DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYSIS

27 OCTOBER 2023

1 - India-Sri Lanka ferry service was resumed recently:

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Environmental Conservation related issues

- **Context:**

- The launch of a passenger ferry service from Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu to Kankesanthurai in Jaffna, Northern Sri Lanka, has revitalised an ancient sea route between India and Sri Lanka.

- **Important information:**

- The effort aims to increase people-to-people contacts, improve tourism, and strengthen bilateral ties.
- Local traders are anticipated to gain from it on both coasts.
- "Cheriyapani" is the name of the vessel, which is a high-speed craft.

- **The earlier path:**

- Between Chennai and Colombo, via the port of Thoothukudi, operated the Indo-Ceylon Express, also known as the Boat Mail, from the early 1900s until 1982.
- Unfortunately, these services were discontinued as a result of the civil war in Sri Lanka.
- From Dhanushkodi to Talaimannar was one of the busiest roads prior to the start of the civil war.

- **Possible effects of the new offering:**

- The ferry can boost religious tourism in both countries' coastal regions by offering a mode of transit.
- An increase of Sri Lankan visitors is anticipated in Indian pilgrimage sites like Nagapattinam, Nagore, Velankanni, Thirunallar, and temple towns like Thanjavur, Madurai, and Tiruchi.
- Beyond promoting religious travel, the services would increase trade and business in the area.

- **First difficulties:**

- **Operational challenges:**

- The Shipping Corporation of India's (SCI) original plan to conduct services every day for ten days has already been rescheduled to operate three times a week, even as the ferry's inauguration was being celebrated.

- **The ticketing and price system:**

- Another issue is the ticket fee, which is about Rs 7,670, and the subpar ticketing systems.
- If the service is to be successful, the cost of the tickets should be lowered and reservations made available on well-known travel websites.

- ***Source → The Hindu***

2 - Subordinate Committee for Technical, Scientific, and Technological Advice:

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Environmental Conservation related issues

- **Context:**

- Nairobi hosts a biodiversity technical body meeting to assess the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's progress.

- **Important information:**

- To oversee the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which was established at the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), governments and specialists in biodiversity have assembled in Nairobi, Kenya.
- Currently, there is a Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-25).

- **Goal:**

- to fulfil the Parties' demands in terms of science, technology, and engineering as they work to translate their agreement into action towards our shared goal of coexisting peacefully with the environment.
- The SBSTTA has generated a total of 250 proposals for the Conference of the Parties since its founding in Paris, France, in 1995.
- The SBSTTA-25's proposals from this Nairobi conference will be forwarded for approval at COP16, which is set for 2024.

- **Concepts:**

- **Qualitative indicators:**

- To enable nations to report on development in a more nuanced manner, categorical indicators could be developed in place of straightforward binary indicators.

- **Online forum for discussion:**

- A discussion board on the internet has also been established to facilitate the exchange of opinions between specialists regarding the indicators and monitoring system.

- **Concerning the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Kunming-Montreal:**

- 195 nations participated in the UN Biodiversity conference COP15 in Montréal, Canada, when they established the landmark Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).
- It calls for the accomplishment of 23 targets and four goals by 2030.
- This framework includes worldwide objectives that seek to guarantee the sustainable use of nature, preserve it for present and future generations, and encourage investments in a green global economy.
- It clears the path for a resilient, nature-positive, and climate-neutral world by 2050 when combined with the climate agreement in Paris.
- The agreement, mediated by China, aims to protect animals, lands, and oceans from deterioration, pollution, and climate change.
- Every two years, parties to the 1993 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convene to develop a worldwide strategy aimed at stopping the loss of biodiversity and reestablishing natural ecosystems.
- The conference was held in Montreal for the fifteenth time, which is why it was given the designation COP15, or the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the CBD.

- **What is the goal of the Kunming-Montreal agreement?**

- **It lays out goals for 2030 regarding:**

- safeguarding deteriorated areas
- mobilising resources for preservation
- Reward to nations that protect biodiversity
- Preventing actions taken by humans that cause the extinction of species

- The GBF places a strong focus on respecting the rights of indigenous groups, who have historically preserved forests and biodiversity, as well as their participation in conservation initiatives.
- It promotes comparable roles for women and neighbourhood groups.
- Members of the agreement are urged to implement practises that promote biodiversity, like sustainable intensification and agroecology.
- In addition, the GBF envisions indigenous peoples and local communities having access to justice and biodiversity-related knowledge.
- The GBF is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN, three of which have a direct impact on biodiversity and the environment:

- **Important points covered under the agreement:**

- **Preservation, defence, and rehabilitation:**

- Delegates agreed to achieve the deal's most prominent objective, known as "30-by-30," which calls for safeguarding 30% of land and 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030.
- As several nations and activists campaigned for during the negotiations, indigenous and traditional areas will also be taken into account in achieving this goal.
- Additionally, the agreement raises the target of 20% to 30% restoration of degraded lands and rivers over the course of the ten years.
- The global community will work to keep the loss of intact landscapes and places with a high species diversity "near to zero by 2030."

- **Cash for the environment:**

- The goal of the signatories is to guarantee that $200 billion annually is allocated, from both public and private sources, to conservation activities.

- **Large corporations disclose effects on biodiversity:**

- Businesses should evaluate and disclose how biodiversity issues impact and are impacted by their operations. The parties consented to the imposition of "requirements" on big businesses and financial institutions to disclose information about their portfolios, supplier chains, and business practises.
- The goal of this reporting is to gradually increase biodiversity, lessen the hazards that nature poses to business, and support sustainable production.

- **Detrimental subsidies:**

- By 2025, nations pledged to identify and either phase down, abolish, or modify subsidies that contribute to biodiversity loss.
- By 2030, they committed to reducing those incentives by at least $500 billion annually and boosting those that promote conservation.

- **Pesticides and pollution:**

- By 2030, cut the danger posed by pesticides by at least 50%
- Although there is no specific goal stated in the agreement, it will centre on lowering the detrimental effects of pollution to levels that are not deemed hazardous to the environment.

- **Additional focus areas:**

- Put an end to the extinction of known species and, by 2050, tenfold lower the risk and rate of extinction for all species (unknown).
- By 2030, cut the amount of nutrients lost to the environment by at least 50%.
- Cut the global footprint of consumption by half by 2030, notably by drastically cutting waste production and overconsumption, as well as food waste.
- Manage forestry, fisheries, aquaculture, and agricultural lands sustainably. Significantly expand agroecology and other biodiversity-friendly techniques.
- Address climate change with solutions rooted in nature.
- By 2030, at least 50% less invasive alien species will be introduced and established.
- By 2030, ensure the sustainable, lawful, and safe use and trade of wild species.
- Make urban areas greener.

- ***Source → The Hindu***

3 - India would encourage industrialised countries to achieve "carbon negativity" by 2050:

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Environmental Conservation related issues

- **Context:**

- According to two Indian government sources, India wants to pressure industrialised countries to become carbon negative by 2050 rather than carbon neutral, saying that this would give emerging market economies more time to use fossil fuels for development needs.

- **Important information:**

- India is scheduled to present its plan at the COP28 climate summit in Dubai. The country is defying efforts to commit to a timeline for phasing out its own usage of coal and other fossil fuels.
- In order for the world to reach the goal of global net zero emissions by 2050 and to enable developing countries to utilise the natural resources at their disposal for development, wealthy nations should transition to net negative emitters prior to that year.
- By 2050, developed nations including the US, UK, Canada, and Japan hope to achieve net zero emissions.
- While India has promised to achieving net zero by 2070, China has committed to doing so by 2060.

- **What is zero net?**

- The concept of net zero, often known as carbon neutrality, states that every action that releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere must be balanced out by another activity that removes an equal amount.

- **Carbon negative: what is it?**

- A nation can achieve carbon negativity by removing more CO2 from the atmosphere than it emits, which is a positive step.

- **Importance:**

- The COP28 talks are happening at a time when heatwaves and unpredictable monsoons are being caused by catastrophic weather-related events, and scientists are urging quick action.
- Instead of focusing on shifting the focus to decreasing overall carbon emissions through "abatement and mitigation technologies," India plans to continue rejecting the drive from developed nations to set a date for the phase-down of fossil fuels.
- India has promised to reducing the ratio of greenhouse emissions to gross domestic product to 45% of its 2005 level by 2030 and to use non-fossil fuels for half of its installed power capacity.
- Notwithstanding the fact that India has raised its non-fossil capacity to 44% of its total installed power generation capacity, data indicates that 73% of the nation's electricity is utilised by thermal power plants.
- The G20 nations agreed at a conference in New Delhi that coal power must be phased out gradually, but they did not establish a schedule or emission reduction targets.
- The 20 nations that account for more than 80% of global emissions agreed to phase down coal for the first time, marking a breakthrough in the climate negotiations.

- ***Source → The Hindu***

4 - The latest evolutionary law

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Environmental Conservation related issues

- **Context:**

- A new evolutionary law that can account for the evolution of both living and non-living things, including minerals and stars, has been proposed by scientists.

- **Mineral diversity and biodiversity:**

- Living and non-living natural systems develop into states with increased complexity, diversity, and patterns.
- From single-celled to multi-celled organisms, life developed.
- For instance, the complexity of Earth's minerals increased, resulting in variety.
- Thus, biological evolution was propelled by this.
- Mineral diversity results from biodiversity and vice versa.
- Life as we know it today was created by the interaction of the two systems, biological and mineral.

- **The working mechanism:**

- According to the experts, evolution takes place when atoms and molecules are rearranged in a way that maximises their functionalities.
- The secret to evolution is function selection.
- Darwin associated function mostly with survival, but the current research identifies at least three different types of natural functions.
- The first function is stability, which refers to the ability of systems composed of stable atom or molecule configurations to endure.
- The dynamic systems with energy supply are included in the second one.
- The third is novelty, or the propensity of dynamic systems to experiment with novel arrangements or configurations that may result in unique traits or behaviours.
- The evolution of single-celled creatures to use light to create food is an example of originality.
- Additional instances comprise novel behaviours exhibited by multicellular organisms, like swimming, walking, flying, and thinking.
- Similar to this, the first minerals on Earth had a stable atomic arrangement that served as the basis for the subsequent mineral generations' evolution.
- Then, these minerals were integrated into living things.
- Minerals, for instance, are found in the teeth, bones, and shells of living things.
- For instance, Earth had 20 minerals in the early days of the Solar System, but those numbers have now increased to nearly 6,000.

- **Not to mention stars?**

- **In terms of stars, the first ones to originate following the Big Bang were primarily composed of two elements:**

- Hydrogen as well as
- Helium.

- These components were utilised by those first stars to create roughly 20 heavier chemical elements.
- As a result, about 100 extra elements were generated by the stars in the following generation.

- **Path ahead:**

- The law affects many different kinds of intricately changing systems.
- Working together, different stakeholders will be better able to comprehend how their proposed rule might apply to different scientific fields, such as ecology, artificial intelligence, and astrophysics.

- ***Source → The Hindu***

5 - The 2023 Global Maritime India Summit:

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Environmental Conservation related issues

- **Context:**

- The Prime Minister of India will open the Global Maritime India Summit (GMIS) in Mumbai in 2023 for its third edition.

- **Important information:**

- 'Amrit Kaal Vision 2047', the long-term plan for the Indian maritime blue economy, will be unveiled by the prime minister during the event.

- **The plan delineates tactical endeavours targeted at:**

- improving port infrastructure,
- encouraging eco-friendly behaviours, and
- promoting cross-border cooperation.
- The largest maritime event in the nation is the summit.
- Ministers from Europe, Africa, South America, and Asia (including Central Asia, the Middle East, and the BIMSTEC region) will participate from all over the world.

- Global CEOs, business executives, investors, officials, and other global stakeholders will also be present at the summit.
- Ministers and other dignitaries will also represent a number of Indian states at the summit.
- Additionally, the summit will offer a fantastic venue for drawing foreign investment to the nation's maritime industry.

- **Important matters that will be discussed:**

- ports of the forthcoming
- removal of carbon;
- both inland waterways and coastal shipping;
- building ships;
- fixing and reusing;
- money, insurance, and mediation;
- maritime assemblages;
- creativity and technology;
- maritime security and safety; as well as
- tourism on the sea.

- **Former summits:**

- Mumbai hosted the inaugural Maritime India summit in 2016.
- In 2021, the Second Maritime Summit took place virtually.

- ***Source → The Hindu***