



Current Affairs of the Day

lists geo-tourism sites in NE to visit after 'unlock'



Site in Unakoti district of Tripura has numerous rock-cut sculptures and temples

1. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has identified certain geological sites across the Northeast for the promotion of geo-tourism as some States in the region prepare to 'unlock' from September.
2. Sikkim has already opened for tourists while Assam and Nagaland are planning to withdraw COVID-19 restrictions from September in view of the dip in the positivity rate and an increase in the number of vaccinated people.
3. Twelve locations in the Northeast are included in the 32 approved geo-tourism or geo-heritage sites in the country.
4. Of the 12 sites, three are in Meghalaya, two each in Assam and Tripura, and one each in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim.



China formally passes three-child policy into law

1. China's legislature formally amended the country's family planning rules to allow couples to have three children, also announcing a number of policy measures aimed at boosting declining birth rates.
2. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, or Parliament, passed an amendment to the Population and Family Planning Law, state media said, adding that the amended law calls on the authorities to "take supportive measures, including those in finances, taxes, insurance, education, housing and employment, to reduce families' burdens as well as the cost of raising and educating children."
3. The ruling Communist Party announced in May that couples in China would for the first time be allowed to have a third child in relaxation of family planning rules. In 2016, a "two-child policy" was introduced that largely failed to boost birth rates.
4. China's regulators in recent weeks have taken drastic measures to reduce education costs - cited in many surveys as the main reason why many couples prefer to have only one child - including by overhauling the booming private education industry, which may be ordered to go non-profit according to reports in the Chinese press.
5. The changes come in the wake of China's once-in-ten year population census that recorded rapidly declining birth rates over the past decade. The National Bureau of Statistics said on May 11 that 12 million babies were born last year, the lowest number since 1961.

'Biggest challenge'

1. The census said China's population was 1.41 billion in 2020, an increase of 72 million since the last census in 2010. The census recorded 264 million in the age group of 60 and over, up 5.44% since 2010 and accounting for 18.70% of the population.
2. Those in the 15-59 age group were 894 million persons, down by 6.79% since 2010 and accounting for 63.35% of the population. China's workforce in the 15-59 age bracket peaked at 925 million in 2011, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security said previously. That number was down to 894 million in this census and would drop to 700 million by 2050.



3. According to the experts, the ageing crisis might be the biggest challenge the Chinese nation faces in the next century.

A visible change through opening-up

Project Green Slate, an initiative of the NGO Yellow Bag Foundation (YBF), began conducting multiple intelligence (MI) training for children. Attending three-hour weekly sessions of opening-up have ushered in a visible transformation in Anitha.

Eight kinds of intelligence:

1. Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner theorises that people are blessed with more than intellectual capacity and outlines eight kinds of intelligence in every individual — musical, spatial-visual, verbal, logical, naturalistic, kinesthetic, inter-and intra-personal intelligence — which when identified and tapped yield improved performance in other spheres, including academics.
2. Providing children with the right environment and engaging them in activities that would help them identify their strengths and talent is the aim of multiple intelligence (MI) training.
3. The pilot project was launched in two phases, first for children aged between five to eight, and now for those aged 10-12.

Mapping skills

1. For example, when a child is taught alphabets, some may like to write them down, some enjoy singing aloud, some identify them with the names of animals. Whatever combination of learning happens, it indicates the child's latent abilities.
2. Mapping a child's skills and interpreting their strength is important.

Palm oil plan enthruses farmers

1. The National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), a ₹11,040 crore project by the Union government to maximise cultivation and production, is expected to bring in remarkable growth prospects for palm oil industry in Kerala.



2. While both farmers and refiners find the scheme extremely encouraging, it can also revitalise the estates run by the Oil Palm India Limited and the Plantation Corporation of Kerala.
3. Since India is heavily dependent on imports when it comes to crude and refined palm oils, the industry stakeholders believe that the current development will be highly beneficial for the sector.
4. The NMEO-OP proposes to extend the cultivation of oil palm, considered a top oil crop, to an additional 6.5 lakh hectares so that the crude palm oil (CPO) production touches 11.20 lakh tonnes by the 2025-26 financial year.
5. In the total financial outlay of ₹11,040 crores, the share of the Centre will be ₹8,844 crores while the State share of ₹2,196 crores includes the viability gap funding as well. Reportedly, the State government was considering some projects to expand cultivation even before the scheme was announced.

Sites identified

1. Potential sites for cultivation were identified in Wayanad and Palakkad districts while projects to rope in more farmers are also being discussed.
2. COVID-19 had affected the industry like any other sector, but even before that, the situation was not good. But now rubber farmers seem interested in switching to oil palm and the new scheme will attract more. All these new developments will definitely revive the sector by 2022.
3. While NMEO-OP offers special assistance for the rejuvenation of old gardens, it is also expected to generate more employment in the sector.