Prelim Bits 22-03-2022 | Daily UPSC Current Affairs

Finlandization

Recently, as the Russia invoked the threat of Ukraine joining NATO as a pretext for the invasion, the term "Finlandization" of Ukraine has become popular.

- 'Finlandization' is the process whereby a country is induced to favour, or refrain from opposing, the interests of a more powerful country, despite not being politically allied to it.
- This term was originally used with reference to the influence of the former Soviet Union on its neighbour Finland.
- It refers to the **policy of strict neutrality** between Moscow and the West that Finland followed during the decades of the Cold War.
- The principle of neutrality was rooted in the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (or YYA Treaty) that Finland signed with the USSR in 1948.
- Among other things, Moscow guaranteed it wouldn't invade Finland.
- Later, the term was formally coined by the German political scientist **Richard Lowenthal** in 1961 in the wake of the Berlin crisis.
- He used it to warn about the Soviet Union's efforts to gain influence in Europe by the same oppressive methods they used on Finland.

Reference

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3. https://www.historytoday.com/archive/finland-and-finlandization

World Happiness Report 2022

Recently, the latest edition of the United Nations' World Happiness Report for the year 2022 was released.

- This report is issued annually by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
- This report is a measurement of subjective well-being of 150 countries (146 in 2022).
- It relies on three main well-being indicators (life evaluations, positive emotions, and negative emotions), levels of GDP, life expectancy etc.
- Happiness rankings are based on life evaluations as the more stable measure of the quality of people's lives.
- It assigns a score on a scale of 0-10, based on an average of data over a three-year-period.
- **Findings** - This year (2022) marks the tenth anniversary of the World Happiness Report.
- For the fifth straight year, the World Happiness Report 2022 has found **Finland** to be the happiest country in the world.

- From the other end, **Afghanistan** was ranked as the unhappiest nation, followed by Lebanon, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Botswana, respectively.
- **India**, meanwhile, saw a marginal improvement in its ranking, jumping three spots to 136, from 139 a year ago.
- **Russia and Ukraine**, currently at war with each other, have been ranked 80 and 98 respectively.
- The 2022 rankings, however, were compiled much before Russia launched invasion of its neighbour.

Reference

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Ol Chiki

For first time, the Indian Constitution has been translated in Santali, written in the Ol Chiki script.

- Also known as Ol Cemet', Ol script and Ol ciki Script, the Ol Chiki script is used for writing Santali.
- **Pandit Raghunath Murmu** (Guru Gomke) is the inventor of Ol Chiki script.
- In the novel **Bidu Chandan**, he described how god Bidu, and godess Chandan who appear on Earth as humans had naturally invented the Ol Chiki script to communicate with each other using written Santali.
- One of the interesting feature of the Ol Chiki script is that it makes use of signs and symbols long familiar to the Santals.

Santali

- Santali is a language with its own special characteristics, and has a literature which dates back to the beginning of the 15th century.
- Santali belongs to the Munda group languages of the Austro-Asiatric family.
- According to the 2011 Census of India, Santali is spoken by over 70 lakh people across the country.
- In 2003, the 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act added Santhali (along with the Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages) to Schedule VIII (Official Languages of India) to the Constitution of India.
- This addition meant that the Indian government was obligated
    1. To undertake the development of the Santali language and
    2. To allow students appearing for school-level examinations and entrance examinations for public service jobs to use the language.
- In 2005, India’s Sahitya Akademi started handing out awards every year for outstanding literary works in Santali, a move that helped preserve and give more visibility to the community’s literature.

Reference

1. https://indianexpress.com/article/india/indian-constitution-translation-ol-chiki-7823156/
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GI Tag for Narasinghapettai Nagaswarm

Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram has got the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag under 'musical instruments of class 15'.

- Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram is Tamil Nadu's traditional wind instrument, made by traditional village artisans of Kumbakonam.
- The artisans based in Narasinganpetti village are making them through specialised processing skills. The technique and skill of making these instruments were inherited from their forefathers.
- The nagaswaram now used by artists throughout is called pari naggeswaram and is longer than Thimiri.
- **Making** - A major portion of Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram is made from the traditional wood **'acha'** (Hardwickia binata), a type of ebony.
- Artisans of the nagaswaram choose the wood wisely, ensuring it is 200 years old, and which does not absorb moisture.
- The top portion has a metal staple into which a small metallic cylinder is inserted to hold the mouthpiece made of reed.
- The reeds are made from the leaves of a locally grown plant called **'naanal'** (a variety of bamboo).
- Artisans use drilling machines, besides carpentry tools, to make the nagaswarams that are played widely in functions like weddings and temple festivals.

Reference

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2. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/trichy/tamil-nadu-gi-tag-for-handmade-narasingapettai-nagaswaram/articleshow/90342793.cms
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Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

India calls on nations to abide by Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention at the UNSC meet.

- Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) was the first multi-lateral treaty categorically banning biological and toxin weapons.
- It is a disarmament treaty that effectively bans the development, stockpile, production, or transfer of biological agents and toxins of "types and quantities" that are not protective or peaceful.
- BTWC has 183 members (including India).

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