

09 MAY 2019

ARCTIC COUNCIL

In news:

- India was re-elected as Observer to the Arctic Council during the 11th Arctic Council ministerial meeting at Rovaniemi, Finland.

About Arctic Council:

- The Arctic Council promotes cooperation, coordination and interaction among Arctic states, the region's indigenous communities and other inhabitants on common issues, particularly on sustainable development and environmental protection.
- It was established in 1996 by Ottawa Declaration and is headquartered in Tromso, Norway.
- Members: United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden.
- 13 Non-arctic Observer States: France, Japan, Poland, Singapore, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, India, Spain, Italy, China, Korea and Switzerland.

It has 6 Permanent Participants, representing Arctic indigenous peoples.

- Aleut International Association
- Arctic Athabaskan Council
- Gwich'in Council International
- Inuit Circumpolar Council
- Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
- Saami Council
- India successfully got the Observer status in 2013 during the Kiruna Ministerial meeting held in Sweden
- India has its Arctic research station 'Himadri' in Svalbard, Norway since 2008. It was set up by India's National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, an institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

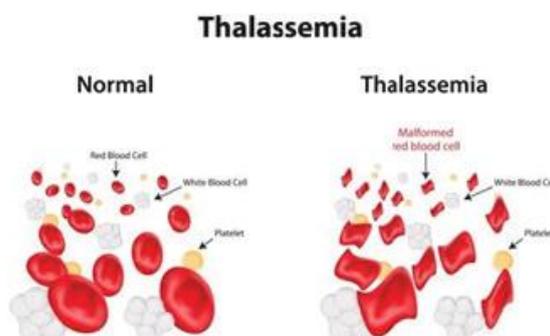
WORLD THALASSEMIA DAY

Objective: to raise awareness about thalassaemia (a genetic disease), its prevention and measures to avoid its transmission among people throughout the world.

It is observed in honour of all patients suffering and fighting from thalassaemia and also all scientists working hard to provide improved quality of life to people suffering with it.

About Thalassemia

It is an inherited blood disorder characterised by less haemoglobin (Hb) and lesser than normal blood cells. A person suffering from thalassemia has at least one of the parents as disease carrier.



NOTE



Reason: Genetic mutation and deletion of some key gene fragments leads to thalassemia. Less haemoglobin in patient's body results in improper oxygen transport and destruction of red blood cells (RBCs) and leads to anemia. This further leads to iron overload, bone deformities especially in face and in severe cases can cause heart diseases.

Apart from bone deformities a person with thalassemia can also have yellow or pale skin, dark coloured urine, delayed growth and excessive tiredness.

Being a genetic disease its prevention is difficult but can be diagnosed by blood tests.

At Risk: People who have a case of thalassemia in family history are at high risk of disorder. It is more common among people of Mediterranean (like Italian, Greek, Middle Eastern) and Southeast Asian ancestry, and in African-Americans.

Treatment: It can be treated by blood transfusions and chelation therapy. In children it can be cured by bone marrow transplant. But, some signs and symptoms only develop during later childhood or adolescence.

BORDER ROADS ORGANIZATION

In News:

On 7 May 2019 BRO celebrated its 59th Raising Day (foundation day).

In Brief:

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was formed on on 7 May 1960, with primary goal of securing India's borders and developing infrastructure in remote areas of India's north and north eastern states.

About BRO

- It is a leading road construction agency under Ministry of Defence.
- Its primary role is to provide road connectivity in India's border areas. It also creates up-grades and maintains infrastructure along borders to meet India's overall tactical and strategic goals.
- Apart from road construction it also executes maintenance works along Northern and Western frontiers mainly to meet strategic requirements of Indian Army. It is responsible for over 53,000 Km roads.
- Its work involves Formation Cutting, Surfacing, Bridge construction and Resurfacing.

VESHAK FESTIVAL

Why in news?

- The Sri Lankan government has restricted the five-day national Vesak festival celebrations to just two days citing the prevailing security situation in the country following the massive Easter Sunday bombings.



About Veshak Festival:

- Veshak is also known as Buddha

NOTE



Jayanti, Buddha Purnima and Buddha day.

- The festival commemorates the birth, enlightenment (Buddhahood), and death (Mahaparinirvana) of Guatama Buddha.
- This festival is observed by Buddhists and even by Hindus in India, Tibet, Sri Lanka and many other countries.
- It is observed on the full moon day of April.
- On this day, the buddhist use to meditate, observe the eight Precepts of Buddha, partake vegetarian food, give charity, bathing the Buddha.

BASAVANNA

Why in news?

- On May 8 the state of Karnataka observed Basavanna Jayanti.

About Basavanna:

- He was a 12th century philosopher, social reformer, statesman, Kannada poet in the Lingayat tradition of Bhakti movement.
- He was a social reformer during the reign of the Kalachuri-dynasty king Bijjala I in Karnataka.
- He spread social awareness through his poetry, popularly known as Vachanas.
- He rejected gender or social discrimination, superstitions and rituals such as the wearing of sacred thread.
- But at the same time he introduced Ishtalinga necklace, with an image of the Shiva Linga.
- As the chief minister of his kingdom, he introduced new public institutions such as the Anubhava Mantapa to discuss spiritual questions.



NOTE

