Prelim Bits 18-06-2019

Catalhoyuk

- Catalhoyuk was a very large Neolithic and Chalcolithic proto-city settlement in southern Anatolia, Turkey.
- The city existed from approximately 7500 BC to 5700 BC, and flourished around 7000 BC.
- Catalhoyuk is the best example of an early Neolithic town where humans began to swap a nomadic hunter-gatherer existence for a lifestyle centered on farming, i.e. the transition to a fully settled existence has been satisfactorily achieved.
- In 2012, it was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- According to recent studies it is found that the ancient city has faced modern day urban problems like Overcrowding, Violence, Infectious diseases, and Environmental degradation.
- Catalhoyuk's residents lived in clay brick structures akin to apartments, entering and exiting through ladders that connected the living areas of houses to the roofs.
- After death, residents were buried in pits dug into the floors of the homes.

Desertification

- Desertification is a type of land degradation in which a relatively dry the land region becomes increasingly arid.
- Desertification leads to losing bodies of water as well as vegetation and wildlife.
- Desertification and land degradation are major threats to agricultural productivity in our country.
- Around 40 to 70 per cent of the land has undergone desertification in eight states, Rajasthan, Delhi, Goa, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Tripura and Himachal Pradesh
- The highest increase in land degradation is observed in Lunglei district of Mizoram (5.81 percent increase from 2003-05 to 2011-13)
- Loss of soil cover, mainly due to rainfall and surface runoff, is one of the biggest reasons for desertification.
- It is responsible for 10.98 percent of desertification in the country.

- Other main reasons include, wind erosion (5.55 per cent), human-made or settlements (0.69 per cent), vegetation degradation (8.91 per cent) and salinity (1.12 per cent)

UNCCD

- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification is established in 1994.
- It is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management.
- The main agenda of this convention is to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030.
- India a signatory to UNCCD for the first time will host the 14th session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in September 2019.
- Other two major conventions of United Nations are the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Co2 Emissions of Bitcoins

- According to recent studies it is found that the use of Bitcoin, a popular virtual currency emits over 22 megatons of carbon dioxide annually.
- For a Bitcoin transfer to be executed and validated, a mathematical puzzle must be solved by an arbitrary computer in the global Bitcoin network.
- The network, which anyone can join, rewards the puzzle solvers in Bitcoin.
- The computing capacity used in this process known as Bitcoin mining has increased rapidly in recent years.
- The power consumption of hardware behind the bitcoin network is about 46 TWh (Terra Watts).

Yoga Locator App

- AYUSH Ministry has launched Yoga Locator app as a part of International Yoga day celebrations.
- The app will help to locate yoga events around the city, also provides a list of Yoga training centres and instructors near the user’s location.
- The app enables yoga instructors to register themselves and reach out to people who want to pursue a yoga course.
- The app will be available permanently and it will give information to people about yoga activities happening in the user’s vicinity throughout the year.

Source: The Hindu, Down to Earth, Indian Express

