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## ***February 4, 2020***

### ***Topic:- Sports***

***News:-Four cyclists to take part in Portugal event.***

- Four cyclists hailing from Shimla who are also a part of the Hero Action Team will be travelling to Portugal to race at the Algarve Bike Challenge on February 7.
- The cycling race hosts some of the finest riders from across the world in three-day mountain biking extravaganza on the southern coast of Portugal. The race witnessed participation of over 1100 cyclists from 16 countries.

***Importance of this Collaboration:-***

- Announcing the partnership with Portugal based race, Team Manager, Hero Action Team Ashish Sood said that this collaboration serves as a great platform for the Hero Action Team riders to explore the seemingly endless and beautiful trails of Portugal with the best two-person teams and top elite riders.
- The partnership not only enables Himalayan Adventure

Sports & Tourism Promotion Association (HASTPA) to increase its international footprint in the mountain biking circuit but also ensures its homegrown riders get world-class exposure.

### ***Why important for the exam?***

- This is the second time cyclists from India will be racing at the event. The race is a great test of endurance, resolve and skill, and will give a huge exposure to the local boys.

(Source:- The Tribune)

## ***Topic:- Environment***

### ***News:-Preserving wetlands crucial say, experts.***

- The State Council of Science, Technology and Environment celebrated the 53rd state-level World Wetlands Day at Amlela in Nagrota Surian, adjoining the Pong Lake.

### ***What is the theme for the World Wetlands Day-2020?***

***“Wetlands and Biodiversity.”***

### ***Why Preserving wetlands crucial?***

- Wetland biodiversity contributed to the ecosystem,

resilience, clean water, storm protection, carbon storage, health, tourism and recreational jobs.

- “The biodiversity is a foundational value of wetlands and an inherent part of these ecosystems. It is through the wetland biodiversity that critical ecological processes are carried out.

### ***Important Facts:-***

- Pong Lake in the lower Kangra valley was the biggest wetland in northern India.

(Source:- The Tribune)

## ***Topic:- Wildlife***

### ***News:-Bar-headed goose count goes up by 68 pc at Pong Dam Lake.***

- Though the population of migratory birds coming to the Pong Dam lake in Kangra district has almost remained stagnant this year, the number of bar-headed goose has increased by 68 per cent from the previous year.
- Last year, the total count of these birds at the lake was 29,443. This year, the census carried out in the last few days showed that 49,496 bar-headed geese have visited the lake. This is the biggest concentration of these birds in any part of the country.

## ***Important Facts:-***

- 1,15,701 birds of 114 species had been seen at the Pong Dam lake this year. This figure includes 1,04,032 migratory waterfowls of 60 species, 10,377 resident water birds of 30 species and 1,292 birds of 24 other local species.
- Dominant species are bar-headed geese (49,496), northern pintail (12,881), Eurasian coot (10,860), common teal (7,334), common pochard (3,988), northern shoveler (2,818), great cormorant (2,121), Eurasian wigeon (1,350) and ruddy shelduck (1,028)
- Other uncommon bird species seen in the lake are common shelduck (75), northern lapwing (32), common ringed plover (20), pied avocet (09), osprey (5), black-bellied tern (5), common merganser (4), sarus crane (2), Eurasian curlew (2), white-tailed lapwing (1), water pipit (1), lesser white-fronted goose (1) and Buff-bellied Pipit (1).
- A few noticeable species are great crested grebe, red-crested pochard, ferruginous pochard, mallard, tufted duck, Eurasian spoonbill, curlew sandpiper and many other species of larks and pipits. The total population has shown a marginal increase from 1,15,229 to 1,15,701 whereas the number of species seen has increased from 103 to 114.

## ***About Bar-headed goose:-***

- The bar-headed goose is a goose that breeds in Central Asia in colonies of thousands near mountain lakes and winters in South Asia, as far south as peninsular India. It lays three to eight eggs at a time in a ground nest.
- Scientific name: *Anser indicus*
- Conservation status: Least Concern (Population decreasing)



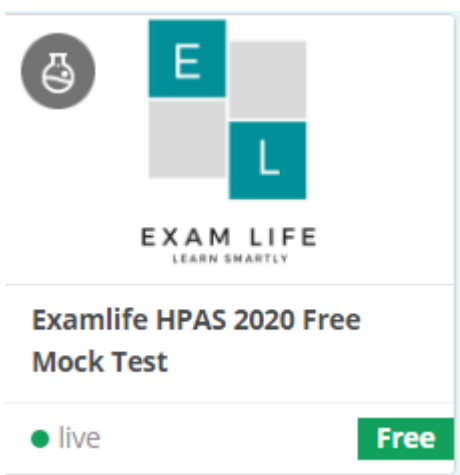
(Source:- The Tribune)

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*HPAS—> See Second (Regular Quiz)*

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