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YOJNA IAS

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2022



Relics of Mahatma Buddha



Relics of Mahatma Buddha – Today Current Affairs

- Four sacred relics of Lord Buddha are being taken from India to Mongolia for an 11-day exhibition on the occasion of Mongolian Buddha Purnima celebrations.
- These relics are to be displayed at the Batsagan Temple in the Gandan Monastery Complex in Ulaanbaatar.
- The four relics are among the 22 relics of Buddha, which are currently kept in the National Museum in Delhi.
- Also they are known as 'Kapilvastu relics' because they have been recovered from a place in Bihar which is believed to be the ancient city of Kapilvastu. This place was discovered in 1898.
- Those relics are sacred objects associated with holy persons.
- They can be body parts (teeth, hair, bones) or other objects that the holy person has used

or touched.

- In many traditions it is believed that relics have special powers to heal people, bestow grace or drive away demons.

Today Current Affairs

Sacred Relics of Buddha:

- According to Buddhist beliefs, at the age of 80, Buddha attained salvation in Kushinagar district of Uttar Pradesh.
- The Mallas of Kushinagar performed the last rites of his body with ceremonies as a universal king.
- His remains were collected from the funeral pyre and divided into eight parts, namely Ajatashatru of Magadha, Lichchavi of Vaishali, Shakya of Kapilvastu, Malla of Kushinagar, Bullij of Allakappa, Malla of Pava, Kolia of Ramgram and Vethadipa. Distributed among a brahmin. The Hindu Analysis
- Its purpose was to build a stupa over the sacred relics.
- After this two more stupas are found, one of which has been built over the collected Asti Kalash and the other over the ember (wooden unburned coal).
- The stupas (Saririka Stupa) built on the remains of the Buddha's body are the earliest surviving Buddhist temples. Seven of these eight stupas were built by Ashoka (272–232 BC), and he collected the bulk of the remains within the 84,000 stupas he built in an effort to popularize the cult of stupas alongside Buddhism.

Discovery of Kapilvastu Remains : The Hindu Analysis

- The discovery of an excavated coffin at the stupa site at Piprahwa (near Siddharthnagar, UP) in the year 1898 helped identify ancient Kapilavastu.
- The inscription on the cover of the coffin refers to the relics of the Buddha and his community, the Shakyas.
- The excavation of another stupa by the Archaeological Survey of India during the year 1971-77 revealed two rock-cut coffins containing a total of 22 sacred bone relics, which are now under the care of the National Museum.
- After this more than 40 terracotta prints were discovered from different levels and places in the Eastern Monastery of Piprahwa, which proved that Piprahwa was the ancient Kapilavastu.

Security for Mongolia Travel : The Hindu Analysis

- During the 11-day visit, the relics will be accorded 'State Guest' status in Mongolia and will again be taken to the National Museum of India.
- The Indian Air Force has provided a special aircraft, the C-17 Globemaster, for travel,

which is one of the largest aircraft available in India.

- In the year 2015, the sacred relics were placed under the 'AA' category of antiquities and art treasures, which should not be taken out of the country for exhibition in view of their fragile nature.

Gautam buddha : The Hindu Analysis

- He was born as Siddhartha in about 563 BC into a royal family at Lumbini, which is located near the Indo-Nepal border.
- His family belonged to the Shakya dynasty, which ruled in Kapilavastu, Lumbini.
- At the age of 29, Gautam renounced home and renounced worldly life and adopted a lifestyle of austerity or extreme self-discipline. Today Current Affairs
- After 49 consecutive days of meditation, Gautam attained Bodhi (knowledge) under a peepal tree in Bodh Gaya, Bihar.
- Buddha gave his first sermon in Sarnath village near Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. This event is known as turning of the wheel of Dharma. Today Current Affairs
- He died in 483 BC at the age of 80 in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh. This event is known as Mahaparinirvana.
- He is considered to be the eighth incarnation of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu (Dashavatar).

Swadeep Kumar

International Literary Festival Unmesh



International Literary Festival Unmesh – Today Current Affairs

- Ministry of Culture and Sahitya Akademi in collaboration with the Department of Art

and Culture, Government of Himachal Pradesh are organizing Unmesh, an International Literature Festival as part of the Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.

- UNMESHA is the country's largest literary festival representing over 60 languages and 64 events with over 425 writers, poets, translators, critics and distinguished personalities from different walks of life from 15 countries including India.

Today Current Affairs

Sahitya Akademi:

- Sahitya Akademi was formally inaugurated by the Government of India on 12 March 1954.
- Although it was established by the government but this academy functions as an autonomous organization. It was registered as a society in January 1956 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- The Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, is the central body for literary dialogue, publication and publicity in the country and the only organization to conduct literary activities in 24 Indian languages, including English. The Hindu Analysis
- 24 awards annually for literary works in languages recognized by the Akademi and an equal number of awards for literary translations in the languages of India and in the languages of India are given after a year-long process of scrutiny, discussion and selection.
- It also conducts literary exchange programs with various countries around the world to promote Indian literature. The Hindu Analysis
- The Sahitya Akademi Award is the second highest literary award given by the Government of India after the Jnanpith Award.

Swadeep Kumar

FATF grey list



FATF grey list – Today Current Affairs

- The Financial Action Task Force has given great relief to Pakistan in a three-day convention in Berlin, Germany. It decided to remove Pakistan from the 'Grey List'. The FATF is expected to make an official announcement during the plenary session in October.
- Pakistan has been on the FATF grey list continuously since June 2018.

Today Current Affairs

Financial Action Task Force (FATF):

Introduction:

- It is an intergovernmental body that was established in 1989 during the G7 summit in 1989 in Paris.

Mandate : The Hindu analysis

- In October 2001 after the 9/11 attacks, the FATF expanded its mandate to include efforts to combat terrorist financing.
- In April 2012, it added to efforts to combat the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- The FATF has developed the FATF Recommendations or Standards, which ensure a coordinated global response to combating organized crime, corruption and terrorism.
- More than 200 jurisdictions around the world have committed to FATF recommendations through a global network of nine regional bodies and FATF membership.

Formation of FATF : The Hindu analysis

- The FATF currently consists of 37 member jurisdictions and two regional organizations (the European Commission and the Gulf Cooperation Council), representing the most major financial centers in all parts of the world.
- India is a member of FATF since 2010.
- India is also a member of its regional partners, the Asia Pacific Group (APG) and the Eurasian Group (EAG).

The headquarters : The Hindu analysis

- Its secretariat is located at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris.

FATF Lists:

Grey list : The Hindu analysis

- Countries that are considered safe havens to support terror funding and money laundering have been put on the FATF gray list.
- Being included in this list serves as a warning to the country concerned that it may be included in the black list.

Black List : The Hindu analysis

- Countries identified as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs) are included in the Black List. These countries support terrorist funding and money laundering activities.
- The FATF regularly revises this list to include or remove countries.
- Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) are currently on the High Risk Jurisdiction or Black List.

Sessions / Sessions : The Hindu analysis

- FATF Plenary is the decision-making body of the FATF.
- Its session is organized three times every year.

What is the grey list and the reasons for Pakistan's inclusion in it?

About Grey List : The Hindu analysis

- Grey listing means that the FATF has placed a country under surveillance to check its progress on measures against money laundering and the financing of terrorism.
- The "Grey List" is also known as the "Enhanced Watch List".

Countries included in the grey list : The Hindu analysis

- As of March 2022, there are 23 countries on the FATF's increased monitoring list, officially known as "Jurisdictions with Strategic Deficiencies", including Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Sudan, Uganda and Yemen is included.

Remove from list : The Hindu analysis

- To get out of the grey list, a country has to perform tasks recommended by the FATF, for example by confiscating the properties of individuals linked to terrorist groups.
- If the FATF is satisfied with the progress, it removes the country from the list.
- The FATF recently removed Zimbabwe and earlier Botswana and Mauritius from the grey list.

- Zimbabwe has strengthened the effectiveness of its AML/CFT regime and addressed technical deficiencies to meet commitments in its Action Plan on strategic deficiencies identified by the FATF in October 2019.
- AML/CFT stands for “Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism”.
- In the case of Pakistan, it was first included in the list in the year 2008 and then excluded, after that it was included in the list again from the year 2012 to 2015 and has remained in the list since the year 2018.
- The FATF released a 27-point action plan in June 2018 after placing Pakistan on the ‘Grey List’. This action plan is related to curbing money laundering and terrorist financing. In the year 2019, a parallel action plan was submitted by the regional partner of FATF- Asia Pacific Group (APG).

Effect of listing on a country : The Hindu analysis

- If a country is on the gray list, it indicates an increased risk to the global financial and banking system in dealings with that country.
- Furthermore, given that major financial institutions such as the IMF and WB are affiliated with the FATF as observers, a grey-listed country faces complications in accessing international debt instruments.
- An example from July 2019 is the US\$6 billion IMF loan agreement that stressed the need for Pakistan to comply with FATF action.
- Pakistan’s economy is in dire straits and continues to suffer from severely low foreign exchange reserves, despite loan aid from Saudi Arabia and China.

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Amrit Sarovar Mission



Amrit Sarovar Mission – Today Current Affairs

- The Union Government has asked the Ministry of Railways and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to utilize the soil/silt excavated from ponds/tanks in all districts across the country for their infrastructure projects under the Amrit Sarovar Mission.
- Amrit Sarovar Mission was launched on 24 April 2022 with the aim of water conservation.

Today Current Affairs

Target:

- The objective of the mission is to develop and rejuvenate 75 water bodies in each district of the country as part of the celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- Altogether this would lead to the creation of 50,000 reservoirs of about one acre or more in size.
- The mission encourages the mobilization of civil and non-governmental resources to meet these efforts.

Involved Ministries:

The mission has been launched with a holistic government approach with 6 Ministries/Departments, namely : The Hindu Analysis

- Department of Rural Development
- Department of Land Resources
- Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation
- Department of Water Resources
- Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change.

Technical Partner : The Hindu Analysis

- Bhaskaracharya National Institute of Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N) has been appointed as the technical partner for the mission.

Refocus with different plans : The Hindu Analysis

- This mission works by re-focusing the states' own plans through states and districts through MGNREGA, XV Finance Commission grants, PMKSY sub-schemes like watershed development components, Har Khet Ko Pani, among others.

Target : The Hindu Analysis

- Mission Amrit Sarovar to be completed by 15th August 2023.
- About 50,000 Amrit Sarovars are to be built in the country.
- Each of these Amrit Sarovar will be in an area of 1 acre with a water holding capacity of 10,000 cubic meters.
- People's participation in the mission is central. The Hindu Analysis
- Local freedom fighters, their family members, martyr's family members, Padma awardees and citizens of the local area where the Amrit Sarovar is to be constructed will be involved in all phases.
- National flag hoisting will be organized at every Amrit Sarovar site on every 15th August.

Achievements : The Hindu Analysis

- So far 12,241 sites have been finalized by the states/districts for the construction of Amrit Sarovars, out of which work has started on 4,856 Amrit Sarovars.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav : The Hindu Analysis

- Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate 75 years of Independence and the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements.
- The festival is dedicated to the people of India, who have played a vital role in not only taking India in its evolutionary journey, but also in enabling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to energize India 2.0 by a self-reliant India.
- The official journey of the Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav began on 12 March 2021, marking the beginning of a 75-week countdown to the 75th anniversary of our independence that will end after a year on 15 August 2023.

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Paschim Seti Power Project



Paschim Seti Power Project – Today Current Affairs

- China was involved in the West Seti Hydroelectric Project for almost six years (2012 to 2018). The project will be taken over by India in 2018 after nearly four years of being outside China.
- Earlier the Indian Prime Minister visited Lumbini, where he celebrated the 2566th Buddha Jayanti celebrations. Nepal has also invited India to invest in the Western Seti Hydroelectric Project.

Today Current Affairs

Paschim Seti Power Project:

- It is a proposed 750 MW hydroelectric project to be built on the Seti River in far-western Nepal. Which has been the only blueprint for the last six decades.
- Recently the government has revamped the West Seti and Seti River (SR-6) project, a joint storage project with a capacity to generate 1,200 MW of electricity.
- Its storage or reservoir will be filled during the monsoon season and water will be drawn from it to generate electricity every day during the peak hours of the dry season. The Hindu Analysis
- Its success is expected to restore India's image in Nepal and give it importance in future ideas for hydroelectric projects, at a time when competition is tough. Therefore, Paschim Seti has the potential to become a defining model for Nepal-India power relations in the future.

India-Nepal Energy Relations : The Hindu Analysis

- Nepal is rich in power sources with about 6,000 rivers and an estimated capacity of 83,000 MW.
- Mahakali Treaty was signed in the year 1996 for 6,480 MW generation, but India is still not able to come out with the detailed project report.
- The Upper Karnali project, for which the multinational GMR has signed a contract, has not made any progress over the years. The Hindu Analysis
- India has succeeded in implementing the 900 MW Arun-3 project at Sankhuwa Sabha in eastern Nepal, the foundation stone of which was laid in 2018 and which is scheduled to be completed by the year 2023. It has helped build trust in India.
- During the visit of Indian Prime Minister to Nepal in 2014, he had said that India should start executing its projects on time. The Hindu Analysis
- There is a provision in the Constitution of Nepal under which any treaty or agreement with any other country on natural resources will require the ratification of Parliament by at least two-thirds majority. This would also mean that any hydro projects would require government works before they could be signed and given for execution.
- Nepal has a severe power shortage as it generates only about 900 MW against an installed capacity of about 2,000 MW. Though it is currently exporting 364 MW of electricity to India, it has been importing from India in the last few years.

India-Nepal Diplomatic Relations : The Hindu Analysis

- The standoff between Nepal and India led to economic sanctions imposed in 2015 but equations changed after Oli took over as the new PM Deuba, who recently visited India, where he established fraternal relations with India.
- Nepal is an important neighbor of India and holds special importance in its foreign policy due to its geographical, historical, cultural and economic ties spanning centuries. The Hindu Analysis
- India and Nepal share a similar relationship in terms of Hinduism and Buddhism, with Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha, located in present-day Nepal.
- The two countries not only share an open border and free movement of people, but they also have close ties through marriage and family ties, popularly known as the Roti-Beti relationship.
- The Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 is the basis of the special relationship that exists between India and Nepal. The Hindu Analysis
- Rivers originating in Nepal feed India's perennial river systems with ecological and hydroelectric potential.
- However, the border issue emerged in November 2019 when Nepal released a new political map, which claimed Uttarakhand's Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh as

part of Nepal's territory. The area of Susta (West Champaran district, Bihar) can also be displayed in the new map.

Swadeep Kumar

Child marriage



Child marriage – Today Current Affairs

- Child marriage is still widespread in India. It is being argued that the increase in the minimum age of marriage for women has been done for substantial benefit at the individual and social level. The impact of this effort on the problem of eradication of child marriage needs to be assessed in future.
- The data of National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5: 2019-2021) reflects the reality of the present situation.

Today Current Affairs

National Family Health Survey-5 Data

Rural and urban gap : The Hindu Analysis

- According to NFHS-5 statistics, approximately 25% of women aged 18 to 29 are married before the legal age of 18.
- The prevalence of child marriage is higher in rural areas (28%) than in urban areas (17%).

State of affairs : The Hindu Analysis

- The highest prevalence of child marriage is in West Bengal (42%), followed by Bihar and Tripura (40% each). However, these high prevalence states have shown the greatest reduction in child marriages.
- Goa, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala on the other hand have a prevalence rate between 6% and 7%.

Education and community wise statistics : The Hindu Analysis

- The highest prevalence of child marriage in India is in tribal and Dalit communities (39%). Its prevalence among the disadvantaged social groups is 17%, while the remaining prevalence is among the Other Backward Classes.
- 27% of illiterate women who married before the age of 18 are underweight (body mass index less than 18.5). Also, more than two-thirds (about 64%) of illiterate women suffer from iron-deficiency anaemia.

Structural factors of child marriage : The Hindu Analysis

- Social and economic conditions are mainly responsible for child marriage. The association between child marriage and adverse health outcomes is driven by structural factors such as social norms, such as poverty and female education.
- One of the major reasons for child marriage is poverty and heavy dowry burden on late marriages. Also, these factors interfere with the educational opportunities of a girl child, which makes child marriage more convenient.
- It is also the belief of the society that women should get married soon from the point of view of security.
- Child marriage is also encouraged due to financial burden and fear of tarnishing family prestige.

Efforts to stop child marriage : The Hindu Analysis

- Most of the states have adopted the policy of 'Conditional Cash Transfers' (CCTs) for the last two decades to prevent child marriage. Through this, the government tried to implement a 'uniform policy on all', which is not a practical method. In fact, the policy of cash transfer has not proved effective for adolescent girls.
- The Karnataka government has amended the 'Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2017' to make 'child marriage' a cognizable offense and set a minimum of rigorous imprisonment for those promoting child marriage.
- In this direction, the government has also made efforts like 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana.
- The government had started 'Mahila Samakhya Programme' in the year 1988. Its objective

was to promote women's education and their empowerment in the socio-economically backward rural areas of the country. The program was based on 'Community Engagement' of women.

- The minimum age of marriage for women has been increased from 18 to 21 years. Public health dividends can be obtained from marriage at age 21.

Solution : The Hindu Analysis

- Ensuring minimum 12 years of education for women.
- Secondary education should be expanded and adolescent girls should be sent to school regularly.
- Governments to expand residential schools, girls' hostels and public transport network to underprivileged areas of the country.
- With this the girl child will not be compelled to leave education in the middle.
- Improving the education of women and providing them with modern skills.
- This will increase employment potential and improve health and nutrition.
- Education is important for individual liberty and social well-being and it contributes to human development.
- Need to focus on schemes that reduce the financial burden of marriage.
- However, the eligibility criteria for these schemes must be related to attainment of education other than age.
- Will and insights like Janani Suraksha Yojana and elimination of open defecation need to be adopted in the case of child marriage as well.

Way Forward : The Hindu Analysis

- 'Group study' should be promoted by forming women's clubs in secondary and higher secondary schools, so that awareness against child marriage can be increased through ideological exchange.
- Programs and lectures should be organized by the teachers in the schools on the topic 'Gender Equality', so that 'Progressive Attitude' can be developed in the children towards women.
- Children's Village Assemblies established in about 2.5 lakh gram panchayats of the country can prove to be a better platform against child marriage across the country.
- Employees of various departments, who regularly interact with the rural people, should be appointed as 'Child Marriage Prohibition Officers'.
- Rights to register births and marriages should be decentralized and these rights should be given to Gram Panchayats, so that their rights can be ensured practically to girls.

Swadeep Kumar

IN-SPACE HQ in Gujarat inaugurated by PM Modi...

IN-SPACE HQ in Gujarat inaugurated by PM Modi – Today Current Affairs

- INSPACE is an independent nodal agency under the Department of Space to allow and regulate the non-government private entities and ensure the greater private participation in the space sector so that India can boost its participation in the space industry from 2% of the share currently globally. to attract the youth of India, a post was written to alert them “Watch This Space”. It will provide the opportunities to the best minds from all over the nation to work in various govt and private sectors.

Today Current Affairs

- INSPACE: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the headquarters of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE) on June 10, 2022, in Bopal, Ahmedabad in presence of Home Minister Amit Shah.

INSPACE Composition : The Hindu Analysis

- IN-SPACE Chairman- Pawan Goenka.
- It comprises technical experts for space activities along with safety expert, academic experts and legal and strategic experts from other departments.
- Members from PMO and MEA of Government of India are also included.



INSPACE Objective

- The organization will take care of the needs and demands of private players, including educational and research institutions.
- It will also explore ways to accommodate these requirements in consultation with ISRO.
- Providing space based services as per the definition of space activities.
- Sharing of space infrastructure and premises under the control of ISRO
- The private entities will now be able utilize the existing ISRO infrastructure to carry out

their space-related activities. The Hindu Analysis

- Space activities including building of launch vehicles and satellites
- Establishment of new space infrastructure and facilities by private entities
- Establishment of a suitable mechanism for promotion, hand holding, sharing of technology and expertise to encourage participation of NGPEs in space activities.

Ravi singh

Web 5.0

Web 5.0 – Today Current Affairs

Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey heads his bitcoin business unit The Block, Web 5.0 is being developed with the aim of creating additional decentralized webs that help you control your data and identity.

Today Current Affairs

Web 1.0, Web 2.0, and Web 3.0?

- Web 1.0: The first generation of the global digital communications network, referred to as the “read-only” Internet made of static web pages that only allowed for passive engagement.
- Web 2.0 was the “read and write” Internet. Enable users to communicate with servers and other users leading to the creation of the social web. This is the world wide web that we use today.
- Web 3.0 is the next generation of the Internet – a “read-write-execute” web – with decentralization as its bedrock. The Hindu Analysis
- Web 3.0 speaks about a digital world, and it is built by leveraging blockchain technology, where people are able to interact with each other without the need of an intermediary. Web 3.0 will be driven by Artificial Intelligence and machine learning where machines will be able to interpret information like humans.

USES OF WEB 5.0

- The Block Head (TBH), Web 5.0 Being developed by Dorsey’s Bitcoin business unit is aimed at “building an extra decentralized web that puts you in control of your data and identity”.
- “The web democratized the exchange of information, but it’s missing a key layer: identity. We struggle to secure personal data with hundreds of accounts and passwords we can’t remember. On the web today, identity and personal data have become the property of

third parties.”

- Web 5.0 is Web 2.0 plus Web 3.0 that will allow users to ‘own their identity’ on the Internet and ‘control their data’.
- Significance: It’s about changing the “control of identity” of an individual and talks about giving users control over their own data, it cites an example that it’s totally up to the user whether to save his data anonymously encrypted on the decentralized blockchain or to sell that data to vendors for monetizing and advertising.



Challenges Related to Web 5.0 : The Hindu Analysis

- There are hardly any implications for this technology in the near future as it’s just being an idea at a very early stage, and nobody knows how it would be turned out.
- How the sovereign government would allow this decentralized platform which is free from any government intervention, could lead to contention between the government and promoters of Web 5.0.
- There is still unclarity, that how the system will operate, who would control it, and what are safety scenarios for vulnerable people like women, children, etc.

Ravi Singh

Operation Sankalp



Operation Sankalp – Today Current Affairs

- INS Talwar, a stealth frigate of the Indian Navy, is currently deployed for Operation Sankalp, the third consecutive year of Indian Navy presence in the Gulf region, with the objective of safeguarding India's maritime interests.

Today Current Affairs

Operation Sankalp

- The Indian Navy has launched 'Operation Sankalp' in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman as a measure to ensure the safety of Indian ships.

Background : The Hindu Analysis

- Keeping in view the deteriorating security in the Gulf region after the attack on merchant ships in the Gulf of Oman on June 19, 2019, the Indian Navy has decided to ensure the safe passage of Indian flag-bearing ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz on June 19, 2019. Started maritime security work called Operation Sankalp in the Gulf region.

Deployment : The Hindu Analysis

- Twenty-three warships have been deployed for this operation so far and an average of 16 Indian flag merchant ships are being provided safe passage in the Gulf region every day.
- Indian Navy's stealth frigate, INS Talwar is currently stationed in the Gulf region.

Importance : The Hindu Analysis

- India is dependent on imports for about 85% of its oil demand. In the year 2019-2020, about 62% of India's oil imports worth around USD 66 billion were imported from the Gulf region.
- Due to the prevailing security situation in the Persian Gulf, it is necessary to provide security to Indian flag merchant ships passing through the region.

INS Talwar : The Hindu Analysis

- INS Talwar (F40) is the flagship ship of the Talwar class of warships of the Indian Navy.
- This Russian-built ship was inducted into the Indian Navy in June 2003.

Features : The Hindu Analysis

- Anti-Air Operation
- Anti-Ship/Land Attack Missiles
- Anti-Submarine Warfare

Persian Gulf : The Hindu Analysis

- Also called the Arabian Gulf, it is a shallow marginal sea in the Indian Ocean located between the Arabian Peninsula and southwestern Iran.
- Its length is about 990 km. and its width is maximum about 340 km in the Strait of Hormuz from minimum 55 kms. Happens till then.
- The region holds approximately two-thirds of the world's estimated proven oil reserves and one-third of the world's estimated proven natural gas reserves.
- A significant amount of maritime trade passes through the Gulf, leading to large oil tankers transporting oil to all parts of the world from major maritime terminals in Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and other places.

Gulf of Oman : The Hindu Analysis

- The Gulf of Oman, the northwestern part of the Arabian Sea, lies between the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula (Oman) and Iran.
- It is 560 km long and connects to the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz.
- It is a shipping route for the oil producing region around the Persian Gulf.
- It provides the only gateway into the Persian Gulf from the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. Thus, the world's major oil exporters and importers have a joint interest in its security.

Swadeep Kumar

About National Chambal Sanctuary



About National Chambal Sanctuary – Today Current Affairs

- Recently the Madhya Pradesh government has proposed mining activities in 292 hectares of five stretches connected by river Chambal and its tributary Parvati.
- This step has been taken to free the State Forest Department from devoting time, resources and efforts to check illegal mining activities in the National Chambal Sanctuary.
- Mining of sand is banned in the sanctuary since 2006.

Today Current Affairs

About National Chambal Sanctuary:

- National Chambal Sanctuary was established in the year 1979 with a length of 425 km of Chambal River.
- Its valley is 2-6 km along the Chambal river near the tri-point of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. are spread over an extended area of
- The National Chambal Sanctuary is listed as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and is a proposed Ramsar site.

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) : The Hindu Analysis

- Birds are excellent indicators of ecosystem health.
- BirdLife International's IBA program aims to identify, monitor and protect a global network of IBAs to protect the world's birds and related biodiversity.

- 554 IBAs have been identified in India by the Bombay Natural History Society and BirdLife International.
- 40% of these IBAs fall outside protected area networks and thus constitute an important tool for landscape-level conservation planning.

According to BirdLife International, there are some standardized criteria for determining IBAs, which are as follows:

A: Global : The Hindu Analysis

A1. Species of Global Conservation Concern:

- This area/site regularly has significant numbers of globally threatened species, or Species of Global Conservation Concern.

A3. Biome Restricted Species:

- The site is known to contain a significant assemblage of species whose reproductive distribution is largely or entirely confined to a single biome.

A4. Congregation:

- The site is known to contain 1% of the biogeographic population of a collective waterfowl species on a regular basis.
- The site is known or considered to be a regular site where a collective seabird or terrestrial species has 1% or less of the global population.
- The site is known to be a regular site with 20,000 waterfowl or 10,000 pairs of seabirds of one or more species.

Ecology : The Hindu Analysis

- The National Chambal Sanctuary is home to the critically endangered Gharial (small crocodile), Red Crown tortas and the endangered Ganges River dolphin.
- Chambal supports the largest population of alligators in the wild.
- The only known place where Indian skimmers nest in large numbers are recorded.
- Chambal supports 8 of the 26 rare turtle species found in the country.
- Chambal is one of the cleanest rivers of the country.
- Chambal supports more than 320 resident and migratory birds.

Subsidies : The Hindu Analysis

- The local people are directly dependent on the various resources of the sanctuary. They farm along the river, draw water from the river for irrigation, practice subsistence and commercial fishing, and mine sand.

Other Sanctuaries and National Parks of Madhya Pradesh : The Hindu Analysis

- Madhya Pradesh has 9 national parks and 25 sanctuaries, covering an area of 10,862 sq.km. It covers an area of 11.40% of the total forest area and 3.52% of the geographical area of the state.

Presently, there are 5 Project Tiger Zones in the State in the State-

- Kanha National Park
- Panna National Park
- Bandhavgarh National Park
- Pench National Park
- Satpura National Park
- It is also known as the 'Tiger State' as it is home to about 19% of the tiger population of India and 10% of the world's tiger population.

Chambal River : The Hindu Analysis

- It is one of the most pollution free rivers of India.
- It is 960 km. It is a long river that rises from the Singer Chauri peak in the northern slopes of the Vindhya Mountains (Indore, Madhya Pradesh). From there it covers about 346 km in the north direction in Madhya Pradesh. It flows till and then enters Rajasthan and covers a distance of 225 km. It flows in the north-east direction. The Hindu Analysis
- This U.P. In Etawah district of about 32 km before joining the Yamuna river.
- It is a rainfed river and its basin is surrounded by Vindhya mountain ranges and Aravallis. The Chambal and its tributaries flow through the Malwa region of north-western Madhya Pradesh.
- Tributaries: Banas, Kali Sindh, Parvati. The Hindu Analysis
- Major power projects/dams: Gandhi Sagar Dam, Rana Pratap Sagar Dam, Jawahar Sagar Dam and Kota Barrage.
- National Chambal Sanctuary is situated at the tri-junction of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh on the banks of Chambal River. It is known for the critically endangered Gharial, Red Crown Roof Turtle and the endangered Ganges River Dolphin.

Swadeep Kumar

June 21



June 21 – Today Current Affairs

- June 21 is the summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere.
- This day is celebrated as International Yoga Day.

Today Current Affairs

Summer solstice

- Solitude is a Latin word which means “Stalled Sun”. It is a natural phenomenon that occurs twice a year in each hemisphere of the Earth, once in summer and once in winter. Which are called summer solstice and winter solstice respectively.
- It is the longest day and shortest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
- During this time the countries of the Northern Hemisphere are closest to the Sun and the Sun shines upwards at the Tropic of Cancer (23.5° North). The Hindu Analysis
- Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn are located north and south of the equator at latitudes of 23.5°.
- At 66.5° to the north and south are the Arctic and Antarctic circles.
- Latitude is the measure of the distance of a place from the equator.
- Earth's axis around which the planet completes one revolution during solstice. It is tilted in such a way that the North Pole is tilted towards the Sun and the South Pole is located away from it.
- Typically, this imaginary axis passes through the center of the Earth from top to bottom and is always tilted 23.5° with respect to the Sun.

Excess amount of energy : The Hindu Analysis

- High amount of energy received from the sun is the specialty of this day. According to

NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), the amount of energy the Earth receives from the Sun on this day is 30% more at the North Pole than at the equator. The Hindu Analysis

- The maximum amount of sunlight received by the Northern Hemisphere during this time is usually on June 20, 21 or 22. In contrast, the Southern Hemisphere receives the most sunlight on December 21, 22, or 23, when the Northern Hemisphere has the longest nights.

Geography behind Sankranti : The Hindu Analysis

- Behind this is the changing length of the days due to the tilt of the Earth.
- Earth's axis of rotation is inclined at an angle of 23.5° to its orbital plane. This inclination, along with factors such as Earth's orbit and orbit, leads to variations in the duration of sunlight, due to which any location on the planet receives different days' duration. The Hindu Analysis
- The northern hemisphere spends half the year tilted towards the Sun, receiving direct sunlight during long summer days. During the second half of the year, it tilts away from the Sun, and the days are shorter.
- Tilt is also responsible for different seasons on Earth. Due to this phenomenon, the movement of the Sun from northern to southern hemisphere and vice versa brings about seasonal changes in the year.

Equinox : The Hindu Analysis

- Twice a year during the equinoxes ("equal days/nights") the Earth's axis is not toward our Sun, but perpendicular to the incoming rays.
- This results in day and night of "nearly" equal duration at all latitudes.
- The Spring Equinox occurs on March 20 or 21 in the Northern Hemisphere. The autumnal equinox occurs in the northern hemisphere on September 22 or 23.

Swadeep Kumar

Typhoid fever



Typhoid fever – Today Current Affairs

- The bacteria that cause typhoid fever are becoming more resistant to widely used antibiotics, according to a study published in The Lancet Microbe Journal.
- Typhoid fever causes 11 million infections and causes over 100,000 deaths per year. South Asia accounts for 70% of the global disease burden.

Today Current Affairs

Typhoid:

- Typhoid fever is a life-threatening infection caused by the bacterium *Salmonella enterica* serovar typhi (commonly known as *Salmonella typhi*) which is transmitted only by humans. No other animal carriers have yet been found.

Infection : The Hindu Analysis

- Typhoid fever is spread through the fecal-oral route, through ingestion of contaminated food or water.
- Without treatment, about one in 20 people recover from typhoid, becoming a 'carrier'. Their feces and urine carry the bacteria, even without showing any signs of illness, and they can infect others for a period of about three months (sometimes up to a year).
- Travelers too many typhoid endemic countries are at high risk of getting typhoid fever. This includes parts of Asia (especially India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America, and the Middle East.

Symptoms : The Hindu Analysis

- Symptoms of typhoid range from mild to severe, can last about a month without treatment. Symptoms include: fever, fatigue, malaise (general feeling of malaise), sore throat, persistent cough and headache.

Redressal:

Vaccine / Vaccine : The Hindu Analysis

- Typhoid vaccine/vaccine is available as an oral medication or one-off injection.
- Capsules: This is an active, attenuated vaccine for adults and children over 6 years of age.
- Dosage: For adults and children over 2 years of age, this is an inactivated vaccine that needs to be given 2 weeks before a person gets typhoid.
- Typhoid vaccine is only 50-80% effective.

Remedy : The Hindu Analysis

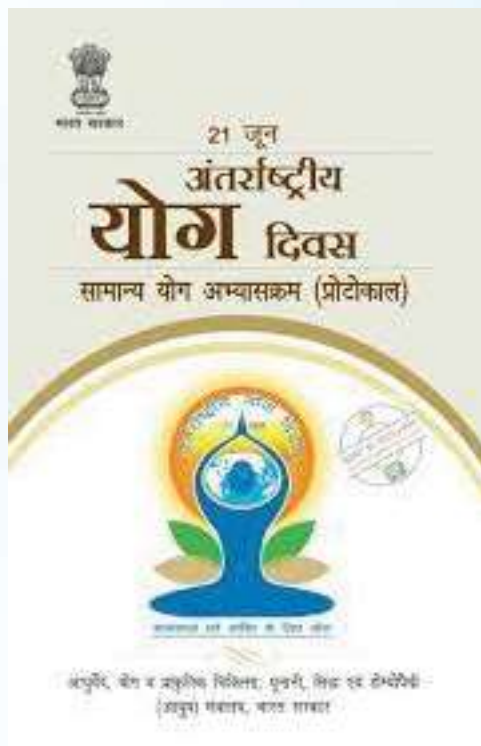
- Typhoid fever requires prompt treatment with antibiotics.

Drug resistance : The Hindu Analysis

- The effectiveness of antibiotics for typhoid fever is threatened by the emergence of drug-resistant strains.
- The existence of resistant strains or strains of bacteria means that antibiotics or drugs designed to kill them no longer work, allowing them to spread rapidly, threatening public health.
- Since 2000, there has been a steady decline in multi-drug-resistant (MDR) typhoid in Bangladesh and India, lower in Nepal and a slight increase in Pakistan.
- However, according to a study by researchers from Stanford University, Christian Medical College Vellore and other institutions, they are being replaced by strains or strains resistant to other antibiotics.
- Multiple-drug resistance (MDR) is defined as a lack of sensitivity to at least one agent in three or more chemical classes of an antibiotic. The Hindu Analysis
- Strains were classified as MDR if they had genes resistant to the antibiotics ampicillin, chloramphenicol and trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole.
- A new type of drug resistance has been observed in strains called XDR typhoid. Resistant strains to the antibiotic (azithromycin) have been observed in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.
- Extensive drug resistance (XDR) is caused by a typhoid strain that is resistant to at least five antibiotic classes recommended for the treatment of typhoid fever.

Swadeep Kumar

International yoga day



International yoga day – Today Current Affairs

- Eighth International Day of Yoga (21 June 2022) was celebrated across the world.
- Theme 2022: 'Yoga for Humanity'.

Today Current Affairs

Historical Background and Significance:

- The idea of International Day of Yoga (IDY) was proposed by India during the inauguration of the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) held in the year 2014.
- The United Nations declared June 21 as International Day of Yoga (IDY) by passing a resolution in December 2014.
- Two Guinness World Records were created during the first Yoga Day celebrations held at Rajpath in New Delhi in the year 2015.
- It was the world's largest yoga session with 35,985 people.
- It was attended by people from 84 nations.

Yoga and its importance : The Hindu Analysis

- Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India.
- The word 'Yoga' is derived from Sanskrit and means to unite i.e. union of body and consciousness.
- Today it is practiced in various forms around the world and the popularity is increasing continuously.
- Yoga played an important role in the psycho-social care and rehabilitation of COVID-19 patients in quarantine and isolation.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has also asked its member countries to practice yoga and has included it in its Global Action Plan for Physical Activity for the year 2018-30.

Significance of International Yoga Day : The Hindu Analysis

- International Day of Yoga is celebrated to spread awareness about its holistic approach to physical and mental wellness through yoga practice.
- The objective of International Day of Yoga is to develop the habit of meditation for peace of mind and self-awareness which is essential to survive in a stress free environment.

Related Initiatives:

M-Yoga App : The Hindu Analysis

- Prime Minister announced M-Yoga App which will help in achieving the goal of 'One World One Health'.
- The App is the result of collaboration between the World Health Organization (WTO) and Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (Ministry of AYUSH), Government of India.

New website for International Day of Yoga (IDY) : The Hindu Analysis

- This web portal provides all the updated and relevant information related to International Day of Yoga.
- It is a social platform where all social media interactive platforms are available for visitors to track and participate in discussions.
- The portal is also linked to important web pages like Swachh Bharat, Make in India etc.
- Recognized Yoga as a Sports Discipline : The Hindu Analysis
- The Sports Ministry, after reviewing the classification of various sports disciplines, recognized Yoga as a sports discipline and placed it in the 'Priority' category in September 2015.

General Yoga Protocol : The Hindu Analysis

- The Ministry of AYUSH in its 'General Yoga Protocol' has listed Pranayama, Niyama, Asanas etc. under popular yoga 'sadhanas'.

Vocational Education Course in Yoga : The Hindu Analysis

- The Beauty and Wellness Sector Skill Council (B&WSSC) has vocational education courses in Yoga for CBSE schools.
- B&WSSC has been set up as a non-profit organization under the aegis of National Skill Development Corporation, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

Various Skill Initiatives : The Hindu Analysis

- Thousands of candidates have been trained as yoga instructors and instructors through various skilling initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY).
- PMKVY is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

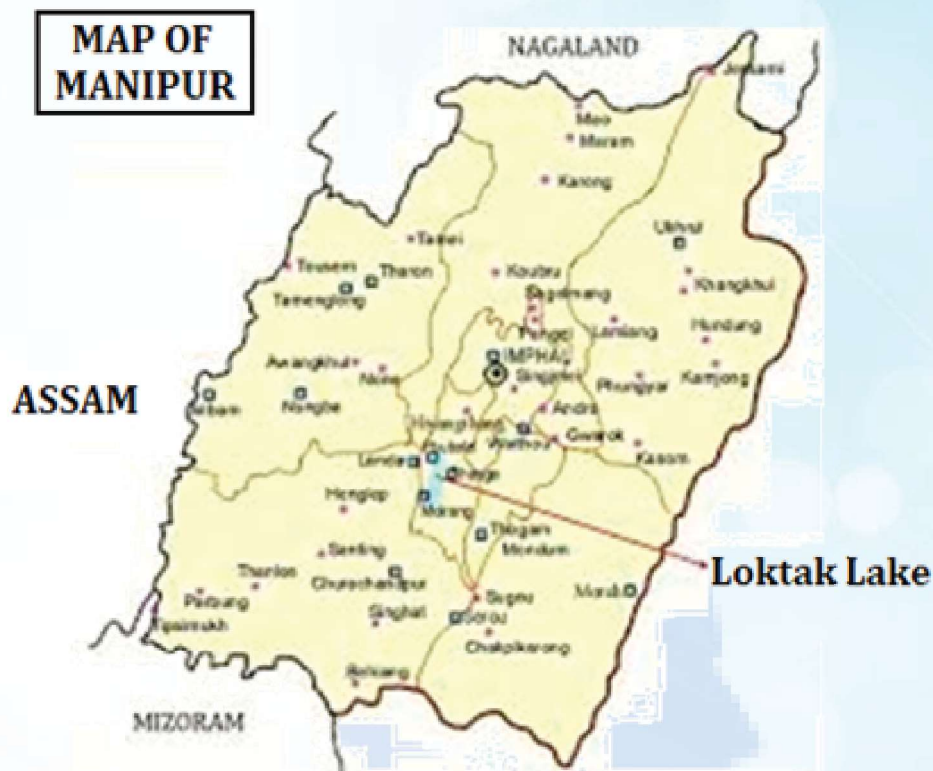
Fit India Movement : The Hindu Analysis

- Yoga is also a part of Fit India Movement.
- The Fit India Movement is a nationwide campaign aimed at encouraging people to include physical activities and sports in their daily lives.

Swadeep Kumar

YOJNA IAS

Kebul Lamjao National Park



Kebul Lamjao National Park – Today Current Affairs

- Residents of Keibul Lamjao National Park (KLNP) in Manipur are protesting against the relocation of the site.
- People argue that the proposed site has nothing to do with efforts to save the endangered deer. On the other hand the people of nearby villages are making every effort to save the deer.

Today Current Affairs

Important facts about Kebul Lamjao National Park:

- It is the only floating national park in the world, Kebul Lamjao National Park on Loktak Lake is the last natural habitat of dancing deer 'Sangai' (*Rucervus eldii eldii*) of Manipur.
- In the 1950s, it was believed that the 'Sangai' deer had become extinct in the country. However, it was later rediscovered in Manipur.
- Hog deer, otter, water fowl and a group of migratory birds are found here.

Loktak Lake : The Hindu Analysis

- Loktak Lake is the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India and is famous for the phumdi floating above the water surface.
- Phumdi is a heterogeneous mass of vegetation, soil and organic matter in different stages of decomposition.
- This ancient lake plays an important role in the economy of Manipur. It serves as a source of water for irrigation, drinking water supply and hydropower generation.
- Keeping in view the ecological status and its biodiversity values, Loktak Lake was initially designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1990
- Later it was also listed under Montreux Records in the year 1993.
- Human activities have put severe strain on the ecosystem of the lake.

Antlered Deer : The Hindu Analysis

- Common names: Sangai, brow horned deer, dancing deer
- Scientific name: Rucervus eldi

Introduction : The Hindu Analysis

- The brow-horned deer, or sangai, is the state animal of Manipur.
- The cover of the animal is dark reddish brown in winter months and becomes very light in summer.
- Native to Cambodia, China, India, Laos and Myanmar, these animals were previously widespread in the habitats of South and Southeast Asia.

Accommodation : The Hindu Analysis

- The habitat of deer varies from scrub and grassland to dry forests and marshlands, depending on the country in which they are found.
- In India these animals are found only in the famous Loktak lake of Manipur.
- The brow-antlered deer usually consume grass.

Hazard : The Hindu Analysis

- While globally habitat loss has been a serious concern in the conservation of this deer, hunting is an additional threat in Manipur. While habitats have been encroached upon for grazing, farming and pisciculture, the animals are highly threatened by a hydroelectric project in the lake.

Security Status : The Hindu Analysis

- IUCN Red List: Endangered

- CITES: Appendix I
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule-I.

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Central Institute of Educational Technology: King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa Award



The Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) won the ‘King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa Award’ of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the year 2021.

- The Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) won the ‘King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa Award’ of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the year 2021.
- CIET is a constituent unit of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) under the Department of School Education and Literacy.
- CIET has been awarded by UNESCO under a comprehensive initiative called PM e-VIDYA for use of ICT in education.

Today Current Affairs

PM e-Vidya

- PM e-Vidya was launched on May 17, 2020 by the Ministry of Education as part of the Self-Reliant India Campaign.
- It integrates all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education by using technology to reduce learning losses.

King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa Award : The Hindu Analysis

- It was established in the year 2005 in collaboration with Bahrain.

- The award recognizes innovative approaches in leveraging new technologies to expand educational and lifelong learning opportunities for all, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and its Goal 4 on Education. The Hindu Analysis
- The award recognizes individuals and organizations that are implementing outstanding projects and promoting the creative use of technologies to enhance learning, teaching and overall academic performance in the digital age.

Prize : The Hindu Analysis

- An international jury annually selects the two best projects.
- Each laureate receives a medal and a diploma of \$25,000 during the ceremony at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Efforts made by Ministry of Education through CIET, NCERT : The Hindu Analysis

- Keeping in view the recommendations of the New Education Policy (NEP), 2020, the Ministry of Education through CIET, NCERT is working tirelessly and meticulously in the design, development and dissemination.
- Working on a large number of e-books, e-content – audio, video, interactive, augmented reality content, Indian Sign Language (ISL) videos, audiobooks, talking books etc. The Hindu Analysis
- Providing various types of e-curriculum for school and teacher education.
- Organized digital programs primarily for students and teachers like online quizzes by leveraging online/offline, on-air technology one class-one channel, DIKSHA, e-pathshala, Nishtha, Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds etc.

Launch of PM e-Vidya : The Hindu Analysis

- To further the objectives of NEP and Samagra Shiksha and to address the above pillars, PM e-VIDYA was launched in May 2020.

Learning till the door : The Hindu Analysis

- CIET was proactive in doorstep learning of children through comprehensive, flexible, ethical and consistent use of 12 PM e-Vidya DTH TV channels and around 397 radio stations including community radio stations under PM e-VIDYA programme.
- These efforts were especially helpful in reaching out to students in pandemic situations when schools were closed.
- These efforts have helped in closing the learning gap to a great extent.

Swadeep Kumar

Single-use plastic



Single-use plastic – Today Current Affairs

- Recently, the central government has prepared a list of single-use plastic items that will be banned from July 1, 2022.
- The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of notified single-use plastics, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene, will be prohibited with effect from July 1, 2022.

Today Current Affairs

Single use plastic

- It refers to plastic items that are used once and are thrown away.

Highest Shares of Manufactured and Used Plastics : The Hindu Analysis

- Single-use plastic products such as plastic bags, straws, coffee bags, soda and water bottles, and plastics used mostly for food packaging.

One-third of the plastic produced worldwide is : The Hindu Analysis

- According to a 2021 report by the Minderero Foundation, an Australian philanthropic organisation, single-use plastics account for a third of global production, of which 98% is made up of fossil fuels.

Plastic is mostly discarded : The Hindu Analysis

- Single-use plastics are responsible for most of the 130 million metric tons of plastic waste globally in 2019, all of which is burned, landfilled or released directly into the environment.

Contribution to Greenhouse Gas Emissions : The Hindu Analysis

- On the current trajectory of production, it is estimated that single-use plastics could be responsible for 5-10% of greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050.

Data for India : The Hindu Analysis

- The report found that India is among the top 100 countries producing single-use plastic waste – rank 94 (the top three are Singapore, Australia and Oman).
- With domestic production of 11.8 million MT annually and imports of 2.9 MMT, India's net production of single use plastic waste is 5.6 MMT and per capita production is 4 kg.

Selection Basis : The Hindu Analysis

- The selection of the first set of single-use plastic items to ban was based on the difficulty of collection and their recycling.
- When plastic is present in the environment for a long time and does not decompose, it turns into microplastic. After that first it enters our food sources and then human body, and it is extremely harmful.
- The largest share of single-use plastics is in packaging, 95% belonging to this category are used in everything from toothpaste to shaving cream and frozen food.
- The selected items are of low value and low turnover and are not likely to have a major economic impact.

Procedure for enforcement of sanctions:

By monitoring : The Hindu Analysis

- The ban will be monitored from the Center by the CPCB and State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) who will regularly report to the Centre.

Issued Guidelines : The Hindu Analysis

- Directives have been issued at the national, state and local levels – for example all petrochemical industries have been asked not to supply raw materials to industries engaged in prohibited items.
- Directions have been issued to SPCBs and Pollution Control Committees to modify or cancel consents issued under the Air/Water Act to industries engaged in single-use plastic items.

Promotion of compostable and biodegradable plastics : The Hindu Analysis

- CPCB issues one-time certificates to 200 manufacturers of compostable plastics and BIS passed standards for biodegradable plastics.

Punishment : The Hindu Analysis

- Violators of the ban can be punished under the Environment Protection Act 1986 – which allows for imprisonment of up to 5 years or a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh, or both.
- Violators may also be asked by the APCB to pay environmental damage compensation.
- There are municipal laws on plastic waste, their own penal codes.

Efforts by other countries to tackle single-use plastics:

Signing the Resolution : The Hindu Analysis

- In the year 2022 at the United Nations Environment Assembly, 124 countries, including India, signed a resolution to draft an agreement to end plastic pollution to address the full life of plastics from production to disposal for future signatories will be made legally binding.
- As of July 2019, 68 countries have banned plastic bags with varying degrees of enforcement.

Countries that have banned plastics:

Bangladesh : The Hindu Analysis

- Bangladesh became the first country to ban thin plastic bags in the year 2002.

New Zealand : The Hindu Analysis

- New Zealand became the latest country to ban plastic bags in July 2019.

China : The Hindu Analysis

- China issued a ban on plastic bags in the year 2020 with a phased implementation.

America : The Hindu Analysis

- Eight states in the US have banned single-use plastic bags, beginning with California in 2014. Seattle became the first major US city to ban plastic straws in the year 2018.

The European Union : The Hindu Analysis

- Directive on single-use plastics came into effect in the European Union in July 2021.
- This directive bans certain single-use plastics for which alternatives are available; Single-use plastic plates, cutlery, straws, balloon sticks and cotton buds cannot be placed on the markets of EU member states.
- The same measure applies to cups, food and beverage containers made of expanded polystyrene and all products made of oxo-degradable plastic.

Swadeep Kumar

Bedti-Varda Project



Bedti-Varda Project – Today Current Affairs

- Two environmental groups in Karnataka have criticized the Bedati and Varada river-linking project, calling it unscientific and a waste of public money.

Today Current Affairs

Bedati-Varda Project:

- The Bedti-Varda project was envisaged in the year 1992 for the supply of drinking water.
- The objective of the scheme is to connect the Bedati, a west-flowing river towards the Arabian Sea, with the Varada, a tributary of the Tungabhadra River, which joins the Krishna River and drains into the Bay of Bengal.
- A huge dam will be built at Hierwadatti in Gadag district.
- A second dam will be built on the Pattanahalla River at Menasagoda in Sirsi in Uttara Kannada district.
- Both the dams will carry water through tunnels to Varda.
- The water will reach to Kengre and then to Hakkalumane for 6.88 km. It will flow down the tunnel, where it will join the Varda. The Hindu Analysis
- Thus the project envisages carrying water from Sirsi-Yelapura region of Uttara Kannada district to arid regions of Raichur, Gadag and Koppal districts.
- A total of 302 million cubic meters of water will be drawn from the Pattanahalla and Shalmalahalla tributaries of the Bedati and Varada rivers, while 222 million cubic meters will be diverted from the Suremane barrage opposite the Bedati River.
- The project will require 61 MW of electricity to draw water up to Gadag. Even after this,

it is not known whether the water will reach Gadag or not.

Project related issues:

Difficulty in rescheduling the route : The Hindu Analysis

- Redirecting a west flowing river to east flowing is a difficult task.

Rivers dependent on rain water : The Hindu Analysis

- At the beginning of summer, the rivers Bedti and Varda start drying up.
- It is a sad irony that government-appointed scientists are planning to interlink these rivers on the pretext of providing drinking water, knowing that they do not flow throughout the year.

Lack of proper project report : The Hindu Analysis

- The Detailed Project Report (DPR) prepared by the Irrigation Department is not accurate as it does not assess the availability of water and the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) on the interconnection of rivers Bedati-Aghanashini and Varda) was prepared without quoting the observation of the report.

Environmental effect : The Hindu Analysis

- More than 500 acres of forest will be lost. Ultimately the result will be that there will also be a significant shortage of water.
- This project will also harm the flora and fauna.
- The Bedati Valley has been designated as an Active Biodiversity Area by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The Hindu Analysis
- The region is home to 1,741 types of flowering plants as well as 420 species of birds and animals.
- The nutrients that accompany the river are responsible for maintaining the fish stock especially at the mouth of the Bedti in the Dedi.
- The river valley acts as a corridor for about 35 different animal species. Bedati in the estuary is known as Gangavali.

Affected lives of thousands of people : The Hindu Analysis

- In addition to fishing communities along the banks of the Bedati and Varada rivers, the Malenadu region at the foothills of the Western Ghats is the source of livelihood for thousands of farmers.

Swadeep Kumar

Snake Island: Black Sea



Snake Island: Black Sea – Today Current Affairs

- Ukraine has inflicted serious damage on Russian forces in airstrikes on a land island in the Black Sea, also known as ‘Snake Island’.
- The attack on the island is believed to be the second major military success by the West using missiles delivered to Ukraine.

Today Current Affairs

Snake Island:

- Land Island, also known as Snake or Serpent Island, is a small piece of rock less than 700 meters in size, described as X-shaped.
- It is 35 km from the coast in the Black Sea. It is located far east of the mouth of the Danube and approximately south-west of the port city of Odessa.
- The Danube is the second longest river in Europe after the Volga. It rises from the Black Forest Mountains of western Germany and covers a distance of about 2,850 km. It flows till its mouth on the Black Sea.
- The island is marked on the map by ‘Village of Byle’, it belongs to Ukraine.

Black Sea:

Nearby Areas : The Hindu Analysis

- The Black Sea is bounded by Ukraine to the north and northwest, Russia and Georgia to the east, Turkey to the south, and Bulgaria and Romania to the west.

Straits : The Hindu Analysis

- The Black Sea is joined by the Bosphorus to the Sea of Marmara and the Aegean Sea by the Dardanelles, which has traditionally been Russia's warm waters' gateway to Europe.
- The Black Sea is also connected to the Azov Sea by the Kerch Strait.

Significance for Russia:

Tactical Intermediate Zone/Buffer : The Hindu Analysis

- The Black Sea is a landmark for the Mediterranean Sea as well as a strategic buffer between NATO countries and Russia.

Geostatistical Significance : The Hindu Analysis

- The dominance of the Black Sea region is a geo-strategic imperative for Moscow, (both to the influence of Russian power in the Mediterranean and to secure an economic gateway to the major markets of Southern Europe).
- Russia has been trying to gain full control of the Black Sea since the Crimean crisis in 2014.
- Control over the Black Sea as well as the land bridge linking Russia and Crimea has been Russia's main goal in the current conflict.
- Reducing Ukraine's access to the Black Sea would turn it into a landlocked country and deal a serious blow to its logistics trade.

Swadeep Kumar

YOJNA IAS