

Nuna

Context:

A recent study suggests new information regarding Australia's history, indicating that a small area of the country was once part of Canada – forming a supercontinent named Nuna.

Research shows that about 1.7 billion years ago, Georgetown rocks were deposited into a shallow sea when the region was part of North America.

Georgetown then broke away from North America and collided with the Mount Isa region of northern Australia around 100 million years later.

This was a critical part of global continental reorganisation when almost all continents on Earth assembled to form the supercontinent called Nuna.

About Nuna:

Nuna, also known as Columbia, was estimated to be around 12900 km from North to South at the widest part, reports Space Daily.

Nuna was made up of more than just Canada and parts of Australia, however, with the eastern coast of India attached to western North America as well.

At this point in our planet's history, South America was rotated in such a way that the western edge of Brazil ended up lined up with eastern North America.

The stitching together of these combined land masses gave us the supercontinent known as Nuna. Nuna predates Pangea dating back to 1.5-2.5 billion years ago.

NHFDC

Context:

A National Conference of the State channelizing Agencies, Public Sector Banks and Regional Rural Banks of National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) was recently held.

During the conference, the participating agencies were asked to better coordinate with NHFDC and Channelising agencies for the smooth and better implementation of NHFDC Schemes for the benefit of larger number of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan). In the Conference, incentive cheques were also given to the best performing SCAs/PSBs/RRBs of NHFDC.

About NHFDC:

The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) has been set up by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India on 24th January 1997.

The company is registered under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956 as a Company not for profit. It is wholly owned by Government of India and has an authorised share capital of Rs. 400 crores.

The company is managed by Board of Directors nominated by Government of India. NHFDC functions as an Apex institution for channelizing the funds to persons with disabilities through the State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) nominated by the State Government.

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)

Context:

The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF), India's first sovereign wealth fund, and Dubai-based ports operator DP World Pvt. Ltd, have announced the creation of an investment platform to invest up to \$3 billion in ports, terminals, transportation and logistics businesses in India.

This is the first investment platform from NIIF and will see investment up to \$3 billion of equity to acquire assets and develop projects in these sectors.

The platform will also look at opportunities beyond sea ports such as river ports and transportation, freight corridors, port-led special economic zones, inland container terminals and logistics infrastructure, including cold storage.

About NIIF:

NIIF was set up in 2015 as an investment vehicle for funding commercially viable greenfield, brownfield and stalled projects in the infrastructure sector.

NIIF will invest in areas such as energy, transportation, housing, water, waste management and other infrastructure-related sectors in India.

The corpus of the fund is proposed to be around Rs40,000 crore, with the government investing 49% and the rest to be raised from third-party investors such as sovereign wealth funds, insurance and pension funds, endowments etc. 3/8 NIIF's strategy includes anchoring equity, quasi-equity and debt funds in partnership with investors targeting investments across the relevant sectors in India.

DHARMA

A software programme – Dam Health and Rehabilitation Monitoring Application (DHARMA)- will also be launched during the conference.

DHARMA is a web tool to digitize all dam related data effectively. It will help to document authentic asset and health information pertaining to the large dams in the country, enabling appropriate actions to ensure need based rehabilitation.

It is a new stride in asset management aspect by India.

About DRIP:

The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), Government of India, with assistance from the World Bank, is implementing the DAM REHABILITATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (DRIP), which would be a six-year project.

The project originally envisaged the rehabilitation and improvement of about 223 dams within four states namely, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu and later Karnataka, Uttarakhand (UNVNL) and Jharkhand (DVC) joined DRIP and total number of dams covered under DRIP increased to 250.

The project will also promote new technologies and improve Institutional capacities for dam safety evaluation and implementation at the Central and State levels and in some identified premier academic and research institutes of the country.

The Central Dam Safety Organisation of Central Water Commission, assisted by a Consulting firm, is coordinating and supervising the Project implementation. 7/8 The project development.

objectives of DRIP are:

- (i) to improve the safety and performance of selected existing dams and associated appurtenances in a sustainable manner,
- (ii) to strengthen the dam safety institutional setup in participating states as well as at central level.

Agriculture Ministers' Conference:

Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference was recently held under the auspices of the 10th Global Forum for Food and Agriculture in Germany.

The conference affirmed to the role of ICT technologies as an important tool to agriculture, for example in improving water-use efficiency.

The meeting was attended by agriculture ministers of 83 nations, as well as high-level representatives of international organisations such as the European Commission and the FAO. Together they adopted an ambitious communiqué and committed to a sustainable stewardship of water.

The theme of the meeting was “**Agriculture and Water – Key to Feeding the World**”.