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ANALYSIS**

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07 AUGUST 2023

1 - Assessment of Climate Change in the Indian Region:

GS III

Environmental Conservation

- **Context:**

- The Lok Sabha was notified about the 2020 evaluation by the Union Minister for Earth Sciences.

- **Important details:**

- It provides an in-depth examination of the effects of climate change on the Indian subcontinent.

- **About the report:**

- India's average temperature has risen by roughly 0.7 degrees Celsius. C between 1901 and 2018.
- The frequency of daily precipitation extremes (rainfall intensities more than 150 mm per day) increased by nearly 75% between 1950 and 2015.
- Drought frequency and spatial extent have increased considerably in India between 1951 and 2015.
- Sea surface temperatures in the tropical Indian Ocean increased by about 1°C between 1951 and 2015.
- The frequency of Severe Cyclonic Storms over the Arabian Sea increased throughout the post-monsoon seasons of 1998-2018.

- **Attempts by India to combat climate change:**

- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol (KP), and the Paris Agreement (PA) are all signed by India.
- Independent studies have deemed India's efforts to be laudable and consistent with the PA's requirements.

- **The Indian government is committed to combating climate change through a number of initiatives and policies, including the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), which includes missions in the following areas:**

- solar energy
- conserving energy
- Agriculture and aquifers

- The Himalayan environment
- habitat protection
- green India
- Climate change requires a strategic understanding.
- The NAPCC creates a framework for all climate-related actions.
- Thirty-three states/union territories have created their own State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) in accordance with the NAPCC, taking into account the state's unique climate change challenges.
- *Source* → *The Hindu*

2 – About the Safe City Project:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- The Minister of State for Home Affairs updated the Rajya Sabha on the implementation of the Safe City Project.
- **Important details:**
- To begin, the Ministry of Home Affairs has approved Safe City Projects with government funding in eight cities:
- **The projects entail the following:**
- locating hotspots for female-on-female violence
- Infrastructure deployment, technological uptake, and other factors
- Women will be safe if community capacity is built through awareness activities.
- The Safe City Project is a project supported by the federal government.
- The project's purpose is to eliminate violence against women while also addressing safety issues sympathetically.
- It plans to use technology and ensure the prompt availability of highly trained police officers to assist women in need.
- CCTV cameras will be installed in public spaces where women congregate.

- A command and control centre will be created at police headquarters, district headquarters, and police stations.
- Integration of location-based services, crime and criminal databases, and CCTV feeds to address women's safety issues in public places quickly and effectively.
- Analysis of video and creation of actionable warnings or alerts for preventive and therapeutic measures.
- *Source → The Hind*

3 – Details of the Iberian Wolf:

GS III

Environmental Conservation

- **Context:**
- The Iberian wolf has been declared extinct in Spain's Andalusia region since 2020.
- **Important details:**
- Andalusia is a Spanish 'autonomous territory' that consists of eight provinces.
- The territorial, hierarchical packs of the Iberian wolf are led by a dominant breeding pair.
- They are home to the greatest number of wolves in Western Europe.
- Iberian wolves were the only Western European wolf subspecies that could still be hunted, and only in Spain.
- *Source → The Hindu*

4 – About the Peace Talks in Jeddah:

GS II

International Relations

- **Context:**

- Saudi Arabia will host peace talks between Russia and Ukraine, as well as the US, certain European countries, and significant developing countries such as India and Brazil, in Jeddah.

- **Important details:**

- While both Ukraine and Russia have expressed willingness to engage in conversation on global platforms, they both absolutely reject what peace would imply for the other.

- **The situation in Ukraine:**

- The Ukrainian President insists that peace discussions cannot take place unless Russian troops withdraw.
- Ukraine has been advocating a 10-point peace proposal since last year's G-20 Summit, which includes:
- Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, Ukraine's territorial integrity was restored to its 1991 boundaries.
- In conformity with the United Nations Charter, it asserts its territorial integrity.
- Russia's war crimes must be investigated and prosecuted.

- **Russia's position:**

- Russia has rejected the offer and would not transfer any of Ukraine's newly acquired land.
- Any negotiations, according to Russia, should take "new realities" into account, referring to revised borders that include regions seized by Russia.

- **Recent negotiating:**

- The two sides negotiated brief ceasefires in the early phases of the battle in order to build humanitarian corridors.
- As evidence of war crimes in Ukraine and Russian attacks on people emerged, the discussions broke down.
- Since then, Russian President Vladimir Putin has been wanted by the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

- Russia withdrew from the Black Sea Grain Deal brokered by Turkey and the UN after a year.
- The arrangement enabled the safe transit of 32.9 million metric tonnes of Ukrainian foodgrains.
- Despite the fact that a considerable volume of grain was transferred to China and other high-income countries, it was regarded as a reasonable bargain.
- While neither Russia nor Ukraine have yet adopted the concept, it has drawn attention to strategic attempts at mediation by prominent people in other parts of the world.

- **China's envisioned peace plan:**

- China has presented a 12-point agenda for political resolution of the Ukraine crisis.
- The proposal restated China's support for state territorial integrity and the UN Charter, condemned the use of nuclear weapons in war, and urged a pause of hostilities and resumption of talks.
- It also argued for "abandoning the cold war mentality," arguing that extending military alliances, referring to NATO and the West, would not provide security.
- The policy was viewed as pro-Russian since it urged countries to refrain from imposing unilateral sanctions.

- **Africa's proposed peace measures include the following:**

- Seven African leaders, led by South Africa's President, visited Russia and Ukraine with a 10-point plan that included recognition of Russia and Ukraine's sovereignty as well as prisoner release.

- **It also asked for:**

- sustaining unfettered foodgrain exports;
- for a decrease in violence, and
- for both sides to start peace talks as soon as possible.
- Several African countries that import grain and fertiliser from Ukraine and Russia have experienced increasing inflation and scarcity as a result of the war.
- The conflict is directly responsible for an estimated 30 million tonnes of grain scarcity across Africa.
- African countries that have not directly condemned Russia and have abstained from voting against it at the UN perceived the effort as a peace endeavour.

- **Peace Talks in Brazil:**

- The Brazilian President proposed leading a "peace club" of non-combatant and non-aligned countries to arbitrate discussions between the two sides.
- He further stated that by arming Kyiv, the West was prolonging the conflict.

- **The following are the scheduled discussions in Jeddah:**
- The participation of the United Kingdom, the European Union, South Africa, and Poland has been confirmed.
- The National Security Advisor of the United States is also slated to attend.
- Saudi Arabia maintains close ties with Moscow and is a member of the powerful OPEC+ oil cartel.
- It has also been blasted for lowering oil output and driving up prices at a time when Russian supplies are under threat of sanctions.
- *Source → The Hindu*

5 - Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act of 2023:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Important details:**
- **In 2015, the MMDR Act of 1957 was totally updated to execute numerous mineral sector changes, including:**
 - instituting an auction mechanism for the issuance of mining concessions in order to promote transparency in natural resource distribution,
 - supports the establishment of the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) for the benefit of mining-affected persons and communities
 - supports developing National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) to lend momentum to exploration and for enforcing stringent penalty for criminal mining.
- **The Act was changed again in 2016, 2020, and 2021 to implement more industry reforms, including:**
 - by abolishing the distinction between prisoner and commercial mines
 - Transferring statutory clearances to ensure that mining operations can continue even if the lessee changes.
 - removing restrictions on mineral concession transfers,

- In order to ensure that concessions to the private sector are exclusively awarded through auction, rights of non-auctioned concession holders that have not resulted in mining leases are lapsed, and so on.
- **Among the most recent changes are:**
- **Six minerals were omitted from the original list of twelve atomic minerals:**
 - Lithium-containing minerals
 - Titanium-containing minerals and ores
 - Beryl and other beryllium-containing minerals
 - Niobium and Tantalum-containing minerals
 - Minerals that contain zirconium.
- After these minerals are removed off the list of atomic minerals, they will be available for private sector discovery and mining.
- **Allowing the Central Government to primarily sell mining concessions for certain critical minerals:**
 - Another key change authorised by Parliament is the Central Government's right to solely auction mining leases and composite licences for certain critical minerals, specifically:
- **Introducing deep-rooted and critical mineral exploration permits:**
 - Despite the fact that under the automated system, 100% FDI is permitted in the mining and exploration industries, no major FDI has been received in these areas.
 - The Act includes provisions in the Bill for issuing a new mining concession known as an Exploration Licence (EL).
 - With the exploration licence obtained through auction, the licensee will be permitted to conduct reconnaissance and prospecting operations for critical and deep-seated minerals covered in the newly proposed Seventh Schedule to the Act.
- **Conclusion:**
 - In compared to surficial/bulk minerals, the country's resource identification for these minerals is extremely limited.
 - Deep-seated minerals represent for a modest share of total mineral production, and the economy is strongly reliant on mineral imports.
 - As a result, there is a pressing need to speed up the finding and extraction of deep-seated minerals.

- The proposed exploration licence will encourage, enable, and incentivise private sector participation in all phases of critical and deep-seated mineral exploration.
- Private sector participation in exploration would provide cutting-edge technology, capital, and knowledge in the search for deep-seated and critical minerals.
- **The proposed exploration licencing system aims to provide an enabling structure in which exploration agencies will:**
 - bring in geological data collectors from all across the world
 - processing and interpretation of the value chain
 - By applying talents and technologies, you can use your risk-taking ability to find mineral deposits.
- *Source → The Hindu*



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