UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 28-01-2021

India's Agreement with IEA

- The Framework for Strategic Partnership between the International Energy Agency (IEA) members and India was signed.
- This partnership would be a stepping stone towards India becoming a full member of the IEA.
- The IEA Secretariat will be responsible for implementation of the cooperative activities in India.
- To know more about International Energy Agency, click here.

Elephant Corridor Case

- The Supreme Court appointed a conservationist as a Member of Technical Committee of the National Elephant 2 Action Plan.
- This three-member Committee was constituted for looking into the Elephant Corridor Case.
- It hears complaints by land owners against the action taken by the Nilgris Collector, which included allegations about arbitrary variance in acreage of the elephant corridor.
- The Supreme Court upheld Tamil Nadu government's authority to notify an 'elephant corridor' and protect the migratory path of the animals through the Nilgiri biosphere reserve.
- The corridor is situated in the Sigur plateau and sustains elephant (Keystone species) populations and their genetic diversity.
- The elephants cross the plateau in search of food and water.

Sigur plateau

- Sigur plateau connects the Western and the Eastern Ghats.
- It has the Nilgiri Hills on its south western side and the Moyar River Valley on its north-eastern side.

Keystone species

- A keystone species is a plant or animal that plays a unique role in the way an ecosystem functions.
- Without them, the ecosystem would be dramatically different or cease to exist altogether.

- Its disappearance could affect other species that rely on it for survival. To know more, click here.

Public Safety Rules 2017

- The situation turned violent when few farmer groups deviated from the agreed route and marched towards central Delhi.
- The Union government issued orders to temporarily suspend Internet in some areas of Delhi under a rarely used provision of a British era Act.
- The order was issued under the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety Rules 2017) of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.
- The rules empower the Union Home Secretary and a State's Home Secretary to pass directions to suspend the telecom services in an area due to public emergency or public safety.
- All such orders have to be reviewed by a committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary within five days.

World Economic Situation and Prospects 2021

- The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2021 was released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).
- It said that the world economy was hit by a once-in-a-century crisis a Great Disruption unleashed by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.
- India's economy is projected to grow at 7.3% in 2021.
- The global economy shrank by 4.3% in 2020, over two-and-a-half times more than during the global financial crisis of 2009.
- The modest recovery of 4.7% expected in 2021 would barely offset the losses of 2020.

IGN Framework

- India has said that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) needs inclusive reforms to act effectively.
- India, along with Brazil, Japan and Germany are pressing for urgent reform of the UNSC and for a permanent seat in it.
- For this, in 2008, the UN General Assembly has decided to facilitate the reform process through the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) framework on equitable representation and expansion of the UNSC.
- The UNGA's adoption of a 2015 resolution to allow the IGN on the basis of a framework document generated some enthusiasm.
- But, it was dampened by the U.S., Russia and China being opposed to serious reform of the Council.

- In any case, the exercise has been deferred in view of the pandemic.

Cairn and India

- Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) awarded Cairn Energy an amount of $1.2 billion in damages for the tax authorities' decision to take by force and subsequently sell the company's shares, etc.
- Cairn has said that it may begin attaching Indian assets including bank accounts in different world capitals, unless the government resolves to discuss paying the amount awarded.
- It would consider this extreme option if India did not respond, as it was under pressure from its shareholders who expect early resolution.
- It said that the U.K.-India Bilateral Investment Treaty, the UNCITRAL arbitration rules, and the New York Convention to which India is a signatory, that would be breached if India fails to pay the dues.
- To know more about Permanent Court of Arbitration, click here.

Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business Standard

