



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 27-06-2026

Mapping Perspective

1. Lake Baikal

Prelims Perspective

2. Khurasani Imli
3. Solanum pandeyi

Mains Perspective

4. Anthropological Survey of India
5. Ecologically Sensitive Area

Lake Baikal

Syllabus: Prelims Bits

Context:

- Researchers reported that ancient DNA obtained from bodies interred in four burial sites in the Lake Baikal area revealed the presence of the oldest-known strains of *Yersinia pestis* (plague bacterium).

About Lake Baikal

Location

- Located in the southern part of eastern Siberia, south-central Russia, near the border with Mongolia.



Geological Significance

- Oldest existing freshwater lake on Earth (about 20–25 million years old).
- World's largest freshwater lake.
- World's deepest lake, with a maximum depth of 1,642 m below the water surface.
- Beneath the lake bottom lie sediments of about 7 km, making it the Earth's deepest continental rift.

Islands

- Contains 45 islands and islets.

- Olkhon is the largest island.

Drainage System

- Up to 330 rivers drain into Lake Baikal.
- Major rivers: Barguzin, Selenga, Upper Angara, Sarma, and Turka.
- Has only one outlet river — the Angara River.

Human Geography

- Home to the Buryat people on the eastern side of the lake.
- Predominantly follow the Tibetan Buddhist religion.
- Main occupations include rearing goats, camels, cattle, and sheep.

International Recognition

- Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996.

Khurasani Imli

Syllabus: GS-3, Agriculture- Intellectual Property Rights

Context

Khurasani Imli, the fruit of Mandu's iconic Baobab tree in Madhya Pradesh, has been awarded a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag.



About

- Khurasani Imli is the fruit of the **Baobab tree (*Adansonia digitata*)**.
- Also known as:
 - Mandav Imli
 - Khurasani Tamarind
- Introduced to Mandu during the reign of **Mahmud Khilji** in the 14th century.
- **Scientific Name of Baobab:** *Adansonia digitata*

Features

- Light green fruit with a tangy sweet-sour taste.
- Grows across villages in the Mandu region of Madhya Pradesh.

Medicinal and Nutritional Importance

- Rich in Vitamin C, antioxidants and minerals.
- Traditionally used for:
 - Diabetes
 - Digestive disorders
 - Fever
 - Fatigue
- Seeds and bark also possess medicinal value.

About GI Tag

- A sign identifying products originating from a specific geographical area.
- Governed by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**.
- Valid for 10 years and renewable thereafter.

Solanum pandeyi

Syllabus: GS-3, Environment & Biodiversity

Context

Scientists from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) discovered a new species of wild brinjal named *Solanum pandeyi* in the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**.



About

- A newly identified species of wild brinjal.
- Found in evergreen forests of Middle Andaman.
- Locally known as **Wild Orange Eggplant**.
- Belongs to the **Leptostemonum clade** of the genus *Solanum*.

Uses

- Utilized by the **Great Andamanese Tribe**.
- Seeds and roots are used for treating tooth infections.
- Fruits are used in preparing traditional sour-sweet sauces.

Botanical Survey of India (BSI)

- Established in 1890.
- Functions under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- Apex institution for taxonomic and floristic research in India.

Anthropological Survey of India

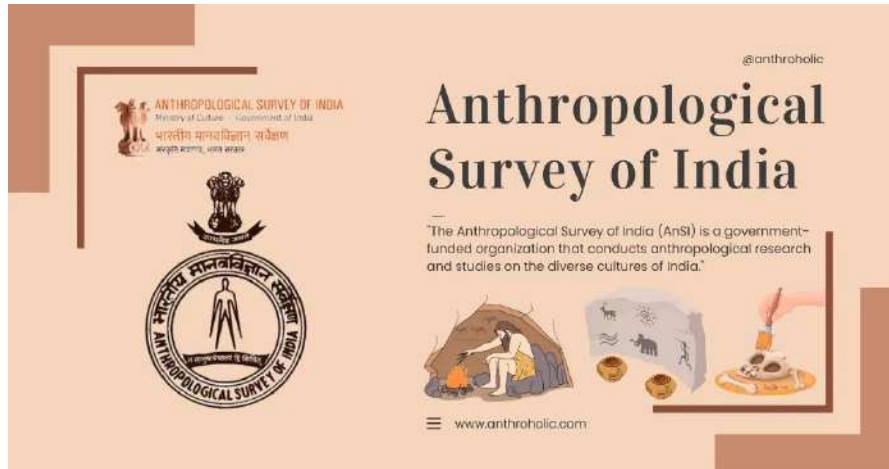
Syllabus: GS-1; History- Indian Heritage

Context:

- Human skeletal remains excavated from the archaeological site of Rakhigarhi have been formally handed over by the Archaeological Survey of India to the Anthropological Survey of India.

About Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI)

- A government-funded organization that conducts anthropological research and studies on the diverse cultures of India.
- The only research organization pursuing anthropological research under the Central Government in the Ministry of Culture.
- Headquarters: Kolkata.
- Established in 1945 under the leadership of Dr. S.C. Roy, a renowned anthropologist.



Evolution of AnSI

- Initially set up to study the tribes and castes of India and their way of life.
- Early research focused on collecting ethnographic data on different tribes and castes, including:
 - Social structure
 - Kinship system
 - Religious beliefs
 - Economic activities
- Over the years, research ambit expanded to include the entire gamut of Indian society:
 - Rural and urban population
 - Marginalized sections
 - Indian diaspora

Principal Objectives of AnSI

- Research tribes and other groups constituting India's population from biological and cultural perspectives.

- Examine and conserve human skeletal remains from both contemporary and archaic times.
- Gather examples of Indian tribal arts and crafts.
- Serve as a training ground for management and advanced anthropology students.
- Publish research findings.

Organizational Structure & Expertise

- Branches located in different parts of India, including:
 - Delhi
 - Lucknow
 - Shillong
 - Pune
- Possesses a multidisciplinary team comprising:
 - Anthropologists
 - Sociologists
 - Linguists
 - Archaeologists
 - Other allied professionals
- Conducts research and studies on various aspects of Indian society.

Publications

- Research findings are published through:
 - *Journal of Anthropological Survey of India*
 - *Occasional Papers*
 - *Monographs*

Ecologically Sensitive Area

Syllabus: GS-3: Environment – Protected Areas.

Context:

- The **Western Ghats**, one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, may soon receive stronger legal protection in at least three states through the notification of **Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs)**.

About Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA)

- **ESAs**, also called **Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)**, are designated regions identified for special environmental protection because of their rich biodiversity, fragile ecosystems, or critical ecological functions.
- The **Central Government** can notify certain areas as **Ecologically Sensitive Areas** under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
- Under this recognition, certain activities are **prohibited**, some are **tightly regulated**, while others are **encouraged** to ensure development does not come at the cost of ecological damage.
- Granting **ESA status** means that any development project in the area will be subject to **stricter environmental scrutiny**.

Significance of ESZ

- **Eco-Sensitive Zones** are created as “**shock absorbers**” for protected areas to minimize the negative impact on **fragile ecosystems** from human activities taking place nearby.
- They act as **buffer zones** around protected areas, reducing ecological pressure and environmental degradation.
- These areas are meant to function as a **transition zone** from areas requiring higher protection to those requiring lesser protection.
- ESZs help balance **environmental conservation** with **sustainable development** by regulating land-use and developmental activities.

Key Features of ESA/ESZ

- Special environmental protection for ecologically important regions.
- Notification under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
- Activities classified into:
 - Prohibited activities
 - Regulated activities
 - Permissible/encouraged activities
- Development projects require enhanced environmental assessment and scrutiny.
- Aim to conserve biodiversity, ecological stability, and ecosystem services while enabling sustainable development.

ECO-SENSITIVE ZONES (ECZ) / ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREAS (ESA)

Designated regions around protected areas identified for special environmental protection because of their rich biodiversity, fragile ecosystems or critical ecological functions.

