the Hindu gods and goddesses but its presiding deity is Lord Rama.

## China repeats claim on Bhutan's east

- China said that it has offered Bhutan a “package solution” to its boundary dispute, reviving a reference to its **1996 proposal for a territory swap** to give Bhutan the disputed areas in its north in exchange for the disputed western areas, including **Doklam**.
- The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) also repeated its claim on Bhutan's eastern boundary at Sakteng, which experts warn, may be a new pressure tactic by Beijing to push Thimphu into concluding a boundary deal.
- During a meeting of the UNDP-led Global Environment Facility on June 2-3 this year, the Chinese representative had tried, unsuccessfully, to stop the funding for Bhutan's **Sakteng forest sanctuary**, claiming the area was disputed. Bhutan, through the Indian delegate who represented them, had rejected the claim, and was granted the funding.

### Never in contention:

- Since 1984, when China and Bhutan began talks, the areas of dispute have only included Pasamlung and Jakarlung valleys to the north (what China calls middle) area, and Doklam and other pasturelands to the west. The eastern boundary of Bhutan, which borders Arunachal Pradesh, has never been in contention.



## Big worry for India:

- After the 11th round of talks in 1996, Bhutan's 4th King Jigme Singye Wangchuck (the present King's father) had informed the Bhutanese National Assembly that China "wanted to exchange the valleys to the north, with an area of 495 square kilometres, with the pasture land to the west, totalling 269 square kilometres".
- The deal would have benefited Bhutan by giving it the larger chunk of land, and resolving its tensions with China, but was a big worry for India, **as the Doklam swap would give the People's Liberation Army (PLA) access to the strategically sensitive "chicken neck" of the Siliguri corridor.**

## Vulnerable groups petition global fund

- Deprived of sources of livelihood during the pandemic, sex workers, transpersons, gay and bisexual men, drug users and people living with HIV/AIDS have written to the **Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM)** protesting against being ignored by government and multilateral agencies in COVID-19-related emergency relief efforts.

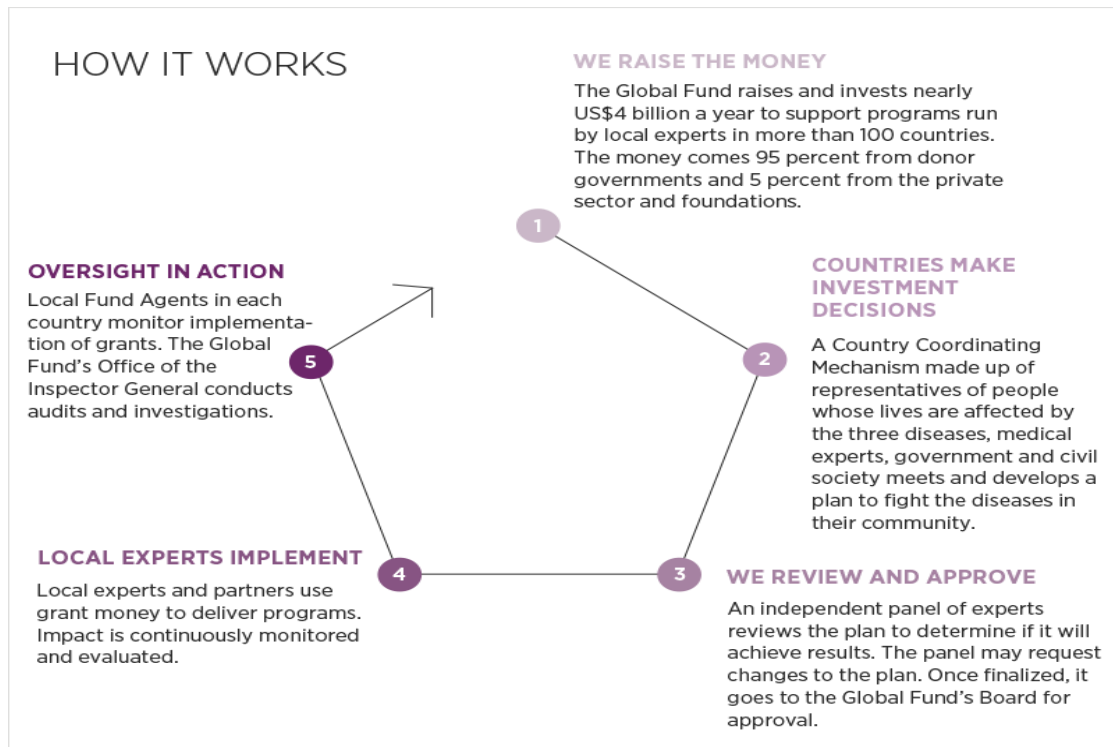
## Value Added Information

### What is Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM)?

- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (or simply the Global Fund) is an international financing organization.
- It aims to "attract, leverage and invest additional resources to end the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to support attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations."
- Founded in 2002, the Global Fund is a **partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and people affected by the diseases.**
- The organization maintains its **secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland**



## Historical background:



- The Global Fund was **formed as an independent, non-profit foundation under Swiss law and hosted by the World Health Organization** in January 2002. In January 2009, the organization became an **administratively autonomous organization**, terminating its administrative services agreement with the World Health Organization.