

FLASH FLOODS

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-I (GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES & THEIR LOCATIONS), GS PAER-I (DISASTER MANAGEMENT)

CONTEXT: At least 13 people, Amarnath pilgrims, died and dozens went missing after flash floods caused landslips near the Baltal base camp in the Ganderbal area of central Kashmir.

The exact location of the cloudburst and flash floods is **Kali Mata Y junction**, located at the lower Amarnath cave towards the Baltal base camp.

ABOUT FLASH FLOODS

- These are **sudden surges in water levels during or following an intense spell of rain.**
- These are highly localized events of short duration with a remarkably high peak and usually have less than six hours between the occurrence of the rainfall and peak flood.
- The flood situation worsens in the presence of choked drainage lines or encroachments obstructing the natural flow of water.

CAUSES OF FLASH FLOODS

- It may be caused by **heavy rain associated with a severe thunderstorm, hurricane, tropical storm, or meltwater from ice or snow flowing over ice sheets or snowfields.**
- Flash Floods can also occur due to **Dam or Levee Breaks, and/or Mudslides (Debris Flow).**
- In areas on or near volcanoes, flash floods have also occurred after eruptions, when glaciers have been melted by the intense heat.
- **The intensity of the rainfall, the location and distribution of the rainfall, the land use and topography, vegetation types and growth/density, soil type, and soil water- content** all determine just how quickly the Flash Flooding may occur, and influence where it may occur.

MITIGATION

- Instead of valleys, people should live in areas on slopes with firm ground for safety reasons.
- In areas where ground fissures have developed, appropriate steps should be taken to check the infiltration of rainwater and surface water.
- Banning "indiscriminate" and "unscientific" construction works.

INDIA GETS ELECTED TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF UNESCO'S 2003 CONVENTION FOR SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (ICH)

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-I (INDIAN HERITAGE SITES), GS PAPER-II (CONSERVATION)

CONTEXT: India has been elected to the Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) for the **2022-2026 cycle.**

KEY POINTS

- India has served as a member of the ICH Committee twice — from 2006 to 2010 and from 2014 to 2018.
- Earlier, **Durga Puja in Kolkata** was inscribed on the UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Humanity.

ABOUT INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

- Intangible cultural heritage is the **practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities, groups and sometimes individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.**
- Also called **living cultural heritage**, it is usually expressed in one of the following forms:
 - Oral Traditions
 - Performing Arts
 - Social Practices
 - Rituals and Festive events
 - Knowledge and Practices concerning nature and the universe
 - Traditional Craftsmanship

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA'S ELECTION TO THE CONVENTION

- It will help India focus on fostering community participation, strengthening international cooperation through intangible heritage, promoting academic research on intangible cultural heritage and aligning the work of the Convention with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- India will have the opportunity to closely monitor the implementation of the 2003 Convention.
- India shall endeavor to encourage international dialogue within the State Parties to the Convention to better showcase the diversity and importance of living heritage.

ABOUT UNESCO'S 2003 CONVENTION FOR SAFEGUARDING OF ICH

- The Convention of the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2003 and entered into force in 2006.

- It comprises **24 members** and is elected in the General Assembly of the Convention according to the principles of equitable geographical representation and rotation.
- Members of the Committee are elected for a **term of four years**.

PURPOSE OF THE CONVENTION

- To safeguard the expressions of intangible cultural heritage that are endangered by the processes of globalization.
- To ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups, and individuals.
- To raise awareness at the local, national, and international levels of the importance of intangible cultural heritage.



PUBLICATIONS

- Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.
- Register of good safeguarding practices.

PRELIMS FACTS

GLOBAL LIVABILITY INDEX 2022

- Released by: **Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU)**
- The index ranked 173 countries based on their livability or living conditions.
- The ranking is based on 5 factors: **stability, healthcare, culture & environment, education, & infrastructure**.
- Most weightage is given to culture and environment along with stability.
- **Delhi** has been ranked **best livable city in India**, followed by **Mumbai, Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Bengaluru**.
- **Vienna** is the most livable city in the world.

CHILIIKA LAKE

- **The world's first fishing cat survey** that took place at Chilika lake in Odisha has provided the world's first population estimation of the fishing cat.
- Chilika is **Asia's Largest & world's second largest lagoon**.
- In 1981, Chilika lake was designated as the first Indian wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- **Irrawaddy dolphins** that are often spotted off Satpada island are the major attraction at Chilika.

- The large **Nalabana Island (Forest of Reeds)** covering about 16 sq km in the lagoon area was declared a bird sanctuary in 1987.

DERECHO

- Several states in the US were hit by a **storm system Derecho that turned the skies green**.
- Green color is due to **light interacting with vast amounts of water** held by such systems.
- A Derecho is a **widespread, long-lived, straight-line windstorm** that is associated with a band of **rapidly moving showers or thunderstorms**.
- In straight-line storms, thunderstorm winds have no rotation unlike a tornado.
- For a storm to be classified as a Derecho it must have wind gusts of at least 93 km per hour.
- Being a warm weather phenomenon, derecho occurs during summers.

GIGAMESH

- It is an innovative wireless network solution that can give fiber-like bandwidth internet services to suburban & rural areas.
- It aims to address congestion issues in 4G infrastructure and provides high-tech as well as affordable internet connectivity.
- It has been developed by **Astrome**, a deep-tech startup.
- Astrome is supported by AI & Robotics Technology Park (ARTPARK), the Technology Innovation Hub (TIH) at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).

ONCOLYTIC VIROTHERAPY

- Oncolytic Virotherapy is among the most promising anti-cancer treatments in recent years that uses a virus called **oncolytic virus**.
- Oncolytic viruses can selectively replicate in and destroy tumor cells, subsequently inducing systemic anti-tumor immune response.
- They can kill cancer cells while leaving nearby healthy cells and tissues intact.

EOSCANSOR COBRENSIS

- It is a **305-million-year-old fossil identified from an incomplete skeleton found in New Mexico (US)**.
- It belonged to **Varanopidae**, an extinct family of reptiles that resembled monitor lizards.
- It has been identified as the oldest tree climbing reptile on record.