



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 18-03-2024**

### **GS-1**

1. Gulmarg
2. Brand Bengaluru

### **GS-3**

3. Thenmala Kullam
4. BioCNG Production from Dung
5. Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) treaty

## Gulmarg

Syllabus: GS-1; Geography

### Context

- *Powered by powdery snow, Gulmarg is vying to become an **international winter sports venue***
- ***Indian Olympic Association** is working on an international certification for the Gulmarg slopes, which are covered by the powdery snow needed for professional skiing*



### About

- *Gulmarg is a hill station and tourist destination in the Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, India.*
- *It's known for its snow-capped mountains, lush greenery, crystal-clear lakes, and colorful flowers.*
- *Gulmarg is also a popular destination for adventure, relaxation, food and culture, and romantic getaways.*

- *The name Gulmarg is a compound of the Persian words gul and marg, which mean "flowers" and "meadow".*
- *It is located in the Pir Panjal Range of the Western Himalayas and is part of the Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary.*
- *Other places*
  - **Gulmarg Gondola:** *The world's highest cable car*
  - **Gulmarg Biosphere Reserve:** *Home to rare species of flora, fauna, and birds*
  - **Alpather Lake:** *A serene blue lake surrounded by snow-capped mountains and wildflowers*

## **Brand Bengaluru**

**Syllabus : GS – 1; Urban planning**

**Context :**

- *The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) presented a Rs 12,369 crore budget for the city primarily focusing on the 'Brand Bengaluru' initiative of the Karnataka government.*

**About**



- *The Brand Bangalore concept includes effective urban planning, sustainable drainage systems, efficient transport systems and smart traffic management, well-planned footpaths to promote transport and healthy lifestyles, dedicated cycling lanes and green spaces to make the city pollution-free and pedestrian- friendly roads for the safety and convenience of citizens.*

### **Key areas of focus under 'Brand Bengaluru'**

- *Trafficable Bangalore*
- *Green Bangalore*
- *Clean Bengaluru*
- *People friendly Bangalore*
- *Healthy Bangalore*
- *Tech Bangalore*
- *Water Security Bangalore*
- *Educational Bangalore*

### **Objectives of 'Brand Bengaluru'**

- *To make Bengaluru city free from traffic and other basic infrastructure problems.*
- *To re-build the city on international standards.*
- *To recreate the beauty of the city.*

### **Key problems**

- *Too many bodies to look after the city administration.*
- *Need to streamline the project implementation strategies.*
- *Political will should be there, irrespective of ideologies of the parties*

### **Way forward**

- *Merging the number of bodies and making a single body to look after the city administration.*
- *Following the guidelines given by the international organizations regarding the town planning.*
- *Taking the suggestions into confidence, given by the citizens.*



## **Thenmala Kullan**

**Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture**

### **Context**

- *Kerala Animal Husbandry department plans to register 'Thenmala Kullan' as indigenous breed.*



### **About**

- *The Thenmala Kullan is locally known as a **dwarf cow**.*
- *The dwarf cow comes with many distinctive features, including a small hump. Reared by tribespeople in **Arippa and Thenmala**, they are less docile and basically thrive on forest-based fodder from nearby oil palm estates.*
- *Though they produce the **nutrient-rich A2 milk**, the quantity is very low and they are reared mainly for calves and manure.*
- *The department plans to compare the cow's genetics to other breeds, and then use selective breeding to create new generations.*
- *Once these steps are complete, the Thenmala Kullan will be declared Kollam's own cow.*

- *The National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources in Haryana will provide the breed with registration and recognition.*

### **The National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR)**

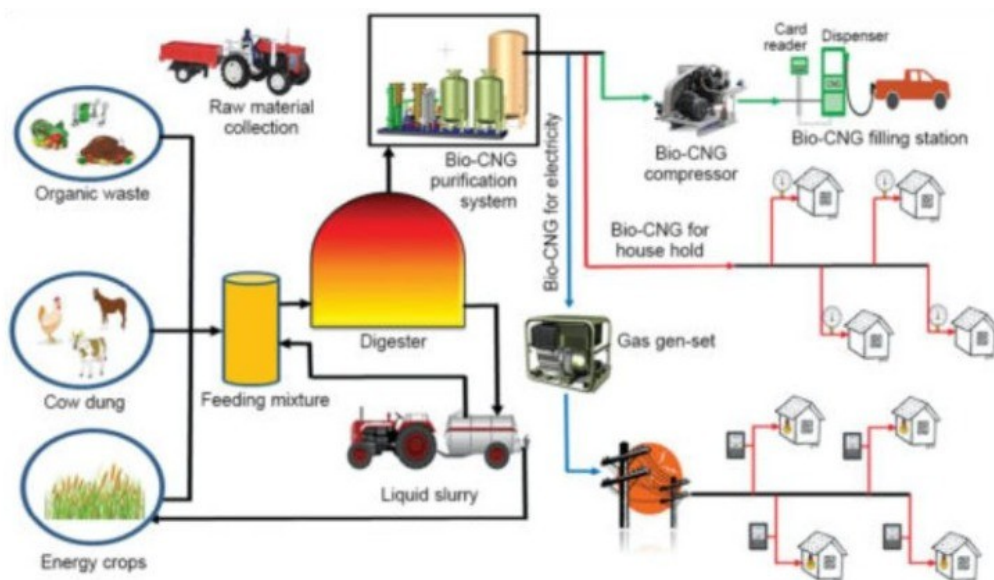
- *The National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR) is an institute of the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** that protects and preserves indigenous farm animal genetic resources.*
- *The NBAGR's mission is to ensure sustainable use and livelihood security for these resources.*
- *The NBAGR was established on September 21, 1984, and is located in Karnal, Haryana.*
- *The NBAGR's services include: **AnGR database, Breed calendars, Tenders,***
- *A **National GeneBank** that cryo-conserves the genetic biodiversity of indigenous farm animals, and A system for registering newly identified germplasm of livestock and poultry.*

## **BioCNG Production from Dung**

### **Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture**

#### **Context**

- *Gujarat's dairy cooperatives are showing the way in supplementing their farmers' income from milk by procuring dung and converting it into Bio CNG and fertiliser.*



## BioCNG

- *BioCNG (compressed natural gas) is produced from dung through a process of **anaerobic digestion**, which breaks down biodegradable material without oxygen to produce biogas.*

## Process

- *The process involves mixing fresh dung with water, which is rich in methane and water, in a sealed vessel reactor for about 35 days.*
- *The process involves **hydrolysis, acidogenesis, acetogenesis, and methanogenesis** stages.*
- *The raw biogas is then purified to remove impurities like CO<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>S, resulting in compressed biogas (CBG) suitable for vehicle use.*
- *From 40 tonnes of dung, the plant generates 2,000 cubic meters of raw biogas containing 55-60% methane, 35-45% CO<sub>2</sub>, and 1-2% hydrogen sulphide (H<sub>2</sub>S) and moisture.*
- *The gases methane and hydrogen can be combusted or oxidized with oxygen, which allows biogas to be used as a fuel.*

## Uses

- *It can be used in fuel cells and for heating purpose, such as in **cooking**.*
- *It can also be used in a gas engine to convert the energy in the gas into electricity and heat.*

## Significance

- *Biogas digesters reduce methane emissions from animal waste, aiding in greenhouse gas mitigation.*

## Know more

- *India's first and only gas-filling station based on dung from cattle and buffaloes is in **Dama village of Deesa taluka, Gujarat**.*
- *The station sells 550-600 kg of gas per day generated from 40 tonnes of dung.*

## Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) treaty

**Syllabus: GS-3: Biodiversity conservation.**

**Context:**

- *Countries hope to bring BBNJ or High Seas treaty into force by 2025; only 2 have ratified it so far.*

**More about news:**

- *The **Blue Leaders High-Level Event** on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction occurred in Belgium.*
- *Encouragement for nations to ratify the **Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) treaty.***
- *The treaty targets safeguarding the high seas from pollution, climate change, and overfishing.*

**What is the BBNJ Treaty?**

- *The BBNJ treaty, also known as the **Treaty of the High Seas**, was established in March 2023.*
- *Its primary goal is the **conservation and sustainable utilization** of marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction.*
- *Represents a pivotal stride toward conserving and managing marine biodiversity in these areas.*
- *The treaty addresses challenges in the high seas, **beyond 200 nautical miles** from coastal countries' exclusive economic zones.*

**Ratification Progress:**

- *Currently, **88 countries** have signed the treaty, with **Chile and Palau** as the sole ratifiers.*
- ***A minimum of 60 ratifications** is required for it to become enforceable.*

**Objectives:**

- *Increase the proportion of protected areas on the high seas, currently at a mere 1.44%.*
- *Ensure **equitable sharing of profits** from marine genetic resources (MGR) and establish **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** rules.*
- ***This is in line with the 30x30 target**, a global commitment to protect at least 30% of the planet for nature by 2030.*

**Concerns:**



- *Despite widespread support, **concerns exist over potential ratification delays** akin to past international agreements.*
- *Operationalizing the **treaty faces logistical challenges**, including defining procedural frameworks and securing funding.*

**Way Forward:**

- ***Global collaboration** is essential for the treaty's entry into force and subsequent implementation.*
- *The forthcoming **United Nations Ocean Conference in 2025** serves as a vital platform for advancing these objectives.*