



For success in a changing world

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 19-09-2024

GS-1

1. Galathea Bay
2. Sahariya Tribe

GS-2

3. National Florence Nightingale Awards 2024

GS-3

4. Delhi Declaration on Civil Aviation
5. Demographic advantage, Indian economy's sweet spot

Galathea Bay

Syllabus: GS-1; Geography- Mapping

Context

- *The centre has notified the international trans-shipment hub at Galathea Bay in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands as a 'Major Port'.*
- *With this, the proposed Rs 44,000 crore mega project is officially under the administrative control of the union ports, shipping, and waterways ministry.*
- *It is also eligible for central funding and will be developed under the public-private partnership model.*

Geographical Location

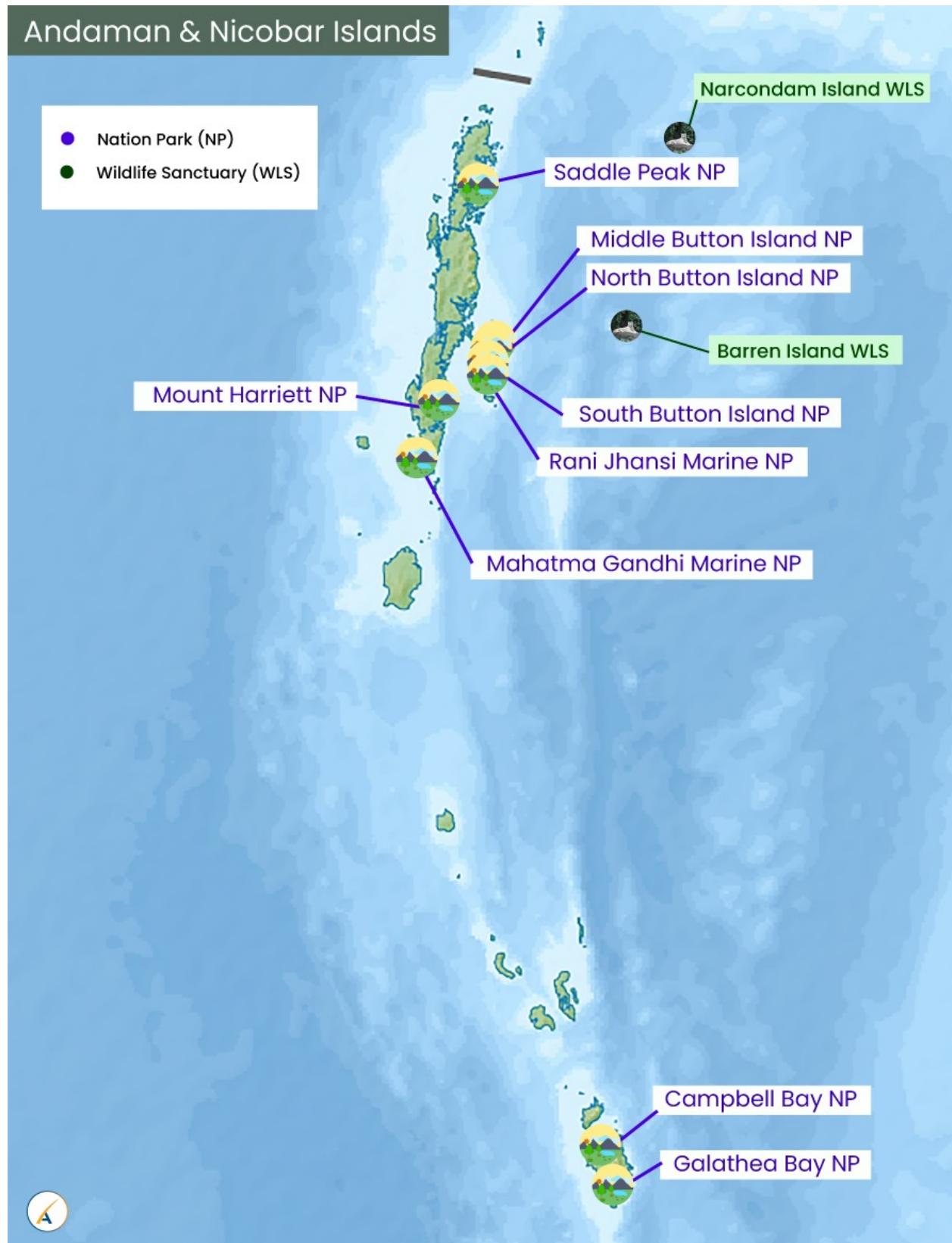
- *Galathea Bay is situated on the **southeastern coast of Great Nicobar Island**, the southernmost island of India.*
- *It opens into the Indian Ocean and is part of the **larger Galathea National Park**.*

Ecological Significance

- **Biodiversity:** *Galathea Bay is known for its rich biodiversity and is home to various endemic and endangered species.*
- **Leatherback Sea Turtles:** *It is one of the most important nesting sites for the Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), which is **critically endangered**.*
- *The bay is part of the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve, recognized by UNESCO for its rich tropical rainforest and mangrove ecosystems.*

Conservation and Environmental Issues

- *Galathea Bay has been designated as a Wildlife Sanctuary and a Marine Protected Area, reflecting its environmental importance.*
 - **Development concerns:** *There have been discussions about infrastructure development in the region, including the proposal for the Great Nicobar Project, which aims to boost strategic and economic presence through a transshipment port, airport, and other facilities. This has raised concerns about the potential impact on the fragile ecosystem and indigenous communities.*
 - **Indigenous Tribes:** *The area around Galathea Bay is also home to the Nicobarese and the Shompen, two of the indigenous tribes of the island.*



Strategic Importance

- **Strategic Location:** Being located at the southern tip of India, Great Nicobar Island, including Galathea Bay, is of great strategic importance.
- It lies near the critical maritime shipping lanes of the **Malacca Strait**, one of the busiest sea routes in the world.
- The region has potential significance for India's security and maritime interests in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.

Recent Developments

- **Ecological concerns:** In light of the Great Nicobar Project, environmentalists have raised concerns about the potential risks to the ecosystem of Galathea Bay, especially its role as a nesting ground for the Leatherback sea turtle.
- **Government Initiatives:** The government has emphasized balancing development with ecological sustainability, and mitigation measures have been proposed to protect the area's biodiversity.

Other Major Ports in India



Sahariya Tribe

Syllabus: GS-1; Tribes of India

Context

- At least 172 cases of malnourished children have been identified among Sahariya tribals in Baran district within two weeks, officials said.

Geographical Location

- The Sahariya tribe mainly resides in the Baran and Kota districts of Rajasthan and parts of Shivpuri, Gwalior, Vidisha, and Datia districts of Madhya Pradesh.
- They are largely concentrated in **forested regions**, which have historically provided them with sustenance.

Ethnic Origins and History

- The Sahariyas are believed to be **descendants of the Bhils**, an indigenous group of India.
- The term "Sahariya" comes from the word 'Seher', which means jungle or wilderness, signifying their close connection to the forests.
- Historically, they have been forest-dwellers, reliant on forest produce for their livelihood.



Language

- Sahariyas speak a **dialect called 'Sahariya,'** which is a mix of Hindi and Mewari dialect.

- In different regions, they also speak Malwi and Bundeli dialects, influenced by the states they reside in.

Social Structure

- The tribe practices patrilineal inheritance.
- Traditionally, the Sahariyas were organized into clans, with clear demarcations of family ties.
- Marriage customs are exogamous, meaning they marry outside their clan to maintain genetic diversity within the tribe.

Economic Activities

- The traditional occupation of the Sahariya tribe is **shifting cultivation, hunting, gathering forest products, and manual labor**.
- With diminishing forest resources, many Sahariyas now work as agricultural laborers or migrate to urban areas for livelihood.
- They also engage in producing items like baskets, mats, and brooms made from forest resources.
- **Tendu leaf collection for making beedis (indigenous cigarettes)** is a significant source of income.

Cultural Practices

- The Sahariyas follow a mix of tribal customs and Hindu rituals.
- They worship deities like **Bhagwan Dev and Hanuman**, and their festivals are similar to Hindu festivals, with local variations.
- They have rich folk traditions of singing and dancing. Important festivals include Deepawali, Holi, and Raksha Bandhan.
- **Ghumar dance** is a popular dance form performed by Sahariya women.
- They also have traditional healers who practice herbal medicine and faith healing.

Education and Social Welfare

- Literacy rate among the Sahariyas is significantly low compared to the national average, with very limited access to formal education.
- Government initiatives under the **Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP)** and other welfare schemes aim to improve their literacy levels and overall socio-economic status.

Challenges Faced by the Sahariya Tribe

- **Land Alienation:** The displacement from forests and loss of traditional livelihood due to deforestation, industrial activities, and land alienation.

- **Poverty:** Most Sahariyas live below the poverty line, with limited access to basic services like education, healthcare, and sanitation.
- **Social Marginalization:** Despite being a Scheduled Tribe (ST), they face discrimination and have been marginalized by the dominant sections of society.
- **Health and Nutrition Issues:** Malnutrition, lack of access to clean water, sanitation, and healthcare services pose significant challenges to their well-being.

Government Initiatives

- The Sahariya tribe is listed as a **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)** due to their backwardness and critical socio-economic conditions.
- Government programs like **Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana** and **PVTG Development Scheme** focus on improving their living standards, education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities.
- Sahariya Development Agency in Rajasthan focuses on their economic and educational upliftment.
- Efforts are being made under the **Forest Rights Act, 2006**, to grant them land rights and access to forest resources.

National Florence Nightingale Awards 2024

Syllabus: GS-2: Social Justice – Health sector.

Context:

- President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, presented the National Florence Nightingale Awards 2024 at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- **Recipients:** 15 nurses were awarded for their outstanding dedication to healthcare services.

About the Award

- **Established:** In 1973 by the Ministry of Health.
- **Purpose:** To honor exceptional nursing professionals across India.
- **Award Components:**
 - **Certificate of Merit.**
 - **Cash Prize:** ₹1,00,000.

- **Medal.**

About Florence Nightingale

- **Background:** *English social reformer, founder of modern nursing.*
- **Contribution:**
 - *Organized care for wounded soldiers during the Crimean War.*
 - *Established the first scientifically-based nursing school at St. Thomas' Hospital, London.*
- **Legacy:** *Pioneered the nursing profession with a focus on sanitation, patient care, and hygiene.*

Delhi Declaration on Civil Aviation

Syllabus: GS-3: Infrastructure – Aviation sector.

Context:

- **The 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation** recently concluded in India, marking a significant milestone with the adoption of the **Delhi Declaration**.

About 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation

- The event, hosted by India in collaboration with the **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**, coincided with the **80th anniversary of ICAO's founding**.
- The conference attracted delegates from **29 countries**, as well as ministers, policymakers, and representatives from **8 international organizations**, including ICAO.
- This platform allowed global aviation leaders to discuss cooperation, explore opportunities, and strengthen international ties within the civil aviation sector.
- During the event, the **Prime Minister of India** highlighted the country's substantial advancements in aviation technology and infrastructure.
- He also emphasized the sector's inclusivity, noting that **15% of Indian pilots are women**, a figure significantly higher than the global average of 5%. India is now the **third-largest domestic aviation market in the world**, following the United States and China.

India's Aviation-Related Initiatives:

- **UDAN Scheme (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik):** A regional connectivity scheme aimed at making air travel affordable and widespread.
- **National Civil Aviation Policy, 2016:** A comprehensive policy that seeks to provide a favorable environment for the growth of the civil aviation sector.
- **GST reduction for MRO services:** GST on domestic Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) services was reduced from **18% to 5%**, enhancing the sector's competitiveness.
- **Open Sky Agreement:** Facilitates liberalized flight operations between countries, promoting air travel.
- **Digi Yatra:** A digital initiative for seamless and paperless travel using biometric technology.

About ICAO:

- **Established in 1944 by the Chicago Convention (Convention on International Civil Aviation), ICAO is a specialized UN agency.**
- **Its mandate is to coordinate international air navigation and promote the safe and orderly growth of global civil aviation.**
- **Headquartered in Montreal, Canada, ICAO has been a key driver in standardizing and regulating international aviation for the past 80 years.**

Demographic advantage, Indian economy's sweet spot

Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Employment

Context:

- **Fastest Growing Big Economy:** India is the world's fastest growing large economy, and is currently the fifth largest.
- **Demographics as a Key Driver:**
 - Median age is around 28 years.
 - 63% of the population is of working age, propelling economic growth.

➤ **Labour Force Participation:**

- *According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the labour force participation rate stood at 55.2% in 2022.*
- *Labour intensity is falling, attributed to growth led by the services sector, not manufacturing.*
- *India is not experiencing "jobless growth" but further measures are needed to harness the demographic dividend.*

Reforms Agenda: Key to Sustained Growth

➤ **Need for Reforms Continuation:**

- *Reforms are crucial to sustaining and accelerating growth, generating employment opportunities.*
- *Finance Minister's 2023-24 Budget speech emphasized productivity improvements and market efficiency.*

➤ **Centre and State Cooperation:**

- *While the Centre has enhanced ease of doing business, States need to play a pivotal role, especially in production sectors.*
- *Coordination between Centre and States is essential to broaden and deepen reforms.*

➤ **Capital vs. Labour-led Growth:**

- *Declining capital-to-output ratio, increasing capital-to-labour ratio, as per the Economic Survey 2023-24.*
- *Economist Arvind Panagariya emphasized labour-led growth, considering India's abundance of labour.*

Challenges in Labour-Intensive Sector Growth

➤ **MSMEs and Labour-Intensive Sectors:**

- *Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are reluctant to scale due to outdated labour laws and high compliance costs.*
- *Labour-intensive sectors are essential for employment generation, but the impasse over new labour codes is affecting investment sentiment.*

➤ **Manufacturing Sector and Workforce Distribution:**

- *45% of the workforce is employed in agriculture, contributing only 18% to GDP.*
- *Need to boost manufacturing and non-agricultural sectors like toys, apparel, tourism, and logistics.*
- *These sectors are labour-intensive and offer high growth potential for job creation.*

Skilling and Education

➤ **Importance of Continuous Skilling:**

- *Only 4.4% of India's workforce aged 15-29 is formally skilled, according to the Economic Survey.*
- *The dichotomy between labour surplus and skill shortage must be addressed through public-private partnerships.*

➤ **Role of Industry in Skilling:**

- *Industry should collaborate in designing curricula and providing 'on-the-job' training.*
- *Skilling should be a lifelong process, with flexibility in educational systems.*

➤ **New Education Policy (NEP) 2020:**

- *Emphasizes foundational skills and critical thinking, which are crucial for adapting to a changing world.*
- *NEP must be periodically reviewed and updated to remain relevant.*

Impact of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML)

➤ **Risks and Opportunities in AI/ML:**

- *Repetitive low-skill tasks are at risk due to automation, but human oversight remains crucial.*
- *AI/ML should be regulated appropriately, while maximizing its potential benefits.*

➤ **Growth of AI/ML Market:**

- *Statista projects AI/ML to become a \$826.73 billion market by 2030.*

- *NASSCOM reports that India has the second-largest talent pool in AI/ML, but a 51% gap between demand and supply.*
- *This presents a niche but significant opportunity for India to capitalize on.*

Conclusion: Harnessing India's Demographic Dividend

➤ **Opportunities for a Young Population:**

- *India's challenge is to employ a large, young, and aspirational population, which is more favorable than dealing with an ageing workforce.*

➤ **Holistic Approach Needed:**

- *India is in a strategic position to create a talent pool, leveraging its demographic advantage for the global economy.*

Practice Qs:

Q. Discuss how India's demographic dividend, coupled with ongoing economic reforms and skilling initiatives, can be leveraged to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth. (15 marks, 250 words)