Prelim Bits 03-10-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Arctic Acidification

- *Researchers have recently highlighted the changing chemistry of the western region of Arctic Ocean.*
- Scientists have predicted that by 2050, Arctic sea ice in this region will no longer survive the increasingly warm summers.
- As a result, the ocean's chemistry will grow more acidic.

pH is a measure of the level of acid or alkali in a water and Seawater is normally alkaline, with a pH value of around 8.1.

- Acidification creates life-threatening problems for the diverse population of sea creatures, plants and other living things that depend on a healthy ocean.

Ocean Acidification is a process of dissolving CO2 in seawater which forms carbonic acid by decreasing the ocean's pH.

- The researchers have also identified a strong correlation between the accelerated rate of melting ice and the rate of ocean acidification (rapid pH decrease).
- Increasing rate of melting changes the surface water in three primary ways.

1. The water under the sea ice, which had a deficit of carbon dioxide, now is exposed to the atmospheric carbon dioxide and can take it up freely.
2. The seawater mixed with meltwater is light and can't mix easily into deeper waters, which means the carbon dioxide is concentrated at the surface.
3. The meltwater dilutes the carbonate ion concentration in the seawater, weakening its ability to neutralise the carbon dioxide into bicarbonate and rapidly decreasing ocean pH.

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Community reserves

Increasing community reserves in North East India poses a serious question about the backdoor entry of the forest department.

- Unlike other regions of India, administrative control of forests in the North East is predominantly by communities, with much of the forests listed as 'unclassified'.
- But North East India has seen a rapid increase of community reserves in the last 11 years.
- A community reserve is usually formed by the local village council and the forest department signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU).
- Community reserves fall under the protected areas, along with marine protected areas, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and conservation reserves, according to the Wild Life (Protection) Act (WLPA), 1972.
- Once a forest land has been declared a community reserve, its governance comes under forest department instead of being governed by the local village councils.
- After a forest has been made into a community reserve, people cannot hunt there, nor can they use it for agricultural practices, leave alone *jhum* cultivation.
- But the village council members who agree to sign the MoU are mostly illiterate and do not know what they are getting into and changes the lives of local residents.

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Swachh Survekshan Ranking 2022

President Droupadi Murmu has recently presented awards as part of Azadi@75 Swachh Survekshan 2022.

- Swachh Survekshan is a Competitive Monitoring Framework for accelerating Hygiene outcomes in Urban India.
- The mission started in 2014 by vision of a Swachh Bharat within the timeframe of five years.
- A framework is to bring competition amongst cities and States to improve their performance in cleanliness.
- It helps India to achieve the goal of sustainable sanitation and waste management.
- The **'Prerak DAUUR Samman'** is a new award category, given based on performance of cities.
- This Samman will be given to cities for five levels of achievement in Swachhata :

1. Divya (Platinum)
2. Anupam (Gold)

3. Ujjwal (Silver)
4. Udit (Bronze)
5. Aarohi (Aspiring)

- The annual cleanliness survey is conducted by the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**.

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UNSC Resolution on Russia's annexation

India has recently abstained from an UNSC resolution that criticizes Russia's 'annexation' of parts of Ukraine.

- Russia has recently annexed four regions of Ukraine - Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson through a referendum.
- Annexation refers to when a country forcefully claims sovereignty and control over a different country's territory.
- It usually involves the use of the military and it is unilateral.
- The US and Albania has tabled a draft resolution, in the 15-nation UN Security Council, which condemns the referendum.

- The UNSC could not adopt the resolution as Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council vetoed it.
- India abstains from the resolution underlining that escalation of tensions is in no one's interest and it is important that pathways are found for a return to the negotiating table.
- The resolution was supported by 10 of the 15 members of UNSC.
- China, Gabon, India, and Brazil abstained from voting and Russia vetoed the resolution.

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YUVA 2.0

Union Ministry of Education has recently launched the PM's Scheme for mentoring (YUVA 2.0)

- **YUVA (Young, Upcoming and Versatile Authors) 2.0** is an Author Mentorship programme to train authors (below 30 years of age).
- It aims to promote reading, writing and book culture in the country and project India and Indian writings globally.
- It is a part of India@75 Project (**Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**).
- It promotes writers to write on subjects regarding Indian heritage, culture and knowledge system.

Presently India tops the chart in youth population being 66% of the total.

- The **National Book Trust (NBT), India**, under the Ministry of Education is the Implementing Agency of this scheme.
- The books prepared under this scheme will be published by NBT, India.
- By promoting **'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'** the books will be translated into other Indian languages.
- The selected young authors will interact with some of the best authors of the world, and participate in literary festivals.

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