

SHORTNEWS

1.EXERCISE NOMADIC ELEPHANT

NEWS: Recently, the Indian Army contingent departed for the **17th edition of India- Mongolia Joint Military Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT.**

About Exercise

- The 17th edition is being held in **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.**
- The Indian contingent will be represented mainly by the battalion of the **ARUNACHAL SCOUTS.**
- **Frequency:** Annual, alternately hosted by India & Mongolia
- **Last Edition:** July 2024 (**Umroi, Meghalaya, India**)
 - First held in **2006**
- **Aim & Objectives:**
 - Enhance **interoperability** in semi-conventional operations under **UN mandate.**
 - Focus on **semi-urban/mountainous terrain** warfare.
 - Strengthen **joint task force** operations between India & Mongolia.

2.SCIENCE BEHIND SCENT

NEWS: An infectious diseases expert is studying **how microbiome research can help people choose the right perfume.**

What is the Skin Microbiome?

- Skin microbiota refers to **the community of tiny organisms that live on our skin.**
- It includes bacteria, fungi, viruses, protozoa, and even mites.
- More specifically, **the term refers to the genetic material (genomes) of all these microbes.**

How Skin Microbiome Influences Perfume Effect?

Perfumes react differently on each person due to their unique skin microbiome, which consists of **millions of bacteria that influence skin chemistry.**

Why Do Some Perfumes Smell Differently on Different People?

- **No two people have the same skin microbiome.**
- The way bacteria interact with **perfume ingredients affects how a scent develops.**
- **Challenge:** Using the wrong perfume or overusing it can cause skin problems, heart issues, or even lead to exposure to harmful chemicals.

The Role of Skin Bacteria in Body Odor

There are **three main types of bacteria** involved in odor production:

- **Cutibacterium acnes** – Found on oily areas (face, back, chest, etc.), creates a musky smell.
- **Corynebacterium** – Found in moist regions (armpits, groin), produces strong odors.
- **Staphylococcus epidermidis** – Present on various parts of the body, helps balance odor-causing bacteria.

3.KUMBAKONAM VETRILAI

NEWS: The Kumbakonam vetrilai has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Government of **India**.

GI products in Tamil Nadu

- With this, Tamil Nadu now has **62 GI-tagged products**.

About Kumbakonam Vetrilai

- It is known as **betel leaf**.
- These are grown in **Thanjavur's Cauvery river basin**, which enhances their distinct taste and aroma.
- The leaves are heart-shaped, dark to light green, and have a **pungent taste**.
- Its first leaves emerge **20–25 days after planting**.
- The first harvest, **called maaruvethalai**, occurs between **the 7th and 12th month**, yielding larger, longer-lasting leaves that command higher prices.
- Second and third-year harvests—**kelavethalai and kattavethalai**—produce smaller yields.
- Major cultivation areas include **Thiruvaiyaru, Papanasam, Thiruvidadaimarudur, Kumbakonam, and Rajagiri**.
- **Health Benefits of Betel Leaves**
 - Betel leaves **aid digestion** and are **rich in antioxidants**.
 - They contain **chavicol, an anti-inflammatory compound** that reduces oxidative stress and may be beneficial for conditions like diabetes.

4.OPEC MUST SQUEEZE US SHALE MUCH MORE TO WIN OIL PRICE WAR

NEWS: OPEC's strategy of increasing oil production is affecting U.S. shale drillers, forcing them to slow operations.

What is OPEC?

- OPEC refers to **the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries**.
- **Establishment:** It was formed in 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.
- **Objective:** It aims to **control oil supply to stabilize global oil prices** and prevent **extreme ups and downs**.
- **Headquarters:** Vienna, Austria.
- **Member countries**– Currently, there are **12 member countries namely** Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.
 - Angola, Ecuador, Indonesia, and Qatar were former members but have **exited OPEC**.

What is OPEC+?

- OPEC Plus refers to non-OPEC countries (10) that export crude oil in addition to the 12 OPEC member nations.
- **Membership:** OPEC Plus countries consist of *Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan, and Sudan.*
- **Key Players in the OPEC Plus Alliance**
 - **Saudi Arabia and Russia:** Both **Saudi Arabia and Russia** have played central roles in the OPEC Plus alliance for the past three years.
 - **Alliance Objective:** The alliance, which initially included 11 OPEC members and 10 non-OPEC nations, aims to stabilize oil prices through coordinated production cuts.

5.VILLAGE DEFENCE GUARDS (VDG)

NEWS: Post Operation Sindoor, the **Border Security Force** has started **arms training for village defence guards (VDGs)** along the **Jammu border with Pakistan.**

About the Village Defence Guard Initiative

- **Background:** The VDG initiative was **originally launched in 1995** to protect Hindu civilians targeted by militants; they were armed with **.303 rifles**.
 - Later discontinued due to allegations of **criminal misconduct** (e.g., abduction, rape) by members during the 1990s.
- **Revival:** It was **revived in 2022 in the Jammu region** after a gap of over 20 years due to a resurgence in terrorist activity.
- **Current Training & Armament:** For the first time, the **Border Security Force (BSF)** is conducting arms training for VDGs along the Jammu border.
 - **Training includes:**
 - **Firing practice**
 - **Tactical knowledge sharing**
 - **Situational awareness**
 - Villagers are now being armed with **semi-automatic weapons** instead of older bolt-action rifles.
- **Role and Strategic Importance:** The VDGs are seen as a **“second line of defence”** and potential first responders to terrorist attacks.
 - VDGs act as **“force multipliers”** to:
 - Help contain infiltrations.
 - Prevent escape of terrorists.
 - Provide real-time intelligence from the ground.

- The VDGs also function under the supervision of district **superintendent of police (SP)/Senior superintendent of police (SSP)**