

## Prelim Bits 04-01-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### Free Movement Regime (FMR)

*The Centre has decided to start an advanced smart fencing system for the entire India-Myanmar border with the end of free movement regime.*

- **Free Movement Regime** - It is a mutual pact between ***India and Myanmar*** to allow tribes dwelling along the border on either side to ***travel up to 16 km*** inside the other ***without a visa***.

*India shares a 1,643 km-long border with Myanmar, which passes through the States of Arunachal Pradesh (520 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (398 km), and Mizoram (510 km).*

- **Initiated in** - *1970's*, last *revised in 2016*.
- **Aim** - To facilitate ***people-to-people ties*** between the countries as residents in the region enjoy strong ethnic and familial relations on both sides of the border.
- **Eligibility** - It can be used by either a ***citizen*** of India or a citizen of Myanmar with the production of a ***border pass***, usually *valid for a year*, and can *stay for up to 2 weeks per visit*.
- **Challenges** - Myanmar's military coup in 2021 prompted an ***influx of undocumented migrants***, who took shelter in Mizoram, and also entered Manipur.
- The migrants belonging to the ***Kuki-Chin-Zo ethnic group share ethnic*** ties with communities in Mizoram and Manipur.
- **Suspension** - *Manipur has suspended the FMR since 2020*, due to COVID-19 pandemic but now urges the centre to end FMR as it attributes to the ongoing ethnic violence in the State.

*India's International border security is Centre's domain.*

- **End of FMR** - Fencing along the entire border will be completed in the next 4-and-half years and it necessitates a visa requirement.
- **Significance of Ending FMR** - It is to ***stop the misuse of the FMR by insurgent groups*** to carry out attacks on the Indian side and flee towards Myanmar and also to put a ***brake on the influx of illegal immigrants, drugs and gold smuggling***.



## References

1. [The Indian Express - Ending Free movement Regime](#)
2. [The Hindu - Free Movement Regime](#)
3. [The Print - Government to terminate Free Movement Regime](#)

## Biodiversity Credits (or) Bio Credits

*There is an urgent need to regulate frameworks to ensure the effective implementation of biodiversity credits.*

### Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

- **Aim** - KMGBF aims to catalyze transformative action by governments, and subnational and local authorities, with the involvement of all of society, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.
- **Adoption** - KMGBF was adopted in 2022 at the 15th Conference of Parties (CoP15) of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- **Financing work** - Biodiversity credits are increasingly being pushed as a means for financing work on the various targets set under the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(KMGBF\)](#).

## Biodiversity Credits

- Biodiversity credit is a financial mechanism, which represents an asset created through investments in the restoration, conservation, and development of biodiversity in a specific landscape.

*Biocredits are similar to carbon credits used to control greenhouse gas emissions.*

- Biocredits are not designed to offset or compensate for actions with negative impacts on biodiversity.
- Instead, proceeds from the sale of biocredits are used to protect and restore biodiversity where it exists.

- To promote biocredits, the ***biodiversity credit alliance*** was also launched at CoP15.

### **Biodiversity Credit Alliance (BCA)**

- BCA provides guidance for the establishment of a credible and scalable market that stands up to the scrutiny of multiple stakeholders.
- BCA is working together with the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to ensure strong foundations and principles exist and can be applied by all market participants going forward.
- BCA was launched during the COP 15 with the support from UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDCA).
- BCA is a voluntary international alliance that brings together diverse stakeholders to support the realization of the [Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

### **References**

1. [Down To Earth - 2024 may see action on biodiversity credits](#)
2. [WEF - Biodiversity credits can deliver benefits for business](#)
3. [UNDP - Biodiversity Credit](#)
4. [UNDP - Biodiversity Credit Alliance](#)

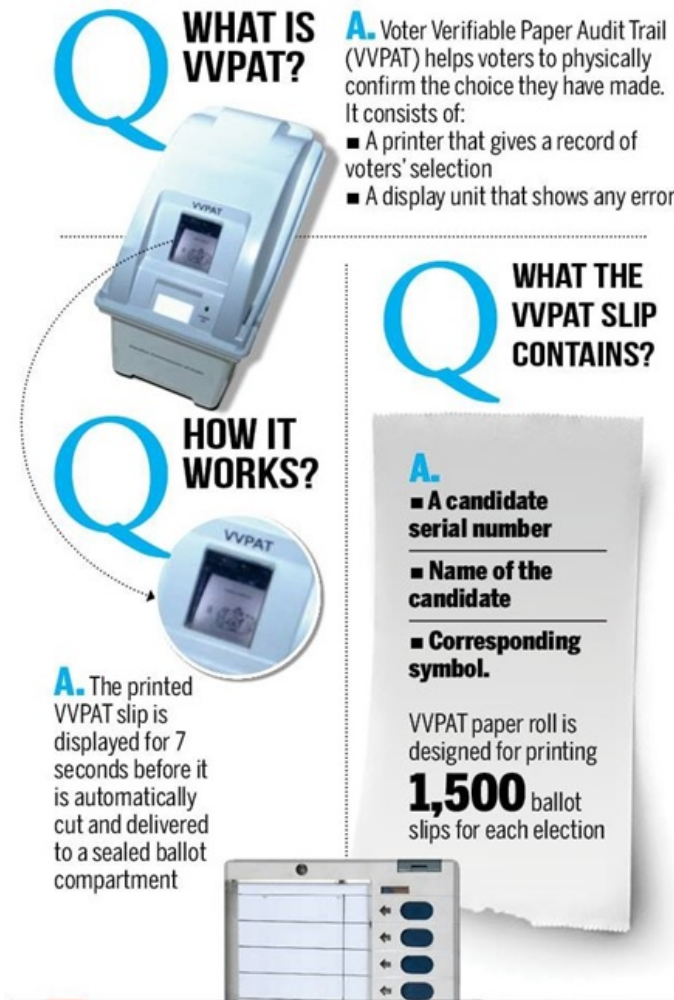
### **Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)**

*INDIA bloc leaders want a meeting with the Election Commission to discuss and provide suggestions on the use of VVPATs.*

- A VVPAT is a machine that is attached to the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM).
- The VVPAT attached to the EVM generates a paper slip which has the name of the candidate voted for and the symbol of his party.
- This is recorded in the machine's control unit and a printer is attached to the balloting unit and kept in the voting compartment.
- The paper slip remains visible on the VVPAT for seven seconds through a transparent window.
- The paper slip can later be retrieved and tallied with the button pressed in the EVM.
- The use of VVPATs falls under Rule 49A of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, which provides that every EVM shall have a control unit and a balloting unit.
- It further states that a printer with a drop box may also be attached to a voting machine for printing a paper trail of the vote.

*These machines were first used in a by-election in Nagaland in 2013.*

- In case of any dispute, the paper slips in the VVPATs can be tallied with the buttons pressed on the EVMs.
- These printed slips can be counted to verify the results.



## References

1. [The Indian Express - What are VVPATs?](#)
2. [Times of India - Lawyer moves HC for VVPAT in all EVMs](#)
3. [The Hindu - INDIA bloc to express its view on VVPAT slips](#)

## Chipko Movement

*Sainikpuri residents plan 'chipko' movement to save trees.*

### Chipko movement

- The Chipko movement was a non-violent agitation in 1973 that was aimed at protection and conservation of trees.

*Gandhian social activist Chandi Prasad Bhatt, founder of the cooperative organisation Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh, led the first Chipko movement near the village of Mandal in 1973.*

- The movement is an uprising against the felling of trees in Uttar Pradesh's Chamoli district (now Uttarakhand) in 1973.
- The uprising originated in Chamoli district and in no time spilled onto other states in

north India.

- The name of the movement chipko comes from the word embrace, as the villagers hugged the trees and encircled them to prevent being hacked.
- The Chipko movement can essentially be called a women's movement.

*The trigger for the modern Chipko movement was the growth in development that Uttar Pradesh witnessed following the 1963 China border conflict.*

## **Chipko Andolan**

- The original Chipko andolan dates back to the 18th century when Rajasthan's Bishnoi community started it.
- The incident includes the sacrifice of a group of villagers, who led by a lady named Amrita Devi, laid down their lives while protecting trees from being felled on the orders of then King of Jodhpur.
- After this incident, the king, in a royal decree, banned cutting of trees in all Bishnoi villages.
- The Chipko Andolan also stands out as an eco-feminist movement.

## **References**

1. [The Hindu - Sainikpuri residents plan chipko movement](#)
2. [The Indian Express - What is the Chipko movement?](#)
3. [Britannica - Chipko Movement](#)

## **Sikki or Golden Grass**

*Sikki artisans suffer livelihood losses amid climate change & state apathy.*

- **Family** - Zizanioides grass family.
- **Scientific name** - Chrysopogon zizanioides

*Sikki finds mention in ancient Sanskrit texts such as the Ramayana, where it is referred to as viran, sugandhimool, ushir and nalad.*

- **Tarai Region** - This grass grows indigenously in the Tarai regions of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and has an average height of 3-4 feet and Sikki is also now grown to arrest soil erosion in hilly regions.
- The stem is used to make artefacts; the roots are used for extracting oil that is used both for perfumery and medicinal purposes.
- Sikki is used to make traditional items such as multipurpose baskets, ornaments, showpieces and many more utility items that are still considered valuable in rural India.

*Sikki vermilion boxes that are considered auspicious are given as part of dowry*

*to brides in the Mithilanchal region of Bihar.*

- **GI Tag** - Sikki got the geographical identification tag in 2018 along with Makhana (aquatic fox nut) and the Madhubani paintings.
- Unlike many plant-based products, Sikki items barely get mouldy or infested with fungi.

*Sikki is locally known as Kaincha in the state of Odisha.*



## References

1. [Down To Earth - Sikki artisans suffer livelihood losses](#)
2. [Down To Earth - Odisha's artisans strike gold with golden grass](#)

## Other Important Topics

### **Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fiber Connection**

- PM Inaugurates Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fiber Connection and dedicates Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD) plant at Kadmat recently
- **Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fiber** connection will lead to faster Internet for the people of Lakshadweep.
- The project is funded by ***Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF)***, Department of Telecommunications.
- **Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD)** is a desalination technique that uses low-grade thermal energy to evaporate seawater and produce fresh water.

### **Savitribai Phule**

- Savitribai Phule (1831 - 1897) was a social reformer, poet in Maharashtra.
- She is considered the 1<sup>st</sup> female teacher in India and is known as the mother of Indian feminism.

### **Rani Velu Nachiyar**

- Rani Velu Nachiyar was the **1<sup>st</sup> queen to fight against the British** colonial power in India.
- She is known by Tamils as **Veeramangai**, who was the princess of Ramanathapuram.

### **Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research among Teaching professionals ('SMART 2.0')**

- The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) along with *National Commission for Indian System of Medicine* (NCISM) has launched 'SMART 2.0' recently.
- The program aims to promote robust clinical studies in priority areas of Ayurveda with Ayurveda academic institutions/hospitals across the country through mutual collaboration.

### **Fog Pass Device**

- A Fog Pass Device is a **GPS-based navigation device** that helps train loco pilot navigate through dense fog.
- It provides on-board **real-time information** (Display as well as voice guidance) to Loco Pilots.
- It gives information regarding location of fixed landmarks such as Signal, Level Crossing gate (Manned & Unmanned), Permanent Speed Restrictions, Neutral Sections etc.

### **Mountain Green Cover Index (MGCI)**

- Recently National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) signed a 3-year MoU with the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to develop & report a **Green Cover Index** for National highways.
- **MGCI** is a metric that measures the amount of green vegetation in mountain areas (forest, shrubs, trees, pasture land, crop land, etc.) in order to monitor progress towards the mountain target.

### **Cyber kidnapping**

- Cyber kidnapping is a type of cybercrime where attackers gain unauthorized access to computer systems or data and then demand ransom.
- In cyber kidnapping, online attackers target victims and force them into isolating themselves to demand ransom from their families.
- They monitor the victims through video chat and use pictures captured by them in isolated conditions to extort money from their families.

### **Starlink**

- Starlink is a ***satellite internet network*** operated by SpaceX, an American aerospace company.
- It provides coverage to over ***70 countries*** and aims to provide high-speed internet coverage to every part of the world.
- It also aims to provide global mobile phone service after 2023.

### **Perihelion**

- The Earth reached its *perihelion, or the closest point in its orbit around the Sun* recently.
- Perihelion occurs in early January, about 2 weeks after the **Winter Solstice**.

### **Vazhakulam variety**

- Vazhakulam pineapple is a pineapple grown in the Vazhakulam area of Kerala, India.
- The pineapple is unique in aroma, flavour and sweetness due to its high sugar content and low acidity.
- Vazhakulam is considered as the biggest pineapple market in India.
- It got its ***GI tag in 2009***.



## Czech Republic

- The Czech Republic, also known as *Czechia*, is a landlocked country in Central Europe with its capital Prague.
- It borders Poland, Germany, Austria, and Slovakia.
- With a *lack of natural lakes*, reservoirs are important in the Czech Republic.

