Prelim Bits 30-04-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Mother Nature - A 'Living Being'

The Madurai Bench of Madras High Court invoked the 'parens patriae jurisdiction', and has conferred juristic status to 'Mother Nature' as a 'living being' having the status of a legal entity.

- Declaring 'Mother Nature' a 'living being' will give the status of a legal person with all corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person, in order to preserve and conserve it.
- The court observed that 'Mother Nature' was accorded the rights akin to fundamental rights, legal rights, constitutional rights for its survival, safety, sustenance and resurgence
    1. To maintain its status and
    2. To promote its health and well-being
- The State and Central governments are directed to protect 'Mother Nature' and take appropriate steps in this regard in all possible ways.

The natural environment is part of basic human rights, of 'right to life' itself.

Reference

https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/mother-nature-is-a-living-being-with-legal-entity-hc/article65367743.ece#:~:text=The%20court%20observed%20that%20'Mother,its%20health%20and%20well-being

Rajamala Eravikulam National Park

The survival rate of newly born Nilgiri tahrs (up to one year) is found to be the highest at Rajamala in the Eravikulam National Park (ENP) than in other isolated natural habitats such as Silent Valley, Pothady, Munnar, etc.

- Rajamala is among the finest Hill Stations in Idukki, Kerala.
- Rajamala hills houses the Eravikulam National Park.
- The Eravikulam National Park is situated in the Kannan Devan Hills of the southern Western Ghats with an area of 97 sq. km.
- The Eravikulam National Park has the highest density and largest surviving population of **Nilgiri tahr**, the endangered mountain goat.
- The park is built mainly with the aim of conserving Nilgiri tahr.
- Every twelve years, this place will be carpeted with blue due to the mass flowering of **Neelakurinji flowers**.

Nilgiri Tahr

- The Nilgiri tahr (*Nilgiritragus hylocrius*) is the only mountain ungulate in southern India amongst the 12 species present in India.
- The Nilgiri tahr is a congener of the Himalayan tahr (Hemitragus jemlahicus), found in

Kashmir and Bhutan and the Arabian tahr (Arabitragus jayakari), found in Oman and United Arab Emirates.
- It is also the state animal of Tamil Nadu.
- It is an endemic species of the Western Ghats.
- The Nilgiri tahr, which used to be found along the entire stretch of Western Ghats, is presently found only in small fragmented pockets.
- Existing populations are under severe stress due to **habitat loss** and **hunting**.

Protection Status	
IUCN Red List of Threatened Species	Endangered
Wildlife (Protection) Act of India, 1972	Schedule I

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/survival-rates-of-nilgiri-tahr-highest-at-rajamala-in-munnar/article65366705.ece
2. https://www.keralatourism.org/destination/rajamala-idukki/209
3. https://www.wwfindia.org/about_wwf/priority_species/threatened_species/nilgiri_tahr/
4. https://www.keralatourism.org/munnar/nilgiri-tahr.php

Epilepsy

- Epilepsy is a chronic Non-Communicable Disease of the brain that affects people of all ages.
- It is characterized by recurrent seizures, which are brief episodes of involuntary movement that may involve a part of the body (partial) or the entire body (generalized) and are sometimes accompanied by loss of consciousness and control of bowel or bladder function.
- Seizure episodes are a result of excessive electrical discharges in a group of brain cells.
- **Symptoms** - Seizure symptoms can vary widely.
- Some people with epilepsy simply stare blankly for a few seconds during a seizure, while others repeatedly twitch their arms or legs.
- One seizure does not signify epilepsy (up to 10% of people worldwide have one seizure during their lifetime).
- Epilepsy is defined as having two or more unprovoked seizures.
- **Treatment** - Treatment with medications or sometimes surgery can control seizures for the majority of people with epilepsy.
- Some people require lifelong treatment to control seizures, but for others, the seizures eventually go away.
- Some children with epilepsy may outgrow the condition with age.
- **Response** - WHO, the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) and the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) led the Global Campaign Against Epilepsy to bring the disease out of the shadows.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/epilepsy-in-children-is-treatable/article65368864.ece
2. https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/epilepsy/symptoms-causes/syc-20350093#:~:text=Epilepsy%20is%20a%20central%20nervous,races%2C%20ethnic%20backgrounds%20and%20ages.
3. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/epilepsy

Battery Passport

German-funded consortium of 11 carmakers and battery producers, including BMW, Umicore and BASF, are aiming to develop a "battery passport" that traces the content and carbon footprint of batteries in Europe.

- The Battery Passport is a **digital representation of a battery** that conveys information about all applicable ESG and lifecycle requirements based on a comprehensive definition of a sustainable battery.
- Each Battery Passport will be a digital twin of its physical battery enabled by the digital Battery Passport platform.
- [The Battery Passport platform offers a global solution for securely sharing information and data.
- This platform aims to go beyond enabling the performance management of just one battery to that of all batteries across the full industry value chain.]
- Batteries could carry a QR code linking to an online database where EV owners, businesses or regulators could access information on the battery's composition.
- This digital tool should also make it easier to recycle raw materials inside batteries, which would cut dependence on foreign suppliers which control the vast majority of resources, like lithium and nickel, essential for battery production.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/german-funded-consortium-to-develop-battery-passport-for-europe/article65356022.ece
2. https://www.globalbattery.org/battery-passport/

Extreme Poverty Dipped in India - World Bank

- The World Bank has reported that extreme poverty in India dropped to 10.2% in 2019 from as much as 22.5% in 2011 and the pace of reduction in rural India has been more dramatic than in urban areas.
- During the 2011-2019 period, the poverty level in rural and urban areas declined by 14.7 and 7.9% points, respectively.
- While it eased to 11.6% in rural areas in 2019, the urban poverty level stood at 6.3%.
- Extreme poverty has been measured in terms of the number of people living on less than $1.90 a day (roughly Rs 145).
- Interestingly, urban poverty inched up by 2% points in the demonetisation year of 2016 and rural poverty rose by 10 basis points in 2019.
- According to the World Bank paper, there has been a slight moderation in consumption inequality since 2011, but by a margin smaller than what is reported in the unreleased 2017 NSS report.
- Real incomes for farmers with the smallest landholdings have risen by 10% in annualised terms during the 2013-2019 period.

Reference

1. https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/extreme-poverty-dipped-in-india-world-bank-report-10165022056830html#:~:text=Extreme%20poverty%20in%20India%20was,World%20Bank%20policy%20research%20said
2. https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/world-bank-report-extreme-poverty-in-india-eased-

12-3-percentage-points-during-2011-2019/2494297/

