

Prelim Bits 24-07-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Zero FIR

Few days ago, a Zero FIR was filed in connection with the Manipuri two Kuki-Zomi women incident.

FIR

- The term First Information Report (FIR) is *not defined* in the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973, or in any other law.
- However, in police regulations or rules, information recorded under *Section 154 of CrPC* is known as First Information Report (FIR).
- **Elements of FIR**
 1. The information must relate to the commission of a cognizable offence.
 2. It should be given in writing or orally to the head of the police station.
 3. It must be written down and signed by the informant, and its key points should be recorded in a daily diary.

*The Apex court in **Lalita Kumari v. Government of U.P.** observed that it is **mandatory** to register a FIR under Section 154 if the complaint is related to a cognizable offence.*

Zero FIR

- **Procedure** - When a police station receives a complaint of an offence that has been committed in another jurisdiction, it registers an FIR and then transfers it to the relevant police station for further investigation.
- *No regular FIR number is given* to the Zero FIR.
- After receiving the Zero FIR, the relevant police station registers a fresh FIR and starts the investigation.
- A Zero FIR can be filed in *any police station* by the victim, irrespective of their residence or the place of occurrence of crime.
- **Purpose** - To provide speedy redressal to the victim so that timely action can be taken after the filing of the FIR.
- **Provision** - The provision of Zero FIR came up after the recommendation of the Justice Verma Committee, constituted after the 2012 Nirbhaya gang rape case to suggest Criminal Law amendments.

References

1. [The Indian Express - What is Zero FIR and why it is registered?](#)

2. [The Quint - Zero FIR Against 'Unknown Miscreants'](#)

Batagaika Crater

Drone footage has revealed details of Batagaika crater, a 1 kilometre long gash in Russia's Far East that forms the world's biggest permafrost crater.

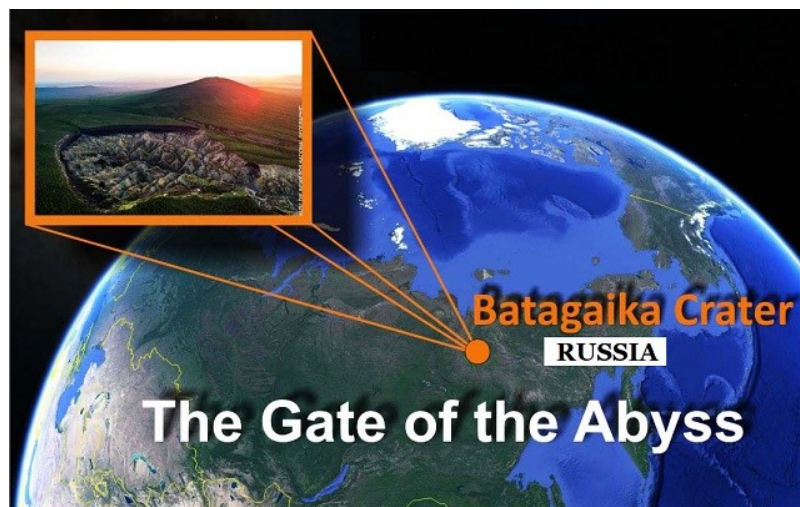
Batagaika Crater

- Batagaika crater is also known as the "Gateway to the Underworld" and has the scientific name: a mega-slump.
- It is the world's largest permafrost crater located in Russia's Sakha Republic.
- The crater is marked by an uneven terrain at the base of the depressed, which is made of irregular surfaces and small hummocks.
- They began to form after the surrounding forest was cleared in the 1960s and the permafrost underground began to melt, causing the land to sink.
- It developed first as a ravine, then by thawing in the heat of sunny days, it started to expand.

Russia is warming at least 2.5 times faster than the rest of the world.

Permafrost thawing

- A permafrost is a ground that remains frozen at 32°F (0°C) or colder for at least two years in a row, as per NASA.
- It comprises soil, rocks and sand that are held together by ice. The soil and ice in permafrost stay frozen all year long.
- Thawing is the process of going from a frozen state to a liquid state.
- The warming is melting the long-frozen tundra that covers about 65% of the country's landmass, releasing the greenhouse gases stored in the thawed soil.



References

1. [The Hindu - World's biggest permafrost crater in Russia's Far East thaws](#)

2. [Reuters – World's biggest permafrost crater in Russia's Far East thaws](#)
3. [WION – World's biggest permafrost crater thaws due to climate change](#)

Cannabis Medicine Project

Union minister Jitendra Singh has said that Jammu is going to pioneer India's first cannabis medicine project undertaken by the CSIR-IIIM.

- **Initiative by** - Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu.
- **Mode** - The project is under public-private partnership (PPP) with a Canadian firm.
- **Significance** -
 1. Produce export quality drugs for neuropathies, diabetic pains, cancer, etc.
 2. Helps in spreading awareness in J&K and Punjab.
 3. Impetus for huge investment in Jammu & Kashmir.

Cannabis

- It refers to a group of three plants with psychoactive properties.
- The Mexican term 'marijuana' is frequently used in referring to cannabis leaves or other crude plant material in many countries.
- **Plants** - Cannabis sativa, Cannabis indica, and Cannabis ruderalis.
- They are made up of more than 120 components, known as *cannabinoids*.
- **Regulation** - The central law that deals with cannabis (weed or marijuana) in India is the *Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, of 1985*.
- The NDPS Act prohibits the sale and production of cannabis resin and flowers, but the use of leaves and seeds of the cannabis plant is permitted.
- The states have the power to regulate and form the state rules for it.
- **Status of cultivation in India** - Farming of cannabis has been ***legalised in Uttarakhand***, and controlled cultivation of cannabis is also being done in some districts of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

References

1. [PIB – Jammu to pioneer India's first Cannabis Medicine Project](#)
2. [Times of India – India's first cannabis med project in Jammu](#)

District Mineral Foundation Trusts (DMFT)

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) finds Chhattisgarh mining department underutilized DMFT, delayed projects.

- **DMF** - District Mineral Foundations (DMF) is a trust, setup as non-profit body in all districts of Chhattisgarh, in 2015.
- **Aim** - To work for the interest and benefit of people and areas affected by mining operations.
- **Funding** - It is funded through the contribution from miners.
- **Legality** - They derive their legal status from section *9B of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 2015*.

- The responsibility of monitoring the works of the DMFT lies with the District Management Committee.
- Under the *Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)* launched by the Union Ministry of Mines in 2015, high-priority sectors can avail 60% of DMFT funds.

The PMKKKY is a programme meant to provide for the welfare of areas and people affected by mining related operations, using the funds generated by District Mineral Foundations (DMFs).

- **High priority areas** - Drinking water supply, healthcare, education, sanitation, skill development, environment preservation, pollution control measures, welfare of women, children, elderly and disabled people.
- **Other priority sectors** - The other 40% of the DMF funds are to be utilized for Physical infrastructure, irrigation, energy, watershed development and other required environmental measures.

The CAG report found several irregularities in the working of the trust, including the delays in projects and underutilisation of funds from the time the DMFT was first established in 2015 to March 2021.

References

1. [Down To Earth - CAG finds Chhattisgarh mining department underutilized DMFT](#)
2. [Chhattisgarh State Centre - District Mineral Foundations \(DMF\)](#)

Silver Cockscomb

Silver cockscomb which is widely regarded as a weed is found to have benefits that is being largely used by the Soliga tribal community.

Silver Cockscomb

- Silver cockscomb is a short-lived beautiful but *troublesome weed* that is 50-60 cm-tall with simple, spirally arranged leaves around the stem.
- In Karnataka's Chamarajanagara district, the silver cockscomb is referred to as *anne soppu*.
- It is also known as lagos spinach, the weed belongs to the Amaranthaceae family, which includes economically important plants like spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*), beetroot and quinoa.
- **Benefits** - The Soliga tribes consume the silver cockscomb as a leafy vegetable as they are high in nutrients such as beta-carotene and folic acids, and have vitamin E, calcium and iron.
- Most farmers use the plant as fodder for livestock.
- It is frequently used in traditional Chinese and Indian medicine for treating eye diseases and ulcers.
- **Issues** - If left unchecked, it can spread quickly and suppress the growth of other

crops, affecting their yield.

- It also attracts insects, caterpillars, worms and moths that can harm crops.

Although it is of the same family as spinach, silver cockscomb leaves have lower levels of oxalic acid (0.2%) and phytic acid (0.12%). Spinach leaves on the other hand are high in calcium, oxalates, vitamin K and potassium, which can lead to formation of kidney stones.

Soliga tribe

- Soligas are an *indigenous tribe of Karnataka*.
- They are indigenous people of South India and are credited with being the first at many things:
 1. They are considered the first settlers of India.
 2. Their home, Biligiri Rangan (BR) Hills, was among the first areas to be declared a wildlife sanctuary in India, in 1974.
 3. In 2011, when the region was declared a tiger reserve, the Soligas were the first community to win resident rights in a tiger reserve.

Reference

1. [Down To Earth - Silver cockscomb isn't a troublesome weed for Karnataka's Soliga tribe](#)

