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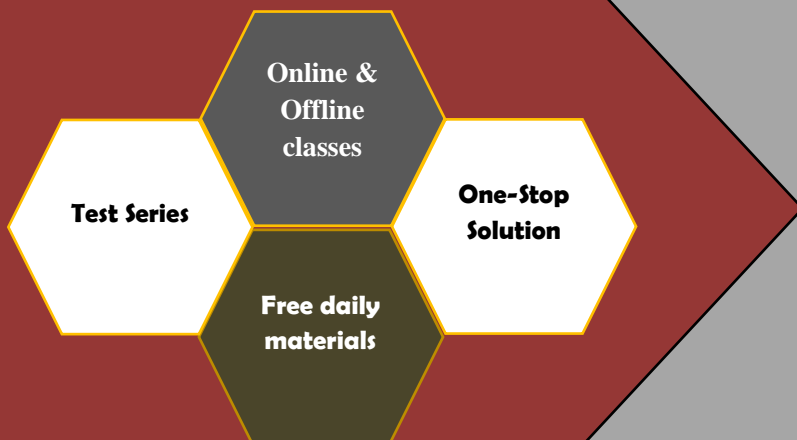
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## Kyhytysuka Sachicarum: New Marine Reptile

Notes for civil services preparation



UPSC

General Studies

## Kyhytysuka Sachicarum: New Marine Reptile

Recently, an international team of researchers has discovered a **new marine reptile** named Kyhytysuka sachicarum. Key Points

- Kyhytysuka translates to **‘the one that cuts with something sharp’** in an **indigenous language from the region in central Colombia** where the fossil was found.
- It has been **named so to honour the ancient Muisca culture** that existed there for millennia.
- The fossil is a **stunningly preserved meter-long skull**, is one of the last surviving **ichthyosaurs** – ancient animals that look eerily like living swordfish.
  - **Ichthyosaur:**
    - They are the members of an extinct group of aquatic reptiles, most of which were **very similar to porpoises in appearance and habits**.
    - They had a **very wide geographic distribution**, and their fossil remains span almost the entire **Mesozoic Era**.
    - They are first known from the **Triassic Period of Asia**, where they began as long-bodied, undulating swimmers without many of the specializations seen in later species.
- The species comes from an **important transitional time during the Early Cretaceous period** when the Earth was coming out of a relatively cool period, had **rising sea levels**, and the supercontinent Pangea (A supercontinent that incorporated almost all the landmasses on Earth) was splitting into northern and southern landmasses.