

FEB 2020

Himachal Pradesh Current Affairs



Pong Lake Wildlife Sanctuary

Why in News?

- According to Annual Waterfowl Estimation exercise 2020 The population of Flagship Species ,Bar-headed Goose have shown 68% increase from last year (2018-19) in Pong lake.
- This year Annual Waterfowl Estimation exercise was divided in two parts, first day on **30th Jan 2020** was for pre-count discussions & planning and actual count was carried out on **31st Jan. 2020** for monitoring the numerical size of bird's population during the year 2019-20 in Pong Dam Wetland.
- Experts from various organizations & Bird Groups viz. Birds of Himachal Pradesh, Himachal Bird Club, International Wetland, Wildlife Institute Of India(WII) ,Dharamshala Bird Club and many wildlife enthusiasts, bird watchers, volunteers along with officials & officers from H.P.Forest Department, participated in this mega exercise.

Pong Lake Wildlife Sanctuary

- **Main Wildlife Attractions:** Indian Hare, Hodgehog longeared, Jackal, common Langur, Rhesus Macaque, Mongoose, Nilgai, Indian por
- **Coverage Area:** 9675 sq km
- **Established:** 1983
- **Best Time to Visit:** November to March
- The Pong Lake Wildlife Sanctuary is situated surrounding the Pong Lake, **which was created by damming up the Beas River in the year 1976.**
- The Pong Lake Wildlife Sanctuary was declared as a sanctuary on **1st June in 1983.** The level of the Pong Lake vacillates between 335 meters and 436 meters.

Investiture ceremony

- Investiture ceremony to be held at **Raj Bhawan at 11th February**
- **Governor Bandaru Dattatraya** would preside over investiture ceremony and would give away the medals for meritorious and distinguished services to the Police, Prison, Home Guards & Civil Defence and Fire Services Personnel.

Pariksha Parv-2

- **Himachal Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (HPSCPCR)** in association with **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights** organised one day state level

orientation and awareness programme on **Pariksha Parv-2 at Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration.**

- **HPSCPCR Chairman Vandana Kumari** presided over the programme which was organised to **reduce the stress in students during exam.**

Surajkund International Crafts Mela

Why in News?

- **Himachal Pradesh will be the "theme state"** of this year's Surajkund International Crafts Mela organised by the Haryana government at Surajkund Faridabad on the outskirts of Delhi.
- The 34th Surajkund International Crafts Mela will be held from **February 1-16.**

HP tax revenue collection increase

- In spite of overall global recession and slow down, the Himachal Pradesh government has succeeded in ensuring increase of overall tax revenue collection of **17.2 percent** till 31st January, 2020.
- It is a healthy sign of economic growth of the State.
- The state has collected taxes of more than **Rs. 600 crore** in financial year 2019-2020 over the corresponding year in the financial year 2018-19.
- **The overall GST collection** has registered a growth of **50.76 percent.**

Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam (HPKVN)

Why in News?

- **Managing Director, HPKVN Rohan Chand Thakur** told here today that Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam (HPKVN) would be conducting screening of eligible candidates for the **HPKVN sponsored Skill Development Courses under C-DAC Mohali, NIFM Faridabad and CTR Ludhiana.**
- The screening of eligible candidates would take place at **DC Office, Mandi Conference Hall on 6th February, DRDA Hall, near DC Office Dharamshala on 7th February and HPKVN Conference Hall, Block 24, SDA Complex Kasumpti Shimla on 7th February.**
- These courses are aimed at enhancing the employability of youth of the state.
- These courses are **100 percent sponsored by HPKVN.**
- These prestigious and high value courses at CTR, Ludhiana, NIFM Faridabad and C-DAC Mohali are having great potential for employment generation and the **eligible youth must take full benefit of these residential courses for which boarding and lodging would be provided free of cost by HPKVN.**

About HPKVN :

- It headquarter is situated in Shimla.
- It is an undertaking of the Government of Himachal Pradesh, established as an autonomous organisation in September 2015.
- The Nodal Agency for skill development in HP to promote and execute training programs focused on placement and entrepreneurship.
- The Facilitating Agency for implementation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded Himachal Pradesh Skill Development Project (HPSDP).

What does HPKVN do?

- HPKVN plans and facilitates vocational training programs for the youth of Himachal Pradesh with the objective to enhance employability and facilitate better placements.
- It also aim to promote entrepreneurship and help establish micro & small scale businesses.

primary and long-term objectives of HPKVN's skilling programs:

The primary mandate of HPKVN is to create an eco-system for demand driven training courses to enhance the employability of Himachal youth. The long-term objective is to enable HP to become India's model state in skill development by strengthening convergence and harmonization of different training programs being run by various departments under the umbrella of HPKVN.

Outcome of Global Investors Meet

- A spokesperson of Industry Department informed on 6th feb 2020 that MoU's worth Rs. 15 thousand have been signed after Global Investors' Meet, which was organised on November 2019.
- Total 703 MoU's have been signed so far with proposed investment of Rs. 96720.88 crore.

Sectoral MOU and proposed investment:

1. **9 MoU's worth Rs. 309.55 crore** were signed in Agri Business, Food Processing and Post Harvest Technology,
2. **250 MoU's of Rs. 17063.22 crore** in Manufacturing and Pharmaceuticals,
3. **225 MoU's, worth Rs. 16559.94 crore** signed in Tourism, Hospitality and Civil Aviation sector,
4. **18 MoU's of Rs. 34112 crore** in Hydro and Renewable Energy.
5. **50 MoU's of Rs. 1901.75 crore** have been signed in Wellness, Healthcare and Ayush,
6. **76 MoU's of Rs. 21740.36 crore** in Housing, Urban Development and Transport,
7. **14 MoU's of Rs. 2833.21 crore** signed in Information Technology, ITES and Electronics,
8. **57 MoU's of Rs. 2034.85 crore** in Education and Skill Development and four MoU's of Rs. 166 crore in various sectors.

Employment to 196800 persons is proposed through these MoU's.

Finance Commission grant

The 15th Finance Commission has recommended an annual grant of **11,431 crore** for the state for year 2020-21 with **45 percent increase**.

International workshop on impact of crop diversification

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur inaugurated international workshop on impact of crop diversification on farmers income food and security at **Dharamshala** on **10 Feb 2020**.

Workshop on women's safety

- The Prosecution department has organized a **five days** workshop on women's safety from **10th February**.
- The inaugural session of the workshop was presided over by **Chairperson Women Commission Dr. Dazy Thakur**.
- Physical abuse, compensation to the victim, protection of witnesses, cyber crime, forensic science, women trafficking and various other matters were discussed in the workshop.

Chhenna Kheer of H.P Milkfed

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur today launched **Chhenna Kheer produce by State Co-Operative Milk Producers Federation (Milkfed)** at **Oak** on **11th february**.
- He also launched half kilogram packet of cow milk on the occasion.

Rs. 3,71,18,647 by Excise and Taxation department to Government

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur was presented a cheque of Rs. 3,71,18,647 as contribution towards the state exchequer by **Principal Secretary Excise and Taxation Sanjay Kundu**, on behalf of the **State Excise and Taxation department** as share of **Technical Service Agency** on **11th February**.

Bir-Billing

Bir-Billing would be developed from tourism point of view as a major adventure sports destination under **Asian Development Bank {ADB} funding** and **'Nai Rahein Nai Manzilein'**.

About Bir- Billing:

- Bir Billing is located **70 km. from Dharamshala**. Billing is situated north of Bir at the distance of 14 km. on the way to the Thamsar Pass trek, which is leading to Bada Bhargal, tribal region of Himachal Pradesh. Bir is mainly a Buddhist town and houses a monastery and a Tibetan handicraft center.
- Bir Billing is a Paragliding destination in the heart of Himalaya's near famous tourist destination Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh.
- Bir Billing Hosted **Paragliding World cup in 2015**.

- This was **“First Paragliding World Cup of India.”**This event happened in the month of October from 24th to 31st, 2015.
- Bir Billing provides the option of **Paragliding, Trekking to Himachali tribal villages, Mountain Biking, Angling and Camping**

Centre of Excellence for Geriatric Care at Ayurvedic College

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur inaugurating Centre of Excellence for Geriatric Care at Ayurvedic College Paprola on 12 Feb 2020.

Himachal Bulletin video capsule

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched the Himachal Bulletin, daily video capsule of the state government at Dharamshala in District Kangra on 12th February, based on developmental activities and welfare schemes.
- It has been produced by the **Information and Public Relations department** of Himachal Pradesh.
- Himachal Bulletin will be **helpful to aware the masses about the welfare schemes and developmental programmes of the state government**. It would help the beneficiaries to gain the benefit of the schemes.
- Himachal Bulletin, video capsule will be available on the **youtube account- DPR Himachal, facebook account- HimachalPradeshGovtIPRDept.**
- This will also be available on the Twitter account- **dprhp of Information and Public Relations Department, you tube, facebook, twitter and instagram accounts of the Chief Minister's office of Himachal Pradesh.**

Kastoori

- poetry book written by ajay prashar.

“Main Jeena Sikhata Hoon” and “Maun Ki Abhivyakti”

- Written by Ajay Prashar
- The first is a collection of stories based on the plight of the AIDS victims and the other a bouquet of poems, mostly spiritual.

Punjab offers supply of sugar from co-operative mills to Himachal Pradesh

- Punjab Government has offered to supply the sugar produced in the cooperative mills of Punjab to the Himachal Pradesh.

Mountain Goat 8th Winter Expedition

- Governor Bandaru Dattatraya flagged-off **Mountain Goat 8th Winter Expedition Spiti 2020 from Shimla, on 15th February** for promoting rural and winter tourism in the state.

- Himachal Pradesh has immense potential for religious tourism as well as adventure and rural tourism and such activities were helpful in promoting tourism in the State.
- Tourists would get an opportunity to know the culture and customs of people of interiors through '**Home Stay**' in rural areas.
- The event will come to an end on **22nd February** with lay-over scheduled at **Kalpa, Kaza and Rampur during the course of the event. 110 participants** are taking part in this expedition from various states across the country and **45 vehicles** would participate in this event.

State Planning Board approves Rs. 7900 crore annual plan for year 2020-21

- The State Planning Board has approved Rs. 7900 crore annual plan for year **2020-21**.
- It is **Rs.800 crore more than 2019-20 with about 11 percent increase**.

CM releases calendar of HPKVN

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur released the official calendar of Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam (HPKVN), on 18th February.

New Education Block to be opened at Khundian

- A new Education Block would be opened at **Khundian in Kangra district** to facilitate the people and students of the area.

Rs 3184 crore for power sector

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has expressed gratitude towards Government of India for recommending a financing facility worth **Rs 3184 crore through World Bank for the project namely Himachal Hydro Power and Renewable Power Sector Development Project**.
- The program was accepted by Department of Economic Affairs, (DEA), Ministry of Finance, **Gol today in 104th meeting of its Screening Committee and recommended to World Bank for financing**.
- This financing would come in the pattern of **90 percent grant and 10 percent loan to Government of Himachal Pradesh**.
- The project aims at holistic development of power sector of the state through investment in all three segments of power sector i.e. **Generation, Transmission and Distribution**
- **On generation part a funding of Rs 1600 crore** will come to the ongoing Shongtong Karchham HEP 450 MW.
- **Transmission part funding amounting to Rs 534.72 crore** would come for strengthening Extra High Voltage transmission (EHV) network in different parts of the state
- **Distribution system will get a funding of Rs 937 crore** and would be used towards automation and strengthening of distribution network in 13 different towns of Himachal namely **Solan, Baddi, Nalagarh, Nahan, Poanta Sahib, Mandi, Sundernagar, Bilaspur, Kullu, Manali, Una, Parwanoo and Hamirpur..**

- **A capacity building component amounting to Rs 112 crore** would flow to all power utilities and Directorate of Energy for establishment of facilities and development of capacities for efficient management of complex power system by all the utilities together.
- **Expertise of advance power markets of the World would be brought in by World Bank** to improve the capabilities of energy sector utilities to maximize the revenue earned by the state from sale of energy through renewable balancing capacity.
- This would also enable the uptake of renewable solar power in the state and facilitate the development of solar sector in the state.
- **Integrated development of power sector** of the state is envisaged by complementing different activities of generation, transmission and distribution.

Bio Mass Plant at Dhaliara

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur inaugurating Bio Mass Plant at **Dhaliara on 19 Feb 2020.**

Police Quarters at Dehra

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur inaugurating building of Police Quarters at **Dehra on 19 Feb 2020.**

Mata Chintpurni Temple Trust presents Rs. 51 lakh towards CM Relief Fund

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur was presented a cheque of Rs 51 lakh by the **Deputy Commissioner Una cum Chairman Mata Chintpurni Temple Trust Sandeep Kumar** as a contribution towards Chief Minister's Relief Fund on behalf of Mata Chinipurni Temple Trust.

CM Relief Fund:

- C.M. Relief Fund is Fund at State Headquarters at the Disposal of Hon'ble C.M. Expenditure from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund may be incurred at Chief Minister's discretion for such purposes as may be approved by him.

International Mandi Shivaratri Fair

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on 22th February inaugurated the week long International Mandi Shivaratri Fair at Mandi by participating in the Pagri Ceremony and Pooja at Shri Raj Madhav Temple in Mandi town.
- Chief Minister also presided over the Sobha Yatra from Shri Raj Madhav Temple to Paddal Mela Ground in Mandi.

About Mandi Shivaratri

- The Mandi Shivaratri fair is held as per Hindu calendar **every year on the Krishna paksha 13th day/13th night** (breaking fast/'vrata' on 14th after sunrise) of the waning moon in the month of **Phalguna that corresponds to February/March** as per Gregorian calendar.
- The festival's popularity is widespread and hence is known as an international festival.
- In view of the large number of gods and goddesses that are invited to the festival from its 81 temples, **Mandi town has the title of 'Varanasi of the Hills'.**

Paragliding pre - world cup at Bir-Billing

- Himachal to host paragliding pre - world cup at Bir-Billing from **31st March to 5th April, 2020.**
- The event is being organised by the **Department of Tourism and Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports, Manali.**
- **Bir-Billing is very famous for this adventurous sports** and earlier **world level event was organised in the year 2015.** Bir-Billing is one of the best paragliding site in the world.
- For the safety and rescue of participants, the **arrangement for helicopter has also been made.**

Srinivasa Ramanujan Students Digital Yojna

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur distributing laptops to meritorious students under the Srinivasa Ramanujan Students Digital Yojna on 22th February at Mandi.

H.P. got Rs. 443.18 crore under Samagra Shiksha

- Centre Government has released a total of **Rs. 443.18 crore to Himachal Pradesh under Samagra Shiksha till date** for overall development of education sector in the state.
- The amount has been released by **Union Ministry of Human Resource Development** for provision of **free uniform to 4,59,890 students, free text books to 2,98,203 students, composite school grant to 15,414 schools, setting up libraries in 15,399 Schools, ICT and digital initiatives in 55 schools.**
- **The amount released would be utilised for** imparting special training to **5,357** out of school children, running of **13** Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalays, self defence training to girls in **4707** schools, **92** additional classrooms in elementary schools, ramps and handrails in **811** schools, solar panels in **19** schools, electrification in **308** schools.

About Samagra Shiksha scheme

- The Union Budget, 2018-19, has proposed to treat school education holistically **without segmentation from pre-nursery to Class 12.**
- **Samagra Shiksha - an overarching programme** for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12 has been, therefore, prepared with the broader goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.

- **It subsumes the three erstwhile Schemes** of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE).
- The vision of the Scheme is to ensure inclusive and **equitable quality education from pre-school to senior secondary stage in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for Education.**

Himachali Pahari cow gets recognition at National level

- Himachali Pahari Cow has been officially registered and named as '**Himachali Pahari**' cow and this breed has now been included in the category of other indigenous breeds like Sahiwal, Red Sindhi, Gir.
- This breed has been included in the list of recognised breeds of the country by **National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources.**
- in order to include this breed amongst recognised category Animal Husbandry Department has compiled **the specialities and traits of the cow and presented the data to National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources.** After two years concerted efforts the breed has now been registered and included in the category of recognised breeds at National level.
- At present the strength of Himachali Pahari cow is estimated to be between **7.50 to 8.00 lakhs** and this cow is mainly found in **Chamba, Mandi, Kullu, Kangra, Sirmaur, Lahaul-Spiti districts.**
- With the registration of this breed, **now funds for their promotion and conservation** would be received from the Government of India.
- **Apart from this,** the Bureau has also recognized the **special breed of buffalo found in the state, which has been named as Gaujari. This breed of buffalo is found mainly in Chamba and Kangra districts**

CM releases lyrical CD 'Pulwama Shradhanjali'

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur today released a lyrical CD, 'Pulwama Shradhanjali' a tribute to the Pulwama martyrs, **written by Sanjiv Mahajan of Nagrota Surian in Kangra district.**
- The music has been composed by **Mohan Dutt Sharma** where as **Pyar Chand has given his melodious voice**

Instructions issued to streamline the mining activities in state

- As per the instructions Mining Officers would ensure that all the existing permitted dumps of minor minerals of mining lease holders be removed and relocated at least at a **distance of one kilometre away** from the mining lease sites by **25th March 2020.**
- Further **all the new dumps should only be allowed atleast 1 km.** away from mining lease areas and it would be ensured that sign boards on such dumps indicating the name of lessee, name of mining lease, its areas and the period of mining lease are placed.

- **If cases of illegal mining** by using mechanical excavators like JCB and pocklane etc are noticed then FIR would be lodged against JCB owner and the user/driver and JCB/mechanical excavator should be impounded.
- If any mining lessee is found engaged in **unauthorised mining or unscientific mining** by using mechanical excavators like JCB, Pocklane, etc in violation of terms and condition of mining lease deed as well as the approved mining plan, the concerned Mining Officer shall immediately lodge FIR and impound the mechanical excavator and immediately suspend the mining activities and recommend the case for termination of mining lease to the competent authority instead of merely compounding the offence.
- **In cases, the vehicles are caught carrying illegal mining material**, the Mining Officer concerned shall write to the concerned RTO for cancellation of registration of such vehicles. No transit permit would be given to vehicles which are found engaged in illegal transportation of mining material repeatedly.
- **The Mining Officers would take stringent action against the lessee who is involved in overloading** by suspension of lease and take up the matter with the concerned RTO for taking action against such vehicles with extended bodies under their respective Act or Rule.
- **No transit permit** would be issued to vehicles found to be having extended bodies.
- **Mining Officers would issue roster** for Mining Guards /Assistant Mining Inspectors/ Mining Inspectors to inspect the vulnerable areas covering the river bed as well as terrain in stretch wise manner for utilizing services of field staff effectively and regular inspection are to be ensured.
- **Mining Officer would ensure that** all the mining lease areas have properly erected boundary pillars to clearly depict the lease boundary. In case, the lessee does not erect the boundary pillars, the mining activities be suspended forthwith.
- **All the Mining Officers are directed to ensure** immediate implementation of these instructions. Any laxity in failure to do so would be viewed seriously and invite disciplinary action.
- **State Geologist would prepare a format** accordingly in which the Mining Officers would submit monthly report to Director, Industries, Himachal Pradesh. He said that strict monitoring of action taken by Mining Officers to implement this plan of action would be done by Director Industries and State Geologist.
- **Additional instructions are being issued separately to all the Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents of Police** for ensuring prevention of illegal mining and scientific and systematic mining of Minor Minerals in the State.

State government invites suggestion to make Plastics Waste Purchase Scheme more effective

- Himachal government is committed to make the state plastic-free and making all possible efforts in this direction. In order to make the state plastic-free, the state government has started a scheme to purchase single use and non-recyclable plastic packaging.

- The state government has invited suggestions from common citizens to make this scheme more effective.
- The people of the state can give their valuable suggestions on the **MyGov Portal** <https://himachal.mygov.in/>.
- The last date for submitting suggestions is **20th March, 2020**.

Joint Director Sanjay Sharma retires from I&PR department

- Joint Director of Himachal Pradesh Information and Public Relations Department Sanjay Sharma retired from government service on **29th February**.
- He had joined the department in the **year 1986** and rendered his services for more than 33 years.
- **Govind Chauhan**, who was serving as **Sound Recordist** also got retired from the department on 29th February.

