Prelim Bits 30-03-2019

Heat Wave

- A Heat Wave is a period of abnormally high temperatures, more than the normal maximum temperature that occurs between occur between March and June in the North-Western parts of India.
- Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) defines Heat Wave need not be considered till the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40*C for Plains and at least 30*C for Hilly regions
- When actual maximum temperature remains 45*C or more irrespective of normal maximum temperature, heat waves should be declared.
- According to a recent analysis, it is found that the urban areas witness less temperature increase during heat waves compared with non-urban areas.
- This is because the vegetation cover of non-urban areas in the form of crops and soil moisture decline sharply after crop harvest well before the onset of heat waves (during summer).
- Where the urban areas have perennial vegetation in the form of tree cover and lawns, and more number of water bodies, which help in keeping the urban areas relatively cooler than non-urban areas.

GI Tags for Indian Coffee

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, under Ministry of Commerce and Industry has recently awarded Geographical Indication (GI) to five varieties of Indian coffee.
- They are as follow

1. **Coorg Arabica coffee -** It is grown specifically in the region of Kodagu district in Karnataka.
2. **Wayanaad Robusta coffee -** It is grown specifically in the region of Wayanad district which is situated on the eastern portion of Kerala.
3. **Chikmagalur Arabica coffee -** It is grown specifically in the region of Chikmagalur district and it is situated in the Deccan plateau, belongs to the Malnad region of Karnataka.
4. **Araku Valley Arabica coffee -** It is coffee from the hilly tracks of Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha region.

- The coffee produce of Araku, by the tribals, follows an organic approach in which they emphasise management practices involving substantial use of organic manures, green manuring and organic pest management practices.

Coffee Production in India

- In India, coffee is cultivated in about 4.54 lakh hectares by 3.66 lakh coffee farmers of which 98% are small farmers.
- Coffee cultivation is mainly done in the Southern States of India:
- Karnataka – 54%
- Kerala – 19%
- Tamil Nadu – 8%
- Coffee is also grown in non-traditional areas like Andhra Pradesh and Odisha (17.2%) and North East States (1.8%).

Dhole

- Dhole (commonly known as the Asiatic wild dog) is an apex social carnivore in the tropical forests of South and South East Asia.
- In India Dhole are found in landscapes covering Karnataka portion of Western Ghats.
- IUCN red book lists Dholes as endangered.
- Generally dholes hunt in packs and tend to venture into forested landscapes adjoining protected areas.
- Anthropogenic factors, which fragment and alter landscapes seriously affects dholes.

India's marine meadows

- Tape seagrass grows up to 150cms tall and is found extensively in Indo-Pacific region, it acts as a feeding area for more than 1000 fish species.
- The grass can bury carbon in under water sediments 40 times faster than tropical forests bury under the soil, thus acts as a major carbon sink.
- The tape seagrass ecosystem under waters is known as India’s marine meadows, which can be extensively found in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Corporate equality Index

- Human Rights Campaign Foundation releases Corporate Equality Index (CEI) annually.
- It is the national benchmarking tool on corporate policies and practices pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer employees.
- CEI rating criteria have three key pillars:

1. Non-discrimination policies across business entities;
2. Equitable benefits for LGBTQ workers and their families;
3. Supporting an inclusive culture and corporate social responsibility.

Source: The Hindu, Down to Earth, New Indian Express

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