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Ramon Magsaysay Award 2024

Japanese filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki has won the 2024 Ramon Magsaysay Award.

- **Ramon Magsaysay Award** - It is Asia's premier prize and highest honor that recognizes greatness of spirit shown in selfless service to the peoples of Asia regardless of race, gender, or religion.
- It is awarded to outstanding **individuals and organizations** whose selfless service has offered solutions to some of the most intractable problems of human development.
- It is also known as the "Nobel Prize of Asia."
- **Ramon Magsaysay** - 7th Philippine President whose ideals inspired the Award's creation.
- **Award Instituted In** - 1957.
- **Announcement** - Recipients of the Award are announced annually on **August 31st**.
- **Award Presentation** - The Award medallion and certificate are presented in a formal ceremony **in Manila, Philippines, every November** of the same year.
- **Categories** - Award was given in six categories annually.

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| Government Service | To recognize outstanding service in the public interest in any branch of government, including the executive, judicial, legislative, or military. |
| Public Service | To recognize outstanding service for the public good by a private citizen. |
| Community Leadership | To recognize leadership of a community toward helping the disadvantaged have fuller opportunities and a better life. |
| Journalism, Literature, and Creative Communication Arts | To recognize effective writing, publishing, or photography or the use of radio, television, cinema, or the performing arts as a power for the public good. |
| Peace and International Understanding | To recognize effective writing, publishing, or photography or the use of radio, television, cinema, or the performing arts as a power for the public good. |
| Emergent Leadership | To recognize an individual, forty years of age or younger, for outstanding work on issues of social change in his or her community. |
| Hayao Miyazaki | |

- Hayao Miyazaki is the Japanese filmmaker, considered one of the greatest animators and directors.
- **His Major Works** - My Neighbour Totoro, Kiki's Delivery Service, World Masterpiece Theater, Future Boy Conan, *The Wonderful World of Puss 'n Boots*, *Castle in the Sky*, *Spirited Away*
- **Books written** - *Starting Point: 1979 to 1996*
- **Studio Ghibli** - He along with director Isao Takahata and producer Toshio Suzuki, founded Studio Ghibli in 1985.
- **Themes** - Pacifism, Environmentalism.
- Miyazaki's work was heavily steeped in the changing lives of Japanese people post-World War II.

Reference

[Indian Express | Magsaysay Award](#)

Zombie fungus

Recently, A field researcher found a dead tarantula that was infected by zombie fungus.



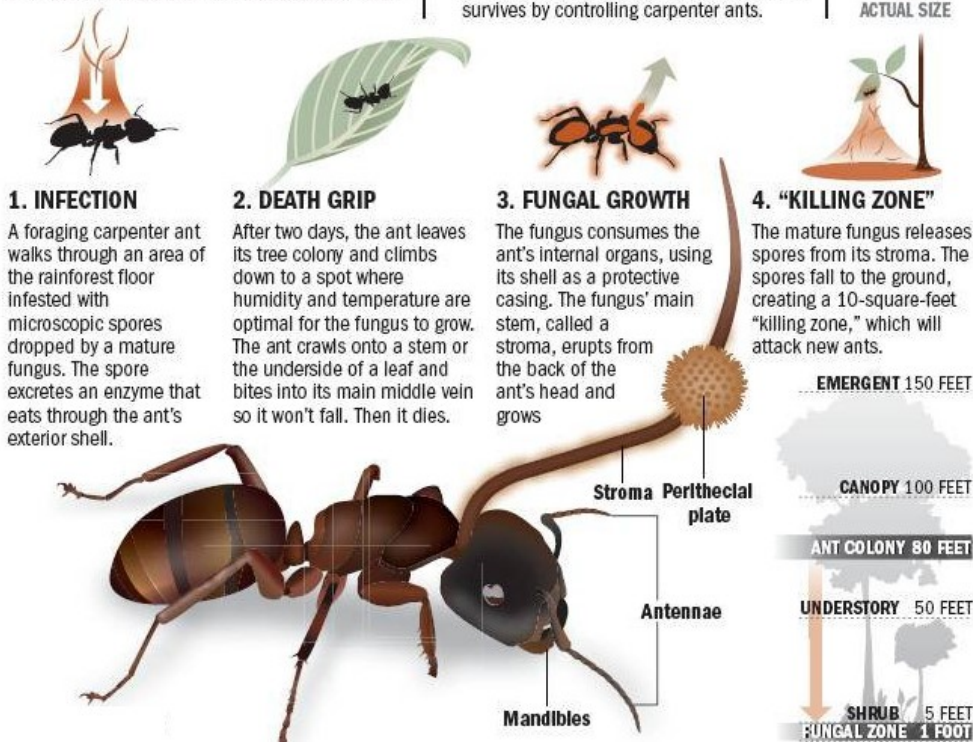
- **Zombie Fungus** - It is a species of parasitic fungus that generally infects ants and alters their behaviour before killing them.
- It is the first time it has infected a tarantula.
- It does not infect humans.
- **Scientific name** - *Ophiocordyceps unilateralis*.
- It is referred to simply as "cordyceps".
- **Taxonomy**
 - **Kingdom:** Fungi
 - **Order:** Hypocreales
 - **Family:** Ophiocordycipitaceae
 - **Domain:** Eukaryota

- **Prevalence** - They currently found predominantly in ***tropical forest ecosystems***.
- **Lifecycle** - The fungus begins its life cycle as a sticky spore on the forest floor.
- **Infection** - The Spore attaches to the body of a passing carpenter ant and germinates infective hyphae (threadlike strands) to breach the insect's exoskeleton.
- **Growth** - Once successfully inside the ant body, the fungus grows and manipulates the ant's behaviour.
- It makes the ant position itself in a warm, humid location near the ground that will best serve to distribute a new crop of fungal spores.
- **Death** - After the ant dies, the fungus finishes digesting the cadaver from the inside out and erects a triumphant stalk from the base of its conquest's head.
- **Spread** - The stalk releases spores from characteristic lateral cushions, and the cycle continues.

How to make a zombie ant

Ophiocordyceps unilateralis, a fungus found in the tropical rainforests of Thailand, survives by controlling carpenter ants.

ACTUAL SIZE



References



1. [CNN | Tarantula infected by 'zombie fungus'](#)
2. [Brittanica | Zombie Ant Fungus](#)

Arabian wolf & Indian wolf

Recently about 9 deaths in the riverine plains of Bachrach, Uttarpradesh is suspected to be caused by Indian Wolves.

- **Wolf (Canis lupus)** - It is a wide ranging and highly adaptive species.
- **Habitats** - With almost 40 subspecies, the wolf lives in a wide variety of habitats

- High mountains like the Himalayas
- Plains like the Indo-Gangetic Plain of South Asia
- The Deccan Plateau
- The icy tundra of the Arctic
- Deserts like the Thar
- The taiga.
- **Southern Wolves** - Indian and Arabian Wolves are southern subspecies of grey wolf species.
- They inhabit mostly arid landscapes.
- The Arabian wolf is the smallest grey wolf in the world and is Endangered due to human persecution.

| Characteristics | Indian Wolf | Arbian Wolf |
|------------------------|--|--|
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| Scientific Name | Canis lupus pallipes | Canis lupus arabs |
| IUCN Status | Endangered | Endangered |
| CITES | Appendix I | Appendix II |
| WPA Status | Schedule I | Not Available |
| Size | Medium in size | Smallest |
| Distribution | India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Israel, Turkey, Iran, and Syria | Arabian Peninsula, the Negev Desert, the Sinai Peninsula, and Jordan |
| Habitat | Open grasslands, thorn forests, and scrublands | Desert-adapted subspecies |
| Hunting | Indian wolves are territorial and hunt during the night | Nocturnal and Hunt during Night |

References

[DownToEarth | Indian wolf brings hope for its Arabian cousin](#)

Lothal dockyard of Harappan Civilisation

Recently a new study by the Indian Institute of Technology-Gandhinagar has found evidence for Lothal dockyard of Harappan Civilization.

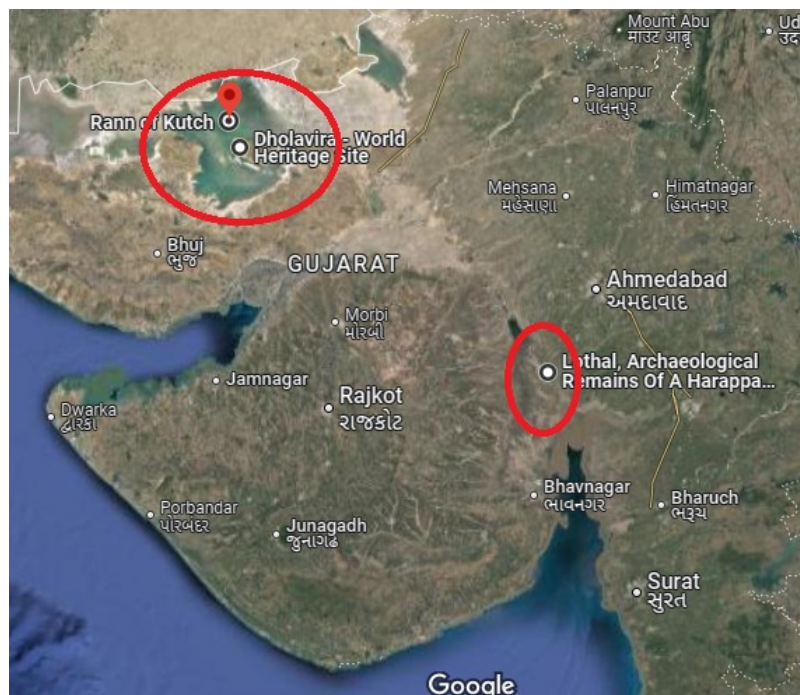
- **Lothal** - It is situated approximately 30 km inland from the Gulf of Khambhat on the western coast of India in Gujarat.
- It served as a bustling port during the Bronze Age Harappan period (2600 BCE to 1900 BCE)
- It was connected to a series of Harappan production and distribution centres along the Gulf of Kachchh and the Rann of Kachchh.
- **Significance** - Lothal is renowned for its well-preserved **brick-walled dockyard and warehouse**.



- **Study findings** - The Lothal dockyard theory is reevaluated using multi-sensor data, cloud computing, and multiple platforms.
- **Path of Sabarmati River** - Sabarmati river used to flow by Lothal during the Harappan Civilization.



- Currently, it flows 20 km east of Lothal.
- The lower reaches of the River Sabarmati underwent significant migration during the late Holocene period.
- It was discovered by the satellite images of the old channels of the River Sabarmati.
- **Travel Route** - There was also a travel route connecting Ahmedabad, through Lothal, the Nal Sarovar wetland, and the Little Rann, to Dholavira.



References

1. [Indian Express | Lothal Dockyard](#)
2. [ScienceDirect | Sabarmati and its connection with Lothal](#)

Indian Ocean Biodiversity Ocean Information System (IndOBIS)

Recently Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE) organised a national-level workshop on IndOBIS.

- **IndOBIS** - It is the Indian regional node of the global Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS).
- **Developed by** - Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE)

CMLRE is a premier research institution under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, established in 1998 at Kochi.

- **Function** - IndOBIS collects data of taxonomically resolved marine species occurrence records from the Indian Ocean.
- It accepts several categories of marine biodiversity data types, including literature and occurrence, abundance records, DNA-derived or genomic profiles, etc.
- **Use of IndOBIS** - It can be used in innovative studies such as tracking species distribution, identifying biodiversity hotspots, and accessing climate change impacts.

Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS)

- OBIS is one of the largest global repositories of information on marine species, marine science, conservation, and education.
- It emanated from the Census of Marine Life (2000-2010).
- **Established by** - Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.
- It is now an integral component of the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) of IOC.
- **Features** - It is supported by a network of nearly 30 regional nodes contributing data.
- It contains millions of records from thousands of datasets contributed by researchers, governments, and organisations worldwide.
- It provides detailed information on ***species distribution across the world's oceans***, including data on their occurrence, habitats, and environmental parameters.
- It provides free and open access to, and application of, biodiversity and biogeographic data and information on marine life.
- It offers tools and services that allow users to search, visualise, and download biodiversity data.

Ocean Eyes

- It is a citizen-centric mobile app for community-engagement approach to data collection, sharing, and analysis in marine biodiversity monitoring and research.
- **Developed by** - Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology
- Citizens and users can record sightings of marine species, log environmental conditions, and upload geotagged photos directly through the mobile.

References

1. [PIB | Indian Ocean Biodiversity Information System](#)
2. [IndOBIS | Indian Ocean Biodiversity Information System](#)