Prelim Bits 27-11-2022 & 28-11-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

China - Indian Ocean Region Forum

China convened the first 'China-Indian Ocean Region Forum' bringing together 19 countries from the region except India.

- The first Indian Ocean Region Forum on Development Cooperation (IORFDC) was held in Kunming city in China.
- Representatives from 19 countries including all countries from South Asia except India attended this event.
- The forum was organised by the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), China's new development aid agency.
- In this forum, China proposed to establish a marine disaster prevention and mitigation cooperation mechanism between China and countries in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).
- China also proposed the establishment of a blue economy think tank network for China and countries in the IOR.
- The new China-led forum could be seen as a counter measure to India's IORA

Indian Ocean Rim Association

- The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is a dynamic inter-governmental organization.
- It is aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean region.
- It has 22 Member States and 10 Dialogue Partners.
- IORA's apex body is the Council of Foreign Ministers (COM) which meets annually.

References

1. The Hindu - China's Indian Ocean forum: India lone absentee
2. Hindustan Times - China gathers India Ocean countries for forum

PSLV-C54

ISRO's PSLV-C54 placed Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-06) and eight co-passenger satellites in orbits.

Significance of PSLV-C54

- It is one of ISRO's longest missions, where it successfully placed nine satellites, including EOS-06 in multiple orbits.
- For the first time, ISRO used two orbit change thrusters in the PSLV rocket to change orbits.
- The mission placed satellites in two different sun synchronous orbits.

The other 7 commercial satellites (Astrocast 1-4 from the US, Thybolt -1&2 and Anand) were roped in for launch via NSIL.

India-Bhutan SAT

- The ISRO NanoSatellite-2 for Bhutan (INS-2B) was built by the joint collaboration of Indian scientist and Bhutanese scientists.
- The INS-2B has two payloads and will provide high-resolution images to Bhutan for the management of the country's natural resources.

OCEANSAT-3

- The Earth Observation Satellite-6 (EOS-06) is the third-generation satellite in the Oceansat series.
- This is to provide continuity services of Oceansat-2 spacecraft with enhanced payload specifications as well as application areas.
- EOS-06 is envisaged to observe ocean colour data, sea surface temperature and wind vector data to use in oceanography, climatic and meteorological applications.
- The satellite also supports value added products such as potential fishing zone using chlorophyll, SST and wind speed, and land based geophysical parameters.
- So far India has launched several Ocean Observatory Satellites including Oceansat series.

References

1. The Hindu - PSLV-C54 places earth observation satellite in orbit
2. Hindustan Times - ISRO successfully launches India-Bhutan SAT
3. Indian Express - PSLV-C54 carried earth observation satellite
4. ISRO - PSLV-C54/EOS-06 Mission

Sacred Grooves

The Tamil Nadu's Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR & CE) Department, which administers 1,500 temples in the arid northern region, have started recreating sacred groves to protect the forest patches.

- Sacred forests or groves comprise patches of natural vegetation from a few trees to several acres that are dedicated to local deities or tree spirits.
- These spaces are protected by local communities because of their religious beliefs and traditional rituals that run through several generations.

- In India, sacred groves are found all over the country and abundantly along the Western Ghats.
- The degree of sanctity accorded to the sacred groves varies from one area to another. Eg: In some forests, even the dry foliage and fallen fruits are not touched.

Significance	Threats
• The vegetation cover of the sacred groves improves the soil stability of the area and prevents soil erosion. • They are important repositories of floral and faunal diversity that have been conserved by local communities in a sustainable manner. • The groves are often associated with ponds, streams or springs and the vegetative cover helps in the recharging aquifers.	• Disappearance of the traditional belief systems. • Transformation of the primitive forms of nature worship into formal temple worship. • Rapid urbanization and developmental interventions. • Invasion by exotic weeds and commercial forestry. • Increasing livestock grazing and fuelwood collection.

References

1. The Hindu - Recreating sacred groves in Tamil Nadu
2. ENVIS – Sacred Forests

Bluebugging

Apps that let users connect smartphones or laptops to wireless earplugs can record conversations, and are vulnerable to hacks.

- Bluebugging is a form of hacking that lets attackers access a device through its discoverable Bluetooth connection.
- Once a device or phone is bluebugged, a hacker can listen to the calls, read and send messages and steal and modify contacts.
- **Susceptible Devices** - Any Bluetooth-enabled device can be bluebugged.
- Wireless earbuds are more susceptible to such attacks and can record conversations.

Process of bluebugging

- It works by exploiting Bluetooth connectivity in devices by pairing with the device via Bluetooth.
- For bluebugging to happen, the device's Bluetooth must be in discoverable mode.
- Once a connection is established between the hacker and the device, hackers can use brute force attacks to bypass authentication.
- They can install malware in the compromised device to gain unauthorised access to it.

Other Bluetooth cyber-attacks

- There are 3 main Bluetooth cyber-attack types - Bluebugging, Bluejacking and Bluesnarfing.

References

1. The Hindu -What is bluebugging?

UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards

The heroic restoration of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum in India, has received the Award of Excellence in UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards 2022 for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

- The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme is awarded every year since 2000.
- It has been recognizing the efforts of private individuals and organizations in restoring, conserving, and transforming structures and buildings of heritage value in the region.
- In 2022, 13 projects from 6 countries have been acknowledged for awards, including 4 from India.

Heritage property Awarded	Award
Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum, Mumbai	Award of Excellence
Stepwells of Golconda Fort, Hyderabad	Award of Distinction
Domakonda Fort, Telangana	Award of Merit
Byculla Station, Mumbai	

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum

- The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum (CSMVS) is a part of the 'Victorian gothic and art deco ensembles of Mumbai World Heritage Site' in India.
- The museum got the award for its impressive restoration of a major civic institution in the historic city of Mumbai.
- The museum was established as the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India in 1922.
- The premier art and history museum is an autonomous institution unaided by the government but supported by public-private partnerships.

Stepwells of Golconda

- The 17th century Qutb Shahi tombs complex which comprises several stepwells (baoli), is located near the Golconda fort in Telangana.
- The Idgah baoli (stepwell) is among the 7 wells inside the Qutb Shahi tombs complex that was restored as part of the conservation effort.

Domakonda Fort

- The Domakonda Fort is a private property and was built in the 18th century with an amalgam of styles including stucco work, arched pillars, flat ceiling, and a courtyard with a water garden pond.

Byculla Station

- The Byculla railway station in Mumbai is part of Central Railways, received an award of merit for its conservation efforts.

References

1. UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation
2. The Hindu - Restoration of Mumbai's century-old museum
3. Indian Express – CSMVS wins UNESCO award for conservation

