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# 2 Minute Series 1<sup>st</sup> Week of May (4<sup>th</sup> May to 9<sup>th</sup> May)

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## GEOGRAPHY

<https://youtu.be/2REZx0NMVtE>

### International Seed Treaty

- The **eighth session** of the Governing Body of **International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)** was held being held in **Rome, Italy** from 11th to 16th November 2019.
- **India attended the session.**
- **India is a signatory to the treaty.**

### History: Evolution of The Treaty

- The **conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture** are key to ensuring that the **world will produce enough food to feed its growing population in the future.**
- In **1983**, the **Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture** was established, and the **voluntary International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources** was adopted.
- Another major step was taken in **1996** with the **adoption of the Global Plan of Action** at the Leipzig International Technical Conference on **Plant Genetic Resources.**
- All this work culminated in **2001** with the **historic adoption of the legally binding International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.**
- The **Treaty entered into force on 29 June 2004.**

### International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources For Food And Agriculture (Seed Treaty)

- **The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, also known as IT PGRFA, Seed Treaty or Plant Treaty,** is a comprehensive international agreement in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity, which aims at **guaranteeing food security through the conservation, exchange and sustainable use of the world's plant genetic resources** for food and agriculture (PGRFA), the **fair and equitable benefit sharing arising from its use,** as well as the **recognition of farmers' rights.**
- It was **signed in 2001 in Madrid, and entered into force on 29 June 2004.**

### The Treaty Aims At:

- **recognizing the enormous contribution of farmers to the diversity of crops** that feed the world;
- establishing a **global system to provide farmers, plant breeders and scientists with access to plant genetic materials;**
- ensuring that **recipients share benefits** they derive from the use of these genetic materials with the countries where they have been originated.

### Main Provisions

#### Multilateral system

- The Treaty's truly innovative **solution to access and benefit sharing, the Multilateral System, puts 64 of our most important crops** – crops that together account for 80 percent of the food we derive from plants – **into an easily accessible global pool of genetic resources that is freely available to potential users in the Treaty's ratifying nations for some uses.**

#### Access and benefit sharing

- The Treaty facilitates access to **the genetic materials of the 64 crops in the Multilateral System for research, breeding and training for food and agriculture.** Those who **access the materials must be from the Treaty's ratifying nations and they must agree to use the materials totally for research, breeding and training for food and agriculture.** The Treaty **prevents the recipients of genetic resources from claiming intellectual property rights over those resources in the form in which they received them,** and ensures that access to genetic resources already protected by international property rights is consistent with international and national laws.
- Those who access **genetic materials through the Multilateral System agree to share any benefits from their use through four benefit-sharing mechanisms established by the Treaty.**

### Farmers' rights

- The Treaty recognizes **the enormous contribution farmers have made to the ongoing development of the world's wealth of plant genetic resources**. It calls for protecting the traditional knowledge of these farmers, increasing their participation in national decision-making processes and ensuring that they share in the benefits from the use of these resources

### Sustainable use

- Most of the world's food comes from four main crops – rice, wheat, maize and potatoes. However, local crops, not among the main four, are a major food source for hundreds of millions of people and have potential to provide nutrition to countless others. The **Treaty helps maximize the use and breeding of all crops and promotes development and maintenance of diverse farming systems**.

### Note:

- During the session, informed the delegates about the uniqueness of Indian legislation "Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act" **to protect Farmers' Rights and breeder's rights**.

### Please go back and read about:

- **Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act, 2001**

### Why in news:

- A few months back in April 2019, PepsiCo sued Gujarati farmers by invoking the provisions of the act.

## HISTORY

<https://youtu.be/Zl8UdWE4b-I>

### Paika Rebellion (1817)

- The Paikas of Odisha were the **traditional landed militia** ('foot soldiers' literally) and **enjoyed rent free land tenures for their military service and policing functions on a hereditary basis.**
- The English Company's **conquest of Odisha in 1803**, and the **dethronement of the Raja of Khurda** had greatly **reduced the power and prestige of the Paikas.**
- Further, the **extortionist land revenue policy of the Company** caused resentment among zamindars and peasants alike.
- **Common masses were affected** by the **rise in prices of salt due to taxes imposed on it**, abolition of cowrie (Hindi – kaudi (shell)) currency and the requirement of payment of taxes in silver, etc.
- **Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar** had been the **military chief of the forces of the Raja of Khurda.**
- In 1814, **Jagabandhu's ancestral estate of Killa Rorang was taken over by the Company**, reducing him to penury.
- The spark was lighted by the arrival of a body of Khonds from Gumsur into the Khurda territory in March 1817.
- With **active support of Mukunda Deva, the last Raja of Khurda, and other zamindars of the region**, Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar led a sundry army of Paikas forcing the East India Company forces to retreat for a time.
- The rebellion came to be known as the **Paika Bidroh** (rebellion).
- The initial success of the rebels set the whole province covering Odisha in arms against the British government for some time.
- Jagabandhu, declared an outlaw, along with other rebels, was sheltered by the Raja of Nayagarh.
- Although Dinabandhu Santra and his group surrendered in November 1818, Jagabandhu evaded British vigilance.
- In spite of rewards offered, none of the people of the province betrayed their leaders.
- Though Khurda was back under Company control by mid-1817, the Paika rebels resorted to guerilla tactics.
- **The rebellion was brutally repressed by 1818.**
- Priests at the Puri temple who had sheltered Jagabandhu were caught and hanged.
- Paikas on the whole suffered greatly.
- In 1825 Jagabandhu surrendered under negotiated terms. (Some sources say he was captured and died in captivity in 1829).
- The Paika Rebellion succeeded in getting **large remissions of arrears, reductions in assessments, suspension of the sale of the estates of defaulters at discretion, a new settlement on fixed tenures** and other adjuncts of liberal governance.

## POLITY

<https://youtu.be/5fJrMcnRQ58>

### Swadhargreh scheme

- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** is implementing the SwadharGreh Scheme which targets the **women victims of difficult circumstances** who are in need of institutional support for rehabilitation so that they could lead their life with dignity. The Scheme envisages providing **shelter, food, clothing and health as well as economic and social security for these women.**
- Under the Scheme, **SwadharGreh will be set up in every district with capacity of 30 women** with the following objectives:
  - To cater to the primary need of shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment and care of the women in distress and who are without any social and economic support.
  - To enable them to regain their emotional strength that gets hampered due to their encounter with unfortunate circumstances.
  - To provide them with legal aid and guidance to enable them to take steps for their readjustment in family/society.
  - To rehabilitate them economically and emotionally.
  - To act as a support system that understands and meets various requirements of women in distress.
  - To enable them to start their life afresh with dignity and conviction.

### Components of the Scheme

- Construction grant for construction of the building will be admissible to State Governments, Municipal Corporations, Cantonment Boards and Panchayati Raj Institutions only. Land for this purpose is to be provided by the implementing agency free of cost.
- Rent for SwadharGreh, if run in a rented building.
- Assistance for recurring and non-recurring expenditure for management of SwadharGreh
- Provision for food, shelter, clothing, medical care, pocket expense for residents and children
- Provision of counselling, legal aid, vocational training and guidance.

## ECONOMY

<https://youtu.be/1TITJyTXqVs>

### SLF - MF

#### News

Franklin Templeton Asset Management Company (FT AMC) has announced the winding up six popular **debt schemes** with immediate effect.

#### Why

**Investors rushing to withdraw** their savings parked in various debt funds.

#### What did RBI do

- Reserve Bank of India created a **two-week window**
- In which it will **lend money to banks at the repo rate** for **90 days**.

#### Who can avail the Scheme

- All **LAF** (liquidity adjustment facility) **eligible banks**
- Against **eligible collateral**
- It can be availed of **only** for lending to mutual funds.

#### How will liquidity needs of mutual funds be met

- By extending **loans**
- Undertaking **outright purchase** of investment-grade corporate bonds, commercial papers, debentures and certificates of deposit held by MFs.
- Doing **repos against the collateral** of investment-grade corporate bonds, commercial papers, debentures and certificates of deposit held by MFs.

#### What is the total amount announced by RBI

RBI has promised to lend through the SLF-MF ₹50,000 crore.

#### Immediate Benefits

- **Reduction in liquidity risk** that mutual funds might face
- **Reduction in redemption pressures** on credit funds
- Improvement in **investor confidence**.

## ENVIRONMENT

<https://youtu.be/2LPMCrsoFzY>

# Comprehensive Census of Orchids In India

## Introduction

- The Botanical Survey of India has come up with the first comprehensive census of orchids of India putting the total number of orchid species or taxa to 1,256.
- *Orchids of India: A Pictorial Guide*, a publication detailing all the species of India was unveiled by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

## Orchids

- Marked by extremely beautiful flowers with unique shape and ornamentation, orchids have complex floral structure that facilitates biotic cross-pollination and makes them evolutionarily superior to the other plant groups.
- Another interesting factor is that the entire orchid family is listed under appendix II of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) and hence any trade of wild orchid is banned globally.

## Orchids Classification

- Orchids can be broadly categorised into three life forms
- **Epiphytic** - plants growing on another plants including those growing on rock boulders and often termed lithophyte
- **Terrestrial** - plants growing on land and climbers
- **Mycoheterotrophic**- plants which derive nutrients from mycorrhizal fungi that are attached to the roots of a vascular plant).





- About 60% of all orchids found in the country, which is
  - 757 species, are epiphytic,
  - 447 are terrestrial and
  - 43 are mycoheterotrophic.
- The epiphytic orchids are abundant up to 1800 m above the sea level and their occurrence decreases with the increase in altitude.
- Terrestrial orchids, which grow directly on soil, are found in large numbers in temperate and alpine region whereas mycoheterotrophic orchids, mostly associated with ectomycorrhizal fungi, are found in temperate regions, or are found growing with parasites in tropical regions.

### Important Points

- A State-wise distribution of orchid species point out that the Himalayas, North-East parts of the country and Western Ghats are the hot-spots of the beautiful plant species.
- The highest number of orchid species is recorded from Arunachal Pradesh with 612 species followed by Sikkim 560 species and West Bengal; Darjeeling Himalayas have also high species concentration, with 479 species.
- While north-east India rank at the top in species concentration, the Western Ghats have high endemism of orchids.
- There are 388 species of orchids, which are endemic to India of which about one-third (128) endemic species are found in Western Ghats.
- The publication points out that Kerala have 111 of these endemic species while Tamil Nadu has 92 of them.
- Among the 10 bio geographic zones of India, the Himalayan zone is the richest in terms of orchid species followed by Northeast, Western Ghats, Deccan plateau and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

## SCIENCE & TECH

<https://youtu.be/ofe4PVHeW4k>

### Styrene Gas Leak

- The deadly gas, Styrene, leaked from the South Korean-owned LG Polymers plant in Andhra Pradesh on 7th May 2020

#### About Styrene

- Classified as a volatile organic compound, Styrene, a benzoic compound, is a flammable liquid that is used to make industrial products like polystyrene, fiberglass, rubber, latex, etc.
  - It is also found in vehicle exhaust, cigarette smoke and in natural foods like fruits and vegetables
- It is a colourless, toxic, organic compound but can become deadly when it mixes with air
  - It reacts with oxygen, turning into monoxides and dioxides that are far more lethal than the original derivative of benzene, a carcinogenic chemical
- Depending on the intensity of inhalation, it can even prove fatal
  - It can also pass through the skin into the body
- Styrene has a high boiling point of 145 degree C

#### Exposure

- Short-term exposure can cause respiratory problems, irritation in the eyes, irritation in the mucous membrane and gastrointestinal issues
- Long-term exposure could drastically affect the central nervous system and lead to other related problems like peripheral neuropathy
- It might lead to cancer and depression also