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News: Currency usage still robust even six years after demonetization

- 30.88 ₹lakh crore, the currency with the public as of October 21 which is 71.84% higher than the level for the fortnight ended November 4, 2016, illustrating that cash usage is still robust even six years after demonetization. Cash usage has been rising, even as digital alternatives for payments have become very popular.

Currency Deposit Ratio (CDR)

- The Currency Deposit Ratio (CDR) is the ratio of money held by the public in currency to that they hold in bank deposits.
- The CDR is an indicator of the preference of people to hold the liquid cash in hand to bank.
- Higher the ratio is, more the people are interested to keep cash in hand than to deposit the same in bank.
- CDR increases as festival season starts.

News: Snow Leopard

- Recently, camera traps revealed the **first sighting of Snow leopard in Baltal – Zojila area in Jammu and Kashmir.**

Snow Leopard

- Snow Leopard (often referred to as the “**ghost of the mountains**”) inhabits at the **higher Himalayan & trans-Himalayan landscape in 4 states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh and UT’s of Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir.**
- This area contributes to **5% of global snow leopard range.**
- Snow leopard acts as an **indicator species to the health of the mountain ecosystem** in which they live, due to their position as the **top predator in the food web.** It is also declared as a **flagship species** by the Government of India **for the high-altitude Himalayas.**
- IUCN Status: Vulnerable.
- Wildlife protection Act: Schedule I.
- CITES Status: Appendix I.
- CMS Status: Appendix I.
- Recently, the 1st Snow Leopard Survey of nation was developed by scientific experts. The use of technology such as camera traps & scientific surveys will

help to estimate the numbers on International Snow Leopard Day (23rd October 2019).

- The occasion also marked the inaugural session of 4th steering meeting of **Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection**.
- **Bishkek declaration** of 2013 reiterates the fundamental principles, objectives & actions pertaining to participatory conservation of snow leopards & their ecosystems of Asia.
- The **first Snow Leopard Conservation Centre** is decided to be established in **Uttarakhand** with the **funding of Global Environment Facility (GEF)**.
- **Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems project** (SECURE Himalaya), a project developed as a response to the growing crisis of illegal trafficking in wildlife, will also contribute towards attainment of the aim of Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP).
- Snow Leopard is also the state animal of **Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh**.