

SHORTNEWS:

1.VALLEY OF FLOWERS

NEWS: The Valley of Flowers in Uttarakhand was opened for tourist arrivals on June 1.

About Valley of Flowers

- **Named By:** The valley is **named by three British mountaineers led by Frank S Smythe** believed to have accidentally **discovered the valley in 1931.**
- **Location:** The valley is **spread over a 87 sqkm** area located in the **Chamoli district, Uttarakhand within the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve.**
 - It forms **one of the two core zones** of the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve.
- **Heritage Site:** The Valley of Flowers is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site.**
- **Habitat:** The valley **lies completely in the temperate alpine zone** encompassing a **unique transition zone** between the mountain ranges of the **Zaskar and Great Himalayas.**
- **River:** The Valley of Flowers is **nestled in the Pushpawati river valley**
- **Religious significance:** The Valley is said to be **under protection of Nanda Devi (the patron goddess of Garhwal and Kumaon)**
 - Nanda Devi **is the second highest mountain in India (after Kangchenjunga)**
- **Tribe:** The valley is **populated by a local tribe called the Bhotiyas.**
- **Flower Species:** The valley is a **meadows of endemic alpine flowers** with around 600 species such as **orchids, poppies, primulas, marigold, daisies and anemones** can be found here.
 - The **brahmakamal, offered to Nanda Devi is also abundantly found.**
- **Fauna:** Wildlife species like the **gray langur, the flying squirrel, the Himalayan weasel, and black bear, the red fox,** the lime butterfly, the snow leopard etc are found here.
- **Tourism and Trekking:** The valley usually stays **open for four months i.e. June, July, August, and September.**

2.COMPOSITE BACKWARDNESS INDEX OF TELANGANA

NEWS: Telangana has introduced the **Composite Backwardness Index (CBI)**, to scientifically **quantify the backwardness of castes on a scale of '0 to 126' points,** independent of their population size.

- Higher the score, the greater the level of backwardness.

About the Composite Backwardness Index

- **Prepared By:** The index is prepared by a **11-member Expert Working Group** set up by the government to **analyse and interpret data from Teleangana's caste survey**.
- **Aim:** The report aims to **disentangle caste-based backwardness from general poverty**.
- **Data Source:** The index has surveyed and ranked a total of **245 castes**, compiling data from **over 3.5 crore residents responding to 74 questions**.
- **Indicators:** The index shortlisted **42 indicators across nine categories**, including **education, living conditions, land ownership, income, access to technology, and social discrimination**.
- **Analysis:** A **statistical significance test** was performed across the responses and data analysed **through quartile distribution**.
 - Every caste was **placed into one of four buckets** based on their aggregate scores.
- **Significance:**
 - It is a first-of-its-kind metric designed and **used to objectively evaluate social and economic disparities**.
 - **Measurable Backwardness:** The index is holistic in its focus on **measuring the real backwardness of a caste**.

3.KHEER BHAWANI MELA

NEWS: Over 5000 of Kashmiri Pandits leave for Kheer Bhawani Mela in Kashmir.

About Kheer Bhawani Mela

- It is an annual Hindu pilgrimage and festival dedicated to Goddess Ragnya Devi, revered particularly by Kashmiri Pandits.
- It is celebrated on Zeisht Ashtami (the eighth day of the bright fortnight of the Hindu month of Jyeshtha – May/June).

Key Shrines Associated

- Tulmulla, Ganderbal (main shrine)
- Tikker, Kupwara
- Laktipora Aishmuqam, Anantnag
- Tripursundri Devsar, Kulgam
- Manzgam, Kulgam

Rituals and Beliefs

- Devotees offer Kheer (rice pudding), milk, flowers, and light earthen lamps at a sacred spring.
- **The color of the spring's water is believed to signal future events:**
 - Clear water – auspicious.
 - Dark or murky – considered a warning.