DATE: **3rd Dec 2018,** Monday

Current Affairs

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Sources: THE HINDU and Indian Express

15.More than 60,000 people visit Hornbill festival in two-days
News:
The tribes of Nagaland celebrated the Hornbill Festival in Naga Heritage Village Kisumu in Nagaland:
Facts:

- It is organized at the **Kisama Village** located at a distance of 10 Kms from the state capital, Kohima
- It is locally known as the "Festival of Festivals" and is organized by State Tourism and Arts and Culture Department, to encourage inter-tribal harmony and promote colorful local culture and traditions.
- Festival is named after the Bird Hornbill.
- It takes place between the 1st to 7th December, which happens to be the Nagaland Formation Day
- This festival is the grandest, most colourful and sparkling carnival in the whole of north east India.
- It is attended by all the major tribes of Nagaland who present themselves with various arts, folk songs, dances and games.
- The most attractive event at the festival is Naga chilly eating competition and pork eating festival

Additional facts:
Major Festivals of North East , India

- **Nagaland** – Moatsu Mong
- **Assam** – Bihu Festival, Ambubachi Mela, Jonbeel Mela, Dehing Patkai
- **Sikkim** – Saga Dawa
- **Arunachal Pradesh** – Losar, Ziro Festival, Dree Festival and Mopin Festival
- **Mizoram** – Anthurium
- **Meghalaya** – Wangala and Nongkrem Dance Festival, Monolith Festival
- **Manipur** – Kang Chingba,
- **Tripura** – Kharchi Puja

16. Cloud seeding

News: Acting on a proposal from scientists of IIT Kanpur, CPCB had planned artificial rains through cloud seeding in the city.

- **Facts:**
  - Cloud seeding is a **weather modification technology** to help create rain.
  - It includes **injecting chemicals such as silver iodide, dry ice and liquid propane in the clouds.**
  - These chemicals reduce the temperature of water vapour molecules, thus helping in precipitation, and provide a platform on which water droplets can coalesce. When they become heavy, they come down as rain.
  - Scientists **use aircraft or rockets to inject silver iodide** or another substance into the atmosphere to mimic ice nuclei.
- **Additional facts:**
  - **Central Pollution Control Board**
    - CPCB, statutory organisation, was constituted in 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.
    - Further, CPCB was entrusted with the powers and functions under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
    - Principal Functions of the CPCB-

      (i) To promote cleanliness of streams and wells in different areas of the States by prevention, control and abatement of water pollution, and

      (ii) To improve the quality of air and to prevent, control or abate air pollution in the country.
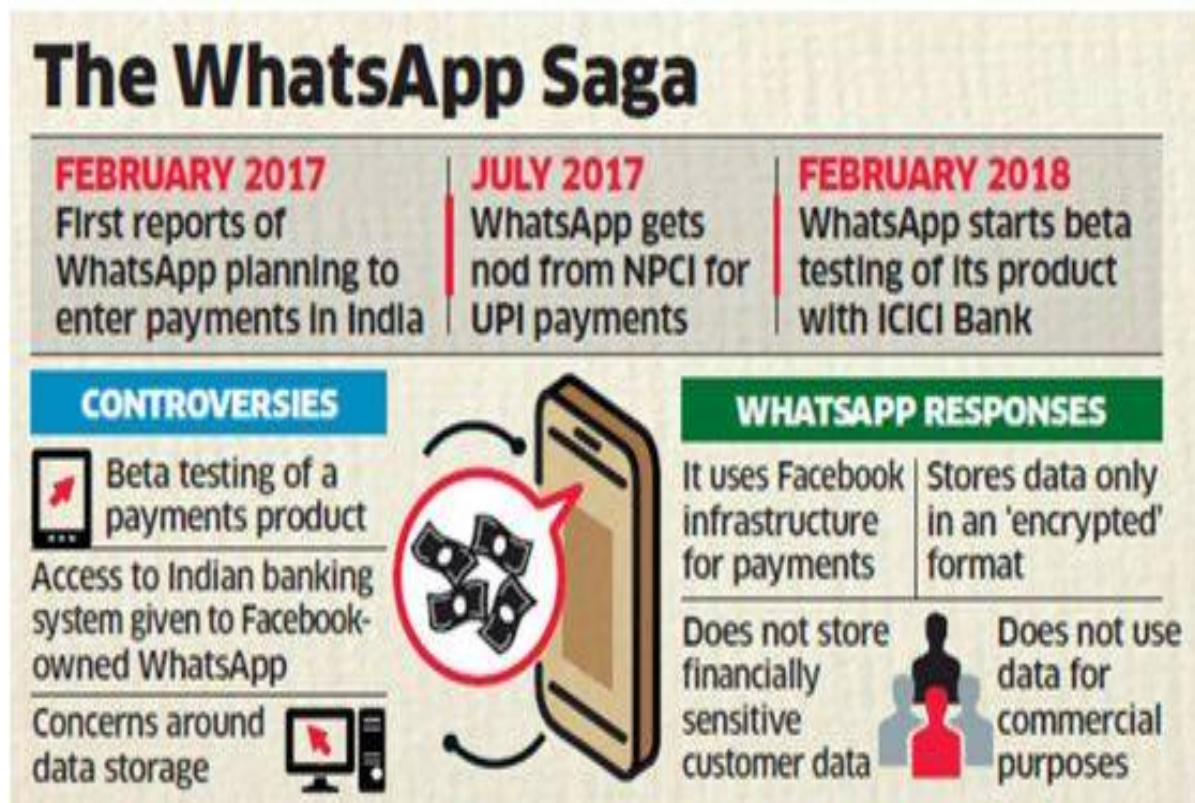
17. WhatsApp payment services
News

WhatsApp is seeking **regulatory clearance from the RBI** to launch full-fledged payment operations in India.

Payment service provider
- Payment service providers (PSPs) **connect merchants to the electronic financial system** so they can accept credit and debit card payments.
- They act on behalf of merchants and are paid by merchants for their services.
- The payment methods that PSPs accepts are: direct debit, credit card, bank transfer, and real-time bank transfer.

- WhatsApp is currently piloting **WhatsApp payments**, and it has now written to the RBI urging that a formal approval be granted to take the payments product to all its users in the country.
- The WhatsApp **In-Chat Payment feature** will allow users to make payments to anyone from their WhatsApp contact list.
- The new option will enable WhatsApp users to both send and receive money.
- The social media messaging application has tied up with some of the largest banks in the country to make this service available to consumers.
- The payment system will work on the **Unified Payments Interface** (UPI) method, where fund transfers can be initiated without having to provide bank account number and IFSC code.
- The UPI interface allows customers to make instant fund transfers through a virtual address, also known as, Virtual Payment Address (VPA). The fund transfer process is fast, easy and can be done on a 24/7 basis on all 365 days in a year.

The WhatsApp Saga

FEBRUARY 2017	JULY 2017	FEBRUARY 2018
First reports of WhatsApp planning to enter payments in India	WhatsApp gets nod from NPCI for UPI payments	WhatsApp starts beta testing of its product with ICICI Bank

CONTROVERSIES

Beta testing of a payments product

Access to Indian banking system given to Facebook-owned WhatsApp

Concerns around data storage

WHATSAPP RESPONSES

It uses Facebook infrastructure for payments	Stores data only in an 'encrypted' format
Does not store financially sensitive customer data	Does not use data for commercial purposes

- **Features and Benefits of WhatsApp In-Chat Payment**
  - **24X7 service-** Make payment to anyone on WhatsApp contact list from anywhere and at anytime
  - **User-friendly 'pay' feature–** It makes transferring funds as simple as sending a photo or a message
  - The payee/beneficiary will receive a payment notification on their chat window once the fund transfer has been made

- o **Transfer through virtual address-** There is no need to ask the payee for account details such as account number or IFSC code. All you need is a virtual address to make payment

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Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

- UPI is a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application (of any participating bank), merging several banking features, seamless fund routing & merchant payments into one hood.
- It also caters to the "Peer to Peer" collect request which can be scheduled and paid as per requirement and convenience.
- Benefits for end Customers:
    - o Round the clock availability
    - o Single Application for accessing different bank accounts
    - o Use of Virtual ID is more secure, no credential sharing
    - o Single click authentication
    - o Raise Complaint from Mobile App directly
- Benefits for Merchants:
    - o Seamless fund collection from customers - single identifiers
    - o No risk of storing customer's virtual address like in Cards
    - o Tap customers not having credit/debit cards
    - o Suitable for e-Com & m-Com transaction
    - o Resolves the COD collection problem
    - o Single click 2FA facility to the customer - seamless Pull
    - o In-App Payments (IAP)

18.Polls come and go, but Sahariyas' plight still poor
News:

The Sahariya tribal community of Shahbad region in Baran district, Rajasthan which recorded 47 starvation deaths during the 2001 drought, has been waiting for concerted welfare measures that could take them out of poverty, unemployment and malnutrition.

About Sahariya tribal community:

- o This is a 70,000-strong community has been classified as a particularly vulnerable tribal group because of its low development indices.
- o It is the only primitive tribe of the Rajasthan.
- o The Sahariyas follow Hindu religious practices and speak a dialect influenced by Hadoti.
- o The main business is gathering and selling of forest wood, gum, Tendu leaf, honey, fruits and vegetables.

o Sahariya tribal have been preserving and conserving the traditional white chalk on red background Mandana drawings, seen on the walls and floors of rural houses.

19. **Tribal art of mandana:**

- These paintings are one of the oldest forms of tribal art in India that has survived over the ages.
- These are used for warding off evil and as a good luck charm.
- The name of the tribal paintings are derived from the word 'Mandan' referring to decoration and beautification and comprises simple geometric forms like triangles, squares and circles to decorate houses.
- Generally the art passes from mother to daughter.
- White khariya or chalk solution and geru or red ochre are used in the painting.
- Twigs are used to draw on the floors and walls of their houses, which are first plastered with clay mixed with cow dung.

20. **Good news on tiger numbers**
News:

A new study offers hope for wild tiger populations across countries by showing that under optimal conditions, tiger numbers can triple in 18 sites across the world, including eight in India.

- **About the study:** The study, published in PLOS ONE, was conducted by 49 conservationists of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) across 10 tiger-range countries.

- The best available information was compiled including the occurrence and abundances of tigers and their prey from available scientific studies, availability of protected buffer forests nearby and the connectivity of the protected areas as well as human disturbances including fragmentation through the Human Footprint Index.
- This information was used for developing site-specific and ecologically realistic targets and timelines for the recovery of tiger populations in 18 tiger global "recovery sites".
- The eight "recovery sites" in India with potential for increasing tiger numbers are the following:
  o Anamalai-Vazhachal (in Tamil Nadu-Kerala)
  o Sathyamangalam (Tamil Nadu)
  o Balaghat (Madhya Pradesh)
  o Achanakmar (Chattisgarh)
  o Western Rajaji and Nandhaur (Uttarakhand)
  o Manas (across Assam-Bhutan)
  o Valmiki (across Bihar-Nepal)

- Currently, these regions support an estimated 62 tigers which could rise to 287 over the next 30-50 years, an increase of more than four times in India alone.
- **Challenges:**
  - Addressing growing incidents of human–tiger conflict in these areas would be crucial to aid this increase.
  - It may have been an "ambitious goal" the signatories of the Global Tiger Recovery Program took on to double the tiger numbers from 3,200 to about 6,000 by 2022.
- **Significance:**
  - This new estimation couldhelp in planning for tiger recovery globally and help to inform more effective, integrated approaches to tiger conservation.
  - This study suggests the need for tiger-range governments to take a holistic, long-term view towards tiger recovery which must include plans for revival of prey animals and other wildlife at the site- level.

The **Global Tiger Recovery Program (GTRP)** seeks to empower Tiger Range Country (TRCs) to address the entire spectrum of threats, domestic as well as those that are transboundary in nature, and work toward increased financial sustainability through the integration of conservation objectives into development.

The GTRP has been developed, with the shared goal of doubling the number of wild tigers globally by 2022 through actions to:

(i) Effectively manage, preserve, protect, and enhance tiger habitats;

(ii) Eradicate poaching, smuggling, and illegal trade of tigers, their parts, and derivatives;

(iii) Cooperate in transboundary landscape management and in combating illegal trade;

(iv) Engage with indigenous and local communities;

(v) Increase the effectiveness of tiger and habitat management; and

(vi) Restore tigers to their former range.

- The 13 Asian Tiger Range Countries (TRCs) are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russian Federation, Thailand, and Vietnam.