

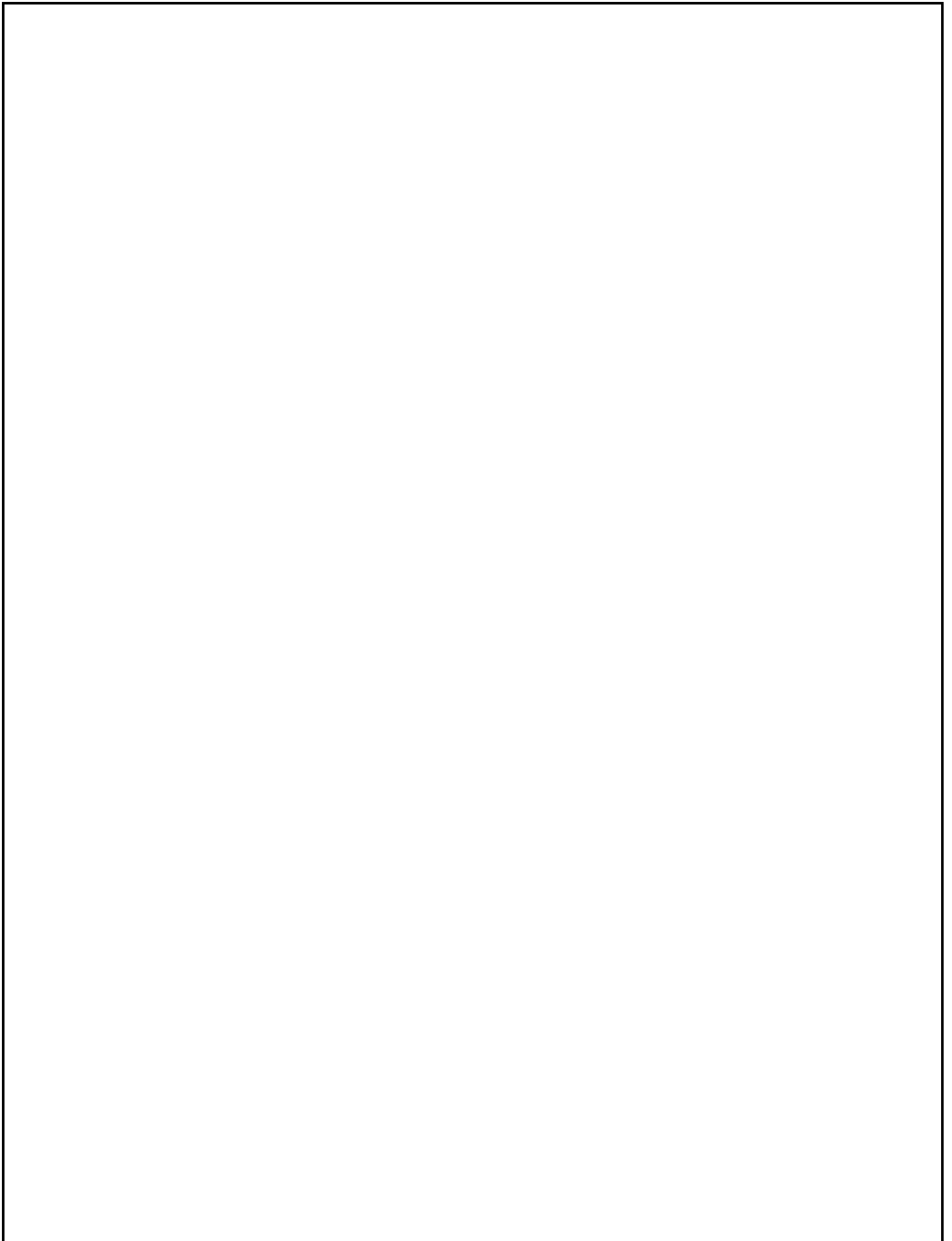
09– 09 – 2022

News: India ranks 132 in HDI as score drops

- India ranks 132 out of 191 countries in the Human Development Index 2021.

Human Development Index

- Human Development Index is released **annually by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**.
- India was ranked **132 out of 191 countries in 2021 ranking, dropping 1 rank** from the previous edition (2020).
- **India scored a 0.633 (out of maximum 1)**, falling in the medium HD category, lower than its 0.645 value in previous report.
- **For the first time in previous 10 years, rank of India showed a decline in two consecutive years.**
- India's **gross national income (GNI) per capita on the basis of purchasing power parity (PPP)**, too, is placed at \$6590.
- **Switzerland topped the index**, followed by Norway and Ireland. Iceland and Hong Kong complete the top five.



News: Odisha government cancels shrimp culture leases inside Bhitarkanika

- The Odisha government has cancelled the permission to cultivate shrimp in the Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary which was earlier given to 2 aquaculture companies.

Bhitarkanika National Park

- Bhitarkanika National Park is located in the **Kendrapara district of Odisha**.
- It is **one of the 37 Ramsar sites** in India.
- Important animal protected is **saltwater crocodile**.
- **Presence of Mangrove forest** is also an attraction of Bhitarkanika NP. The sanctuary is the second largest mangrove ecosystem in India.
- The National Park is **surrounded by the Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- The national park and wildlife sanctuary is inundated by a number of rivers – **Brahmani, Baitarni, Dhamra, and Pathsala**.
- It is said to house **70% of the country's estuarine or saltwater crocodiles**, conservation of which was started way back in 1975.
- The National Park was affected by the **Tropical Cyclone Yaas** which originated in Bay of Bengal.

- Recently, there was a **planned diversion of water from Bhitarkanika River to industrial sites, which is flagged by environmentalists**. It is said to affect the ecosystem services provided by Bhitarkanika National Park.

Concerns about the diversion of water from Brahmani River

- Excess water allocation for industries, which is likely to **reduce fresh water discharge to the sea**.
- The lack of **normal flow of fresh water** would increase **saline ingress upstream**; it would affect the **local flora and fauna** as well as the livelihoods of the farmers and fishermen dependent upon the Brahmani and the Kharasrota (tributary of the Brahmani).
- There could be a quantum **increase in the man–crocodile conflict** since the estuarine crocodiles would leave the core sanctuary area and migrate upstream once salinity increases.
- The reduction in water discharge will **reduce the mangroves** and without the mangroves, the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary will become a marine desert.
- Nutrients from Bhitarkanika are flushed out to the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, which attracts the **world’s largest population of Olive Ridley sea turtles for congregation and nesting**.

