



For success in a changing world

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 17-10-2024

GS-1

1. Nobel prize in Literature 2024
2. Atal Pension Yojana

GS-2

3. Anaconda strategy

GS-3

4. Bone ossification test
5. Nilgiri Tahr

Nobel prize in Literature 2024

Syllabus: GS-1; Art & Culture

Context

- Literature Nobel for Han Kang: Empathetic explorer of historical trauma and personal loss.



About

Nobel Prize in Literature 2024:

- **Awarded to Han Kang** for her "intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life."
- **First South Korean laureate** for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Notable Works:

1. The Vegetarian (2007):

- Focuses on the quiet rebellion of a housewife, Yeong-Hye, who refuses to eat meat.
- Themes: Patriarchy, violence, colonialism, and the consequences of personal resistance.
- Translated into English in 2016, marking Han's entry into global literary circles.

2. Human Acts (2014):

- A deeply moving account of the **1980 Gwangju massacre** and its impact on individuals, especially a 15-year-old boy, Dong-ho.

- Explores the human cost of political violence and suppression.
- 3. **The White Book (2017):**
 - A meditation on life, death, and mourning, particularly centered around the death of the narrator's newborn sister.
 - Known for its fragmented structure and visceral imagery.
- 4. **Greek Lessons (2023, English translation):**
 - A story of a woman who loses her ability to speak, and her relationship with a teacher losing his vision.
 - Explores themes of silence, communication, and loss.
- 5. **We Do Not Part (2025):**
 - Reframes the history of the **Jeju massacre** through the lives of three women: Kyungha, Inseon, and Inseon's mother.
 - Focuses on the intergenerational trauma passed down through female relationships.

Recurring Themes in Han Kang's Work:

- **Trauma and Brutality:** Many of her novels deal with personal and historical trauma, often set against the backdrop of political violence in South Korea.
- **Resistance:** Characters, especially women, challenge patriarchal and violent systems, often through acts of negation and withdrawal rather than overt confrontation.
- **Poetic Prose:** Han's style is marked by her lyrical, minimalistic prose that intensifies emotional depth.

Significance of Han Kang's Writing:

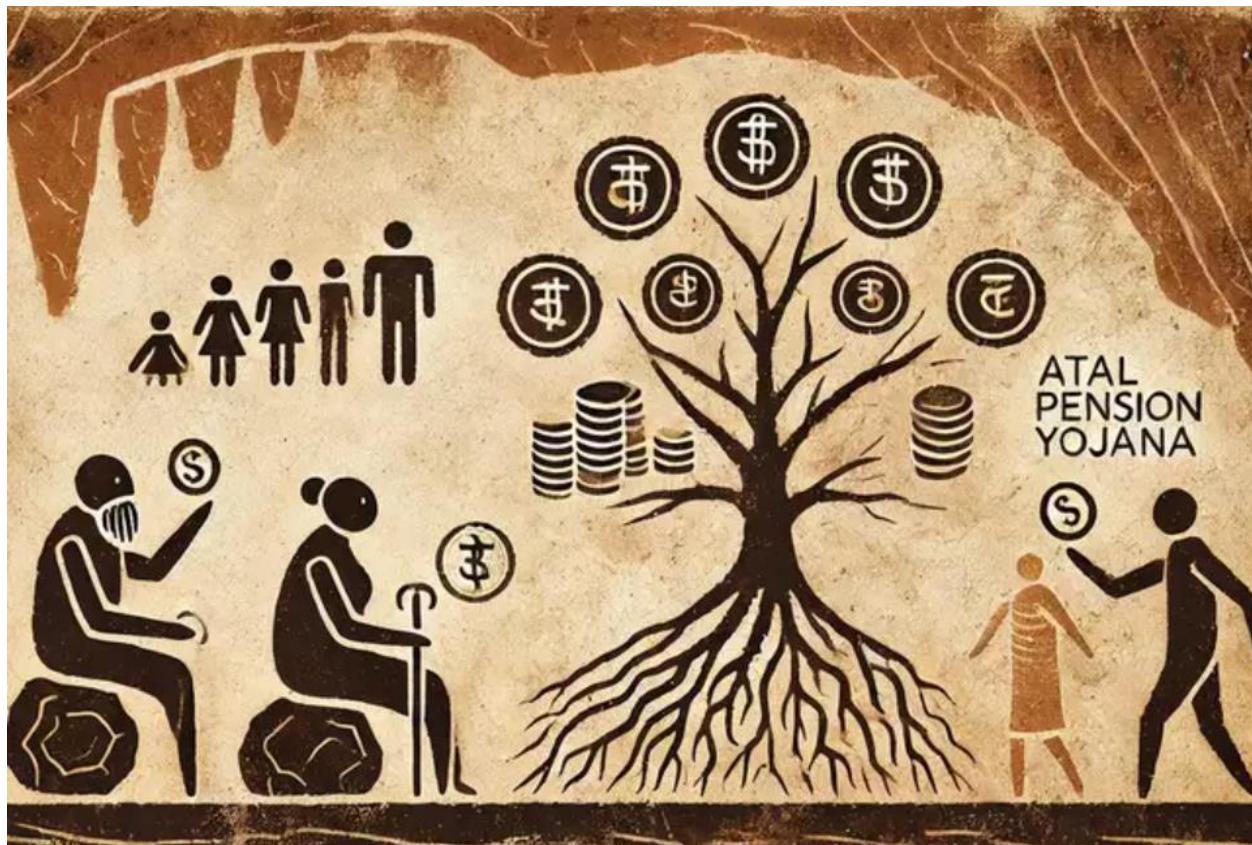
- **Focus on Women's Experiences:** Han explores the subtle yet profound ways in which women resist patriarchal structures.
- **Historical Context:** Her work addresses South Korea's painful past, particularly the Gwangju uprising and the Jeju massacre, making it relevant for understanding postcolonial literature.

Atal Pension Yojana

Syllabus: GS-1; Social Security, GS-2; Government policies and Interventions

Context

- Atal Pension Yojana enrolments crosses 7 crore mark



About Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

- Launched by the Government of India on May 9, 2015.
- Aimed at **providing social security and pension benefits to citizens**, especially the unorganized sector.

Objectives:

- To ensure old-age income security for individuals in the unorganized sector.
- To encourage savings among the workforce for retirement through a systematic pension scheme.

Eligibility:

- Open to all Indian citizens aged between 18 to 40 years.
- The subscriber should have a savings bank account.

Pension Amount:

- Subscribers can choose a fixed pension amount of ₹1,000, ₹2,000, ₹3,000, ₹4,000, or ₹5,000 per month, based on their contributions.
- The pension is payable after the age of 60.

Contribution:

- The amount of contribution depends on the age of the subscriber and the pension amount chosen.
- Contributions range from ₹42 to ₹1,454 per month, depending on the chosen pension and the age at which one joins the scheme.
- **The Government of India co-contributes 50% of the total contribution or ₹1,000 per annum (whichever is lower) for eligible subscribers for the first five years.**

Benefits:

- Guaranteed minimum monthly pension after retirement, depending on the contribution.
- Portable benefits that can be accessed from anywhere in India.
- The scheme aims to empower the lower-income sections of society by providing financial security.

Withdrawal:

- The APY allows withdrawal **only after the age of 60**.
- In the case of the subscriber's death, the spouse can continue to receive the pension or can claim the corpus.

Implementation:

- The scheme is administered by the **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)**.
- The contributions can be made through banks and other financial institutions.

Impact:

- Aimed at reducing poverty in old age and providing financial independence to individuals in their retirement years.
- Promotes a culture of saving and financial discipline among citizens.

Anaconda strategy

Syllabus: GS-2; International Relations

Context

- The 'anaconda strategy' deployed by China against Taiwan involves a wide range of tactics including military maneuvers and cyber warfare.

About

- The concept of an '**Anaconda Strategy**' is being applied by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) against Taiwan, as claimed by Taiwan's navy commander, Admiral Tang Hua.
- This modern iteration mirrors the original **Anaconda Plan** from the American Civil War, where the goal was to strangle the Confederacy economically and militarily without direct confrontation.
- In the current context, China aims to encircle and gradually weaken Taiwan through a combination of military pressure, psychological operations, and cyber warfare, aiming to force Taiwan into submission.

Key Elements of China's 'Anaconda Strategy' Against Taiwan:

1. Military Maneuvers:

- **Naval Encirclement:** China has increased its naval presence around Taiwan, with a steady rise in the number of Chinese ships patrolling the waters, up from 142 in January to 282 by August 2024.
- This encirclement mimics the historical blockade of the Confederate ports, isolating Taiwan.
- **Air Incursions:** The number of Chinese air sorties into Taiwan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) has surged, increasing from 36 incursions in January to 193 in September 2024.
- This constant air pressure serves to exhaust Taiwan's air force.

2. Psychological Tactics:

- **Exerting Constant Pressure:** Admiral Tang noted that China is employing a strategy of continuous pressure, aiming to wear down Taiwan's defenses without overtly crossing the line into full-scale war.
- **Provoking Mistakes:** China's goal, according to Tang, is to push Taiwan to make mistakes under this pressure, potentially creating a pretext for China to justify a blockade or more aggressive actions.

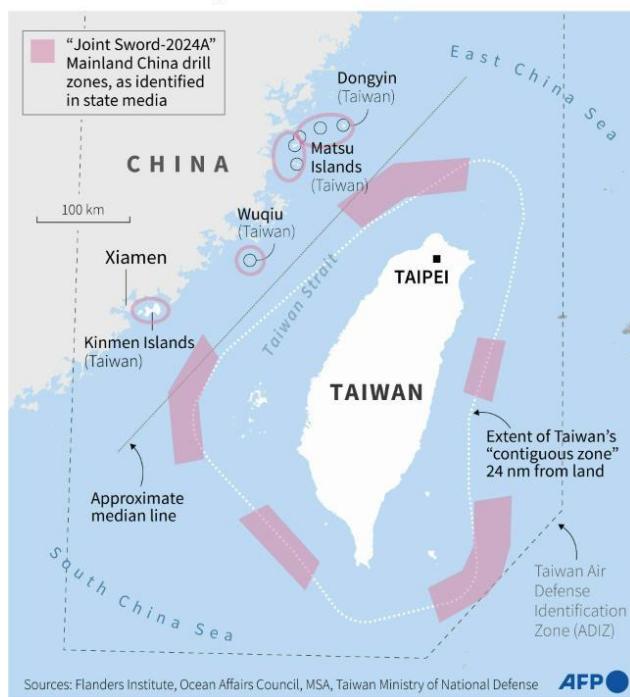
3. Cyber Warfare and Psychological Operations:

- **Destabilizing Society:** As noted by June Teufel Dreyer, China has been conducting cyber-attacks and psychological warfare to destabilize Taiwan's internal politics and societal cohesion.
- This includes disinformation campaigns, influencing media, and other cyber operations aimed at weakening Taiwan from within.

4. **Diplomatic and Economic Pressure:**

- In addition to military tactics, China has worked diplomatically to isolate Taiwan on the global stage, limiting its participation in international organizations.
- Economically, China has tried to weaken Taiwan by influencing trade relations and undermining its economic resilience.

China military exercises around Taiwan



Strategic Objectives

- China's long-term objective with the **Anaconda Strategy** appears to be forcing Taiwan into submission or a political compromise without the need for a full-scale invasion.
- By gradually tightening the military, psychological, and cyber pressure, Beijing hopes to erode Taiwan's ability to resist, making it more vulnerable to Chinese influence or even reunification.

Bone ossification test

Syllabus: GS-3; Science & Technology

Context

- The latest example of the use of the test came when one of those accused of killing Baba Siddique told a court in Mumbai that he should be tried as a juvenile, claiming he was 17 years old.

About

- A **bone ossification test** is a medical procedure used to estimate a person's age by examining the development and maturation of their bones. It works on the principle that bone formation, or ossification, follows a predictable pattern as an individual grows, from infancy through adolescence.

How the test works:

1. **X-rays:** X-rays of specific bones, typically in the hands and wrists, are taken.
2. **Comparison:** These images are compared with standard reference images of bone development at various ages.
3. **Scoring System:** A scoring system may be applied to assess the degree of ossification, considering factors like the shape, size, and growth of bones.
4. **Result:** The stage of bone development is used to estimate the person's age, usually providing a range, such as 17–19 years.

Application in the Criminal Justice System:

In India, determining age is significant because:

- A person under 18 is considered a minor, governed by the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**.
- Minors cannot be tried as adults and are dealt with by a **Juvenile Justice Board (JJB)**, which can prescribe rehabilitation measures rather than prison.
- In cases of **heinous offences** involving children over 16, the JJB assesses whether the child should be tried as an adult based on their mental and physical capacity to understand the crime.

Court Views on Ossification Tests:

- Courts typically prioritize **documentary evidence** (e.g., birth certificates, school records) over bone ossification tests.

- The test is used as a **last resort** if no reliable documents are available.
- Courts have recognized the **margin of error** in ossification tests, acknowledging that development rates vary among individuals, leading to results that provide a range of ages rather than a specific age.

Nilgiri Tahr

Syllabus: GS-3; Biodiversity- Conservation

Context

- In a significant breakthrough for conservation efforts, a newly colonised habitat of the endangered Nilgiri Tahr has been discovered in Pasumalai, located in the Erasai West beat of the Chinnamanoor Range within the Megamalai Forest Division.



About

- **Scientific Name:** *Nilgiritragus hylocrius* (formerly *Hemitragus hylocrius*)
- **Common Name:** Nilgiri Tahr
- **Family:** Bovidae
- **IUCN Status:** Endangered

Habitat and Distribution:

- **Geographical Range:** Endemic to the Western Ghats, especially in the Nilgiri Hills and other regions of southern India, including Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- **Habitat:** The Nilgiri Tahr inhabits high-altitude grasslands and rocky slopes at elevations ranging between 1,200 to 2,600 meters. They prefer areas with steep slopes and rugged terrain, which provide both foraging grounds and protection from predators.

Physical Characteristics:

- **Appearance:** Nilgiri Tahrs have a stocky body with a coarse, brownish-gray coat. Males are larger than females and develop a dark brown color with age, with a distinct silvery saddle on their back.
- **Horns:** Both males and females have horns that curve backward, although those of males are more prominent.

Behaviour:

- **Diet:** Herbivorous, feeding primarily on grasses, shrubs, and herbs found in the grasslands.
- **Social Structure:** Tahrs live in herds, usually consisting of females, juveniles, and a few young males. Adult males, known as "saddlebacks" due to their distinct coloration, often remain solitary or form small bachelor groups outside the breeding season.

Reproduction:

- **Breeding Season:** The rutting season usually occurs from July to August.
- **Gestation:** Females give birth to a single offspring after a gestation period of about 180 days.

Conservation Status:

- **IUCN Red List:** Endangered, mainly due to habitat loss, fragmentation, and poaching.
- **Major Threats:**
 - **Habitat Destruction:** Conversion of grasslands into plantations (tea, eucalyptus, etc.) and human encroachment have significantly reduced their natural habitat.

- **Poaching:** Though illegal, hunting for meat and horns continues to threaten the population.
- **Invasive Species:** The spread of invasive plant species like *Lantana camara* has led to a decline in the native grasslands that support the Nilgiri Tahr.

Conservation Efforts:

- **Protected Areas:**
 - **Ervikulam National Park** (Kerala) is the largest stronghold for Nilgiri Tahr populations.
 - Other protected areas include Mukurthi National Park, Silent Valley National Park, and the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.
- **Conservation Programs:** Several government initiatives focus on habitat restoration, population monitoring, and anti-poaching measures. The *Nilgiri Tahr Project* aims to ensure the long-term survival of this species by mitigating human-wildlife conflict and preserving grasslands.

Cultural Significance:

- **State Animal of Tamil Nadu:** The Nilgiri Tahr holds cultural importance in Tamil Nadu and features prominently in local folklore.