

UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 05-11-2024

Ranenglao Bob Khathing

Defence Minister recently inaugurated the Major Ralengnao 'Bob' Khathing Museum of Valour at Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

- Ranenglao 'Bob' Khathing was born on February 28, 1912, in **Manipur's Ukhrul district**.
- He was a **Tangkhul Naga**.
- He studied at Sir Johnstone High School in Imphal and did his matriculation from Shillong before joining Cotton College in Guwahati.
- He joined Ukhrul High School as its Head Master. He also founded a school at Harasingha in Assam's Darrang district.
- **Awards** - Bob Khathing was given
 - The coveted award of Member of British Empire (MBE) for his role in galvanising Naga support against the Japanese in Burma and India and
 - Military Cross (MC) for his acts of bravery above and beyond the call of duty.
- In 1939, after the Second World War broke out, Khathing joined the Indian Army and got an Emergency Commission as an officer.
- During the Second World War, he was part of a guerrilla outfit called **Victor Force**, raised by the British to combat the Japanese on the Burma-India road.
- Later, another force known as **SANCOL** was formed in June 1944 under command of Major John Saunders, and Bob Khathing was appointed Advisor to this force.
- At the end of the Second World War, he joined the interim government of **Maharaja Kumar Priyabrata Singh of Manipur** as minister in charge of the hill areas.
- In 1949, when Manipur merged with India, the interim government was dissolved and he joined the Assam Rifles.
- In 1951, he joined the Indian Frontier Administrative Service as an assistant political officer.
- In 1951, he was tasked by the Governor of Assam, Jairamdas Daulatram, to occupy Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.
- Bob Khathing started the expedition for Tawang in 1951, from the Lokhra Camp near Assam's Charduar with troops of Assam Rifles.
- Once they arrived in Tawang, Khathing held parleys with the locals, winning over their trust.
- He officially took Tawang under Indian administration by hoisting the Indian flag on February 14, **1951**.
- Thereafter, Khathing started the process of establishing an administrative set-up in the area around Tawang.
- He appointed **Gaon Buras (village elders)** in each village for that purpose, in keeping with the traditional practice of one Gaon Bura for groups of three to ten

villages.

- Then he went on to serve as Deputy Commissioner of Mokokchung (in Nagaland), Development Commissioner in Sikkim, and Chief Secretary of Nagaland.
- His career ended as ambassador to Burma in 1975 making him possibly the ***first person of tribal origin to be appointed ambassador*** in independent India.
- He died in Imphal on January 12, 1990.

Reference

[The Indian Express | Bob Khathing Museum of Valour](#)

Balfour Declaration

The 107th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration sees Gaza burning and collusion by Zionist Arab regimes.

- Balfour Declaration was made on November 2, 1917, in a letter from British Foreign Secretary ***Arthur Balfour*** to Lionel Walter Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community.
- **Provisions**
 - Balfour Declaration promised British support in ***establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine.***
 - It stated that the British government would not take any action that would prejudice the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish communities already living in Palestine.
 - The British government would not take any action that would prejudice the rights and political status of Jews in other countries.
- **History** - Palestine then was a part of the Ottoman Empire, and Britain had no legal right to promise it to anyone.
- After World War II the system transferred rule from the territories that were previously controlled by the powers defeated in the war Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria to the victors.
- The declared aim of the mandate system was to allow the winners of the war to administer the newly emerging states until they could become independent.
- Upon the start of the mandate, the British began to facilitate the immigration of European Jews to Palestine.
- Between 1922 and 1935, the Jewish population rose from 9% to nearly 27% of the total population.
- Though the Balfour Declaration stated that nothing shall be done against the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine
 - It equip Jews with the tools to establish self-rule, at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs.
- Also, the Declaration in spirit violated the promises made in the McMahon-Hussein correspondence (July 1915 to March 1916).
 - In which the British had promised the Arabs an independent state in return for

support against the Ottoman Empire in World War I.

- **The importance of the declaration for British** - Control over Palestine was a strategic imperial interest to keep Egypt and the Suez Canal within Britain's sphere of influence.
- Britain had to side with the Zionists to rally support among Jews in the United States and Russia, hoping they could encourage their governments to stay in the war until victory.
- Intense Zionist lobbying and strong connections between the Zionist community in Britain and the British government, some of the officials in the government were Zionists themselves.
- Jews were being persecuted in Europe and the British government was sympathetic to their suffering.
- Palestinians and their supporters have long condemned the declaration as a land theft conspiracy.
- This declaration ignored the longstanding Palestinian presence and sovereignty, as Jews made up only 5% of Palestine's population at the time.

Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, represents a strategic military initiative undertaken by Palestinian forces, aimed at targeting Israeli military bases, particularly in areas near the Gaza Strip.

References

1. [Indian Express | Balfour Declaration](#)
2. [Aljazeera | Balfour Declaration](#)

Black hole triple system

A new study says scientists have discovered a "black hole triple" in space for the first time.

- The system comprises a black hole at its centre, currently in the process of consuming a small star spiralling very close to it.
- There is also a second star, which appears to be circling the black hole but is actually far away.
- **Distance** - It is located about 8,000 light years away from Earth.
- **Constellation** - It is situated in the ***constellation of Cygnus***.
- The system features one of the oldest known black holes, the V404 Cygni, which is ***9 times as big as the Sun*** in our solar system.

1 light year is the distance light travels in a year, 9.5 trillion kilometre

- **Black Hole** - A black hole is a region in space where the pull of gravity is so strong that no matter or light can escape it.
- Astronomers believe most black holes are formed after massive stars explode at the

end of their lives known as a supernova. However, the triple system suggests a gentler process.

- Many black holes discovered until now have been part of binary systems, consisting of a black hole and a secondary object (such as a star or another black hole).
- **The black hole Triplet** - The black hole triple not only has one star which orbits the black hole about every 6.5 days, but also a more far-off star which orbits it every 70,000 years.
- **Formation** - V404 Cygni has 2 stars around it as the black hole did not arise from a supernova, which typically kicks away outer stars in the explosion.
- It was formed through another process called "***direct collapse***", where the star caves in after expending all its fuel, but does not explode.
- These events are called as a 'failed supernova'.
- However, the black hole triple will not have 3 members forever, as V404 Cygni is consuming the nearer star.
- This suggests that some already discovered binary systems could have been triple systems at some point, with the black hole later devouring one of its members.

Reference

[Indian Express | Black hole triple system](#)

DANA, Weather pattern

Millions have been affected in southern and eastern Spain due to torrential rain, which began recently because of the annual weather pattern, cold drop.

- It is an ***annual weather phenomenon*** known as a "gota fria," or cold drop.
- It is also sometimes called a DANA, Depresion Aislada en Niveles Altos or isolated depression at high altitudes.
- **Formation** - DANA or cold drop takes place when cold air descends over the warm waters of the ***Mediterranean Sea***.
- This results in atmospheric instability, causing hotter, moist air on the surface of the sea to rise quickly, leading to the formation of dense, towering ***cumulonimbus clouds*** in a matter of hours.
- These clouds then dump heavy rain.
- Its occurrence is related to the polar jet stream, a fast-moving wind current at high levels of the troposphere which circulates from west to east and separates the cold polar air from the warm tropical air.
- Often, a pocket of cold air gets separated from the polar jet stream and collides with the warmer air over the Mediterranean Sea, which results in DANA.
- The phenomenon and usually coincides with the onset of autumn and spring in the western Mediterranean.
- It can occur in Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, and other Mediterranean countries.
- However, experts suggest that cold drops have become more frequent and intense in recent years. Also, the phenomenon has also become more geographically spread.
- This is happening partly because of soaring global temperatures warmer air can retain

more moisture which, in turn, results in more intense rainfall.

- The rise in sea surface temperatures of the Mediterranean Sea has also exacerbated the situation.

Reference

[Indian Express | What is DANA?](#)

Shenzhou-19

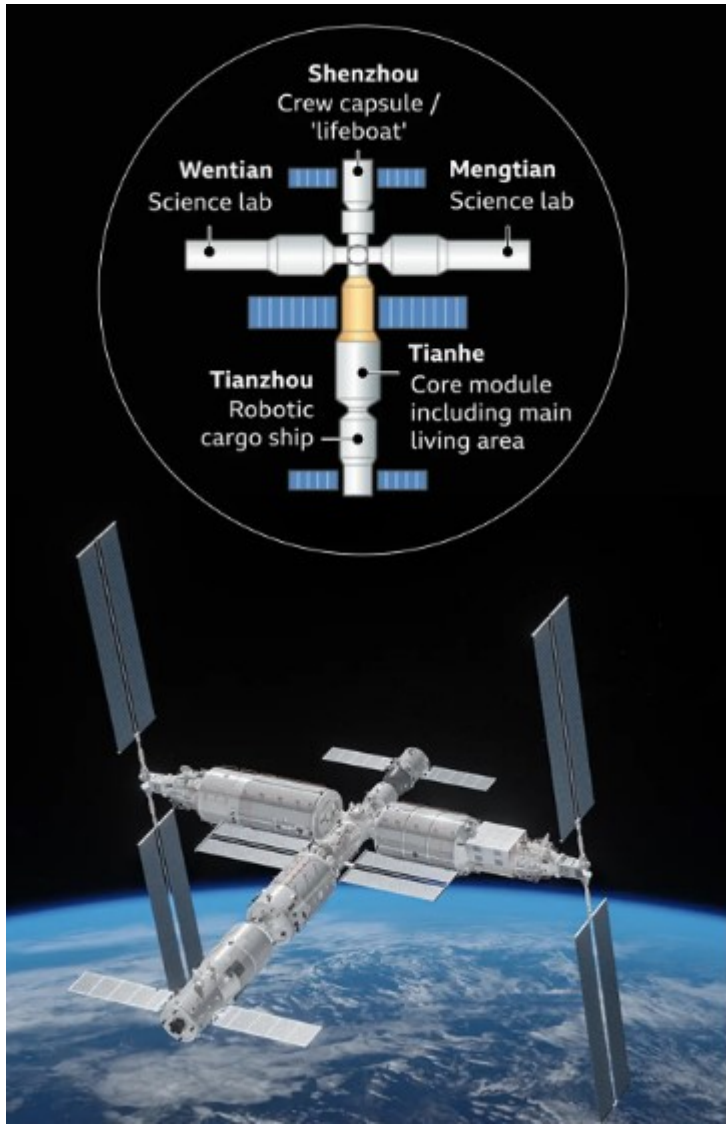
A Chinese spaceship, Shenzhou-19 carrying a 3-person crew docked with its orbiting space station recently.

- It is a ***Chinese spacecraft*** carrying a 3-member crew to the ***Tiangong space station***.
- **Aim** - To focus on scientific research, technological innovation, and crew safety.
- It was China's 14th crewed spaceflight and the 19th flight of the Shenzhou program.
- **Agency** - China Manned Space Agency.
- **Areas of study** - Space life science, microgravity physics, and space material science.
- **Launching Rocket** - It is launched using Long March-2F rocket.
- **Orbit** - Low-Earth orbit.
- **Duration** - The crew remained on the station until April or May 2025.

China launched its first crewed mission in 2003, becoming only the 3rd nation to do so after the former Soviet Union and the United States.

Tiangong space station

- It is a ***permanently crewed space station in T-shape*** constructed by China and operated by China Manned Space Agency.
- It is the ***first space station of China***.
- It is expected to be operational until 2028.
- It is a 3-module space station in low-Earth orbit.
 - The core module Tianhe launched in April 2021, followed by the Wentian and Mengtian experiment modules in 2022.



- The station typically hosts 3 astronauts at a time for six-month stays. It can support 6 astronauts at a time during crew handovers.
- It is significantly smaller and lighter compared to International Space Station (ISS).

ISS is a large space station assembled and maintained in low Earth orbit by a collaboration of 5 space agencies and their contractors - NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada).

Reference

[The Hindu | Shenzhou-19](#)