Prelim Bits 26-05-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

River Kolak

Kolak fisherfolk living along the banks of River Kolak is in distress as chemicals from Vapi industries destroy river catch.

- Kolak River is a river in Gujarat in western India.
- The west flowing river originates is Kaprada taluka.
- Kolak River flows into the Arabian Sea near Udwada.
- Its basin has a maximum length of 50 km.
- It is also connected to Madhuban reservoir of Damanganga River.
- It flows through the north side of Vapi city in Gujarat.
- Kolak village on the bank of River Kolak in Gujarat's Valsad district.
- The village is home to 4,646 people, most of whom rely on fishing for their livelihood.
- The effluent discharge from Vapi's industries is causing pollution of the river.

References

1. DTE - Critically polluted River Kolak: Kolak fisherfolk in distress

Da Vinci glow

The experts predicted that a 'da Vinci glow' would be visible around the new moon on May 19, 2023.

- The da Vinci glow is a phenomenon in which the crescent moon is on the horizon, but the outline of a full moon is visible.
- The phenomenon usually happens close to sunset.
- On some days, this happens after the sun sets, and the sky is dark but not completely dark.
- This glow is also called *earthshine*, since it occurs due to light reflected from the earth and not the sun.
- The earthshine is the sunlight first reflected by the earth's surface, and then it's reflected by the moon before it reaches our eyes.
- Since it is reflected twice, it is dimmer than the visible part of the moon and thus appears as a faint glow, called the da Vinci glow.
- Earth's clouds are the primary source of this earthshine.

According to NASA, earthshine makes night on the moon 50-times brighter than a full-moon night on the earth.

- Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) was the first person to describe the phenomenon in the 16th century and it was named after him.
- Before da Vinci's theory, the 'ashen glow' of the moon was often called the 'old moon in the new moon's arms'.

References

1. The Hindu - What is da Vinci glow?
2. CNN - When can you see the moon in the Da Vinci glow
3. NASA - The Da Vinci Glow

Dag Hammarskjold Medal

Three Indian U.N. peacekeepers will be honoured posthumously with the Dag Hammarskjold Medal for their supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

- The Security Council established the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Medal as a posthumous award to members of peacekeeping operations.
- The medal is a tribute to the sacrifice of those who have lost their life as a result of service in peacekeeping operations of UN.
- In 1997, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of peacekeeping, the Security Council held a meeting to honour United Nations peacekeepers.
- The medal is the highest honour awarded to U.N. Peacekeepers.
- In 1998, the first Medal was presented to the family of Dag Hammarskjöld.
- The second medal honoured Commandant René de Labarrière, who was the first peacekeeper to lose his life in a United Nations peacekeeping operation, in 1948.
- The International day of UN Peacekeepers is observed every year on 29 May.
- Each year on Peacekeeper's Day, this medal is awarded at a ceremony at UN headquarters.
- Other Awards given on Peacekeeper's day
    - Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage
    - UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award

Dag Hammarskjöld was a Swedish economist and diplomat who served as the second Secretary-General of the United Nations (1953-1961)

- 2023 peacekeeper's day marks the 75th anniversary of the UN Peacekeeping Mission.
- The three Indian U.N. peacekeepers will be honoured posthumously with the Dag Hammarskjold Medal this year. They are,
- Border Security Force (BSF) personnel Head Constables Shishupal Singh and Samwali Ram Vishnoi served with the Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Shaber Taher Ali was employed in a civilian capacity with the U.N. Assistance Mission for Iraq.

Similar Topics - Women U.N. Peacekeepers, Group of Friends, UN Peacekeeping Missions and Blue Helmets

References

1. The Hindu - Indian peacekeepers to be honoured with Dag Hammarskjold medal
2. UN - Peacekeeper's Awards

NITI Aayog's Health Index

NITI Aayog's annual 'health index' for the COVID year of 2020-21 was released.

- The annual health index was launched by the NITI Aayog in 2017.
- The Health Index is a weighted composite index based on 24 indicators grouped under the domains of '*health outcomes*', '*governance and information*', and '*key inputs/ processes*'.
- The health index measures the performance of states and UTs on a weighted composite score on 2 parameters –
  - Incremental performance (year-on-year progress)
  - Overall performance.
- The states and UTs are categorised separately as 'larger states', 'smaller states' and UTs and they are then ranked based on their scores.
- The fifth health index (2020-21) report has not been made public yet.
- COVID year 2020-21 assessment report

Category	Top Performers	Bottom Performers
Larger States (19)	Kerala (1st)	Bihar (19th)
	Tamil Nadu (2nd)	Uttar Pradesh (18th)
	Telangana (3rd)	Madhya Pradesh (17th)
Smaller States (8)	Tripura (1st)	Arunachal Pradesh (6th)
	Sikkim (2nd)	Nagaland (7th)
	Goa (3rd)	Manipur (8th)
Incremental Performance	Rajasthan	
	Uttarakhand	-
	Odisha	
UTs (8)	Lakshadweep	Delhi

References

1. IE - NITI Aayog's Annual Health Index for 2020-21
2. NITI Aayog - Health Index

Global Greenhouse Gas Watch (G3W)

The World Meteorological Congress has approved a new greenhouse gas (GHG) monitoring initiative in a landmark decision.

- Global Greenhouse Gas Watch (G3W) is an initiative coordinated by World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).
- G3W aims to establish internationally coordinated monitoring of greenhouse gas fluxes (top-down) to support the provision of the UNFCCC parties and other stakeholders.
- The new global GHG watch will fill critical information gaps and provide an integrated and operational framework.
- The framework will bring all space-based and surface-based observing systems, as well as modelling and data assimilation capabilities, under one roof.
- **Components -** There are 4 main components of G3W
    1. Surface-based and satellite- based observations.
    2. Prior observations.
    3. Near-real time international exchange of input and output data.
    4. Global high-resolution modelling/data assimilation.
- **Output -** The system will provide sustained delivery of monthly global estimates of net GHG fluxes into and out of the atmosphere at a 100 by 100 km resolution.
- **Benefits -** Improved evaluation of sources and sinks of greenhouse gases.
- Indicate their association with the biosphere, the ocean and the permafrost areas.

References

1. DTE - WMO approves a global tracker for greenhouse gas emissions
2. WMO - Global Greenhouse Gas Watch (GGGW)

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