

Daily Current Affairs: 17.06.2021

UN 'High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land degradation and Drought'

Why in the News?

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** delivered a keynote address at the UN “High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought”.
- He spoke at the Opening Segment in his capacity as the **President of the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**.



Key Points

Steps taken by India to deal with the Land Degradation issue:

- India is on track to achieve its national commitment of Land degradation neutrality (Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3).
- Restoration of 26 million hectares of degraded land aimed by 2030 to achieve an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- In the last 10 years, around 3 million hectares of forest cover has been added in India, enhancing the combined forest cover to almost one-fourth of the country's total area.
- The Prime Minister gave an example of the **Banni region in Rann of Kutch in Gujarat** to illustrate how restoration of land can start a virtuous cycle of good soil health, increased land productivity, food security and improved livelihoods.
- Centre of Excellence is being set up in India to promote a scientific approach towards land degradation issues

About Land Degradation:

- Land degradation is a process in which the value of the biophysical environment is affected by a combination of human-induced processes acting upon the land.
- Land degradation is caused by multiple forces, including extreme weather conditions, particularly drought.

Consequences

There are four main ways of looking at land degradation and its impact on the environment around it:

- A temporary or permanent decline in the productive capacity of the land
- Action in the land's capacity to provide resources for human livelihoods

- Loss of biodiversity
- Shifting ecological risk

Global Efforts to Check Land Degradation:

- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- The Delhi Declaration of 2019, signed by 14th CoP of the UNCCD, called for better access and stewardship over land.
- The Bonn Challenge
- Great Green Wall Initiative
- Drought Initiative
- Land Degradation Neutrality programme



India's Efforts to Check Land Degradation:

- The National Action Programme for combating desertification in 2001
- Integrated Watershed Management Programme (Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana)
- National Mission for Green India
- National Afforestation Programme
- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
- Soil Health Card Scheme
- Soil Conservation in the Catchment of River Valley Project
- Command Area Development and Water Management programme

Source: PIB

42nd session of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Conference

Why in the News?

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar addressed the 42nd session of FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) Conference.
- India is a founder member of the FAO and has played a significant role since inception as Chair and member of various statutory bodies and committees.

Key Points

India's efforts for Food Security during the COVID 19 pandemic:

- The Agriculture sector in India performed well during the severe COVID-19 pandemic and registered an all time high production of **305 million tons of food grains** as well as their exports contributing to the Global Food Security.
- Special parcel trains with refrigeration facilities "**KISAN RAIL**" were introduced by Indian Railways.

- The Government of India launched the “**Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package**”. Under this scheme, free food grains were provided to 810 million beneficiaries.
- More than **Rupees 137000 Crore** have been sent to the bank accounts of over 100 million farmers under the “**PM Kisan**” **Scheme** to provide income support to the farmers.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Climate change and Agriculture schemes:

- Green India Mission
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- Sub-mission on AgroForestry
- Soil Health Card
- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana
- Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region
- India has launched various projects under the **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture** to develop, demonstrate and disseminate the techniques to make agriculture resilient to adverse impacts of climate change.
- The Green Revolution, White Revolution, blue revolution along with the Public Distribution System and price support system for farmers.
- **Facts about Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):**
Formation: 16 October 1945
Headquarters: Rome, Italy
Parent organization: United Nations Economic and Social Council
Director-General: Qu Dongyu

Note:

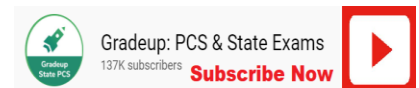
- To commemorate the long-standing relationship between India and the FAO, the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi had released a special **75 rupees commemorative coin to mark the 75th anniversary of the FAO** on 16th Oct 2020.

Source: PIB

8th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus

Why in the News?

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called for an open and inclusive order in Indo-Pacific based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations while addressing the **8th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus** on June 16, 2021.
 - Brunei is the Chair of the ADMM Plus forum in 2021.





Key Points

About ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus:

- The ADMM Plus is an annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN countries and eight dialogue partner countries - Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.

Facts about Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):

- **The 10 member countries of ASEAN** are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.
- **Headquarters:** Jakarta, Indonesia
- **Founded:** 8 August 1967



Image: ASEAN

Key points of the meeting:

- India supports utilisation of ASEAN-led mechanisms as important platforms for implementation of shared vision for the Indo-Pacific.
- India's support to freedom of navigation, over-flight and unimpeded commerce for all in international waters in accordance with the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**.
- The **Sea lanes of Communication** are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region.
 - On the '**Act East Policy**', announced by Prime Minister Narendra

Modi in November 2014, the key elements of the policy aim to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationships with countries in the Indo-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

- As a member of the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**, India remains committed to combat financing of terrorism.
- Through the **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** operations, India remains one of the first to respond in times of distress in the immediate as well as extended neighbourhood.
- As a founding member of the **Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM)**, India seeks to enhance capacity building through collaboration in the areas of Maritime Search & Rescue.

Source: PIB

WGI 2021 ranks India as 14th Most Charitable Country in the World

Why in the News?

- India is now ranked as the 14th most charitable country in the world as per a report released by the **World Giving Index 2021 (WGI)**.
- In the index **Indonesia topped** the list followed by Kenya.



Key Points

- India has been recognised among the Top 20 most generous countries across the globe, an improvisation from its earlier 10-year global rank of 82.
- As per the report, around 61 percent of Indians helped strangers, 34 percent volunteered for a good cause while 36 percent donated money.

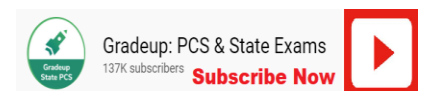
Note:

- The report suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has further increased the 'giving' trends worldwide.

About World Giving Index (WGI):

- WGI is a global survey that has interviewed more than 1.6 million people since 2009.
- It conducts surveys by asking three questions: have they helped a stranger, given money, or volunteered for a good cause in recent months.
- It releases an annual report published by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), using data gathered by Gallup and ranks countries in the world according to how charitable they are.
- The first report was produced in 2010 and this year marks the 10 year anniversary of WGI.

Source: Indian Express



2021 NATO Summit

Why in the News?

- The 2021 Brussels summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was the 31st formal meeting of the heads of state and heads of government of the NATO, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 14 June 2021.

Note: US President Joe Biden took part in his first in-person NATO summit.



Key Points

- NATO Leaders discussed a wide range of issues at the 2021 Brussels Summit, including the main themes of the NATO 2030 initiative: how to reinforce the Alliance's unity, broaden its approach to security and contribute to safeguarding the rules-based international order.

Note: NATO leaders declared **China a global security challenge**.

About NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization):

- NATO, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 European and North American countries. The organization implements the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949.

Source: The Hindu

Kannada actor Sanchari Vijay passes away



- National Award-winning actor Sanchari Vijay passed away.
- Vijay Kumar Basavarajaiah known by his stage name Sanchari Vijay, was an Indian actor known for his work in Kannada cinema.
- Vijay was awarded the National Film Award for Best Actor at the 62nd National Film Awards.
- He also received the Karnataka State Film Award for Best Actor and the Filmfare Critics Award for Best Actor – South for the performance.

Source: The Hindu

June 17, World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

Why in the News?

- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is a United Nations observance celebrated each year on 17 June.
- Its purpose is to raise awareness of the presence of desertification and drought, highlighting methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought.

**Desertification
& Drought Day**  **17 JUNE
2021**



Restoration. Land. Recovery.
We build back better with healthy land

Key Points

- The **theme** for 2021 is "**Restoration. Land. Recovery. We build back better with healthy land**".

History:

- This day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly resolution on January 30, 1995, after the day when the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was drafted.

Note: India is working towards restoring 2.6 crore hectares of degraded land by 2030 and assisting fellow developing countries to develop land-restoration strategies.

Source: Indian Express

