



For success in a changing world

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 16-11-2024

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Land Port Darranga

Syllabus: GS-1; Geography- Ports of India

Context

- To strengthen India-Bhutan relations, Immigration Check Post (ICP) at Land Port Darranga, Assam was inaugurated recently.



About

- **Land Port Darranga** is a strategic border point in the northeastern region of India, located in the Baksa district of Assam, near Bhutan.

Key Facts and Significance:

- **Location:** Situated in Darranga, Baksa district, Assam, along the Indo-Bhutan border. This land port serves as a key entry and exit point between India and Bhutan.
- **Economic and Trade Importance:**
 - Facilitates trade and economic ties between India and Bhutan, particularly benefiting Assam and neighboring northeastern states.
 - Promotes export of Indian goods such as agricultural produce, forest products, and industrial goods to Bhutan.

- Enhances Bhutan's access to the Indian market for goods such as minerals, timber, and agricultural products.
- **Regional Connectivity:**
 - Enhances connectivity between India and Bhutan, supporting India's "Act East Policy."
 - Improves access to Bhutan for northeastern states, fostering tourism and cultural exchange.
- **Infrastructure and Development:**
 - Equipped with customs and immigration facilities, making it a fully operational land port.
 - Development projects aim to modernize facilities, ensuring smoother cross-border movement of goods and people.
- **Security and Border Management:**
 - Plays a role in monitoring cross-border activities, ensuring secure and regulated movement between India and Bhutan.
 - Facilitates regulated immigration checks, helping manage security in the sensitive northeastern border region.

Strategic Importance:

- **Geopolitical Significance:** The port reinforces India's strategic influence along the Indo-Bhutan border, balancing China's influence in the region.
- **Regional Stability:** Promotes peaceful and cooperative relations with Bhutan, supporting stability and economic growth in the area.

Tumaini Festival

Syllabus: GS-1; Art & Culture

Context

- The Tumaini Festival, an annual event held since 2014 at Malawi's Dzaleka Refugee Camp, celebrates the resilience and culture of refugees through music, art, and crafts.



About

- The **Tumaini Festival** is a unique cultural event that brings together refugees and local communities in Malawi.
- Held annually since 2014, it is a platform for artistic expression, featuring music, theater, art, and crafts.
- The festival fosters solidarity and cultural exchange, symbolizing hope and resilience in the face of adversity.

Location and Significance

- The festival takes place at the **Dzaleka Refugee Camp**, which was established in 1994 to shelter people displaced by conflicts in neighboring countries, including **Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo**.
- Over the years, the camp has become a center for **humanitarian aid and cultural initiatives**, offering refugees an opportunity to engage in creative expression while strengthening community ties.

Cultural Impact

- The Tumaini Festival is noteworthy for being the only festival of its kind to be held in a refugee camp.

- It is an **annual celebration** organized by the refugees themselves, featuring various cultural performances and exhibitions.
- The festival highlights the **resilience of displaced people**, providing a space for healing and creativity.

Recognition and Awards

- In 2024, the Tumaini Festival received the **Cultures of Resistance Award (CoR)**.
- This recognition acknowledges the festival's significant contribution to **cultural diplomacy** and its role in bringing together diverse communities through artistic practices.

Conclusion

- The Tumaini Festival is an inspiring example of how culture and community can thrive even in the most challenging environments.
- It highlights the importance of fostering hope and unity through shared experiences, particularly in spaces where people are displaced due to conflict.

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR)

Syllabus: GS-3; Biodiversity

Context

- Ministry asks Maharashtra to address forced eviction concerns of 33 families in Tadoba-Andhari Reserve.

About

- **Location:** Chandrapur district, Maharashtra, India.
- **Area:** Approximately 1,727 square kilometers, including the Tadoba National Park (625 sq km) and the Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary (1,102 sq km).
- **Established:** Tadoba National Park was created in 1955, while the reserve was officially declared a Tiger Reserve in 1995, combining Tadoba National Park and Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary.

Significance

- **Tiger Reserve:** TATR is one of Maharashtra's oldest and largest tiger reserves and part of Project Tiger, which aims to protect Bengal tigers and their habitat.
- **High Tiger Density:** Known for a significant tiger population, TATR has gained popularity as a wildlife tourism destination due to its high sighting rates.

Flora and Fauna

- **Flora:** Primarily a dry deciduous forest with dense teak and bamboo forests. Other species include tendu, mahua, and bija.
- **Fauna:**
 - Mammals: Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, sloth bear, gaur (Indian bison), jungle cat, and wild dog.
 - Reptiles: Spectacled cobra, Indian python, and monitor lizard.
 - Birds: Over 195 bird species, including crested serpent eagle, grey-headed fish eagle, and red-headed vulture.
 - Andhari River: The reserve is named after the Andhari River, which flows through the sanctuary and supports the biodiversity in the region.

Conservation Efforts

- **Anti-Poaching Measures:** Stringent measures have been implemented, including field patrols, community engagement, and technology-assisted monitoring to prevent poaching.
- **Community Involvement:** Local tribal communities are engaged in conservation and ecotourism activities, promoting sustainable livelihoods and reducing human-animal conflicts.
- **Ecotourism Initiatives:** Tadoba has managed to leverage tourism sustainably, providing both funding for conservation efforts and economic benefits for locals.

Challenges

- **Human-Wildlife Conflict:** Given its proximity to villages and farmland, TATR faces conflicts involving livestock predation and occasional attacks.
- **Mining and Industrial Activity:** Industrial activities, particularly coal mining in the region, pose environmental risks that could impact the reserve's ecosystem and tiger habitats.
- **Forest Fires:** Dry deciduous forests are prone to seasonal fires, especially during summer, which can destroy wildlife habitats.

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)

Syllabus: GS-3; International Institutions

Context

- The 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the CBD took place in Cali, Colombia, with the theme "Peace with Nature."

About

- The **United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)** is a key international agreement aimed at conserving biodiversity, promoting its sustainable use, and ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from genetic resources.
- It was adopted at the **Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro** in **1992** and entered into force in **1993**.
- The Convention is legally binding and has been ratified by 196 countries, making it one of the most universally supported environmental treaties.

Objectives of UNCBD

- **Conservation of Biodiversity:** Ensuring the protection and preservation of ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity.
- **Sustainable Use of Biodiversity:** Promoting the utilization of biodiversity in ways that do not cause long-term harm to the ecosystem.
- **Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits:** Ensuring that benefits arising from the use of genetic resources (e.g., pharmaceutical or agricultural products) are shared fairly among the countries and communities that provide them.

Principles of the Convention

- **Sovereignty over Natural Resources:** Countries have the right to use their biological resources as they see fit but must ensure conservation and sustainable use.
- **Precautionary Principle:** When there are threats of significant reduction or loss of biodiversity, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to avoid environmental degradation.
- **Polluter Pays Principle:** Countries are responsible for mitigating the environmental impacts of their activities, particularly on biodiversity.

Key Provisions

- **Access to Genetic Resources:** The Convention establishes rules for how countries should share genetic resources and traditional knowledge related to biodiversity.
- **Nagoya Protocol (2010):** This supplementary protocol to the UNCBD focuses on the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, particularly in the areas of research and commercialization.
- **National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs):** Parties to the Convention are required to prepare and implement NBSAPs to meet their biodiversity conservation targets.

Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020)

- The **Aichi Biodiversity Targets** (adopted in 2010) are a set of 20 global targets aimed at halting biodiversity loss by 2020. These targets focus on issues like habitat loss, pollution, invasive species, and the protection of genetic diversity.

India and the UNCBD

- India ratified the UNCBD in **1994** and is a party to the Convention.
- India has made significant strides in biodiversity conservation, including setting up **protected areas**, including **national parks**, **wildlife sanctuaries**, and **biosphere reserves**.
- The **National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP)** in India, launched in 2008, outlines India's biodiversity conservation priorities and is in line with the objectives of the UNCBD.

Challenges

- **Loss of Biodiversity:** Habitat destruction, pollution, climate change, and over-exploitation of natural resources continue to threaten biodiversity.
- **Funding and Resources:** Despite growing recognition of the importance of biodiversity, there remains a gap in funding and resources for biodiversity-related projects, particularly in developing countries.
- **Implementation and Enforcement:** While countries commit to conservation, enforcing biodiversity protection at local levels remains challenging due to lack of awareness, capacity, and political will.

Future Directions

- A **post-2020 global biodiversity framework** is under negotiation, which aims to address biodiversity loss and integrate biodiversity considerations into other global agendas, including the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

MAHASAGAR

Syllabus: GS-3; Environmental Governance

Context

- The third edition of the high-level **virtual** interaction *MAHASAGAR* was conducted by the Indian Navy recently.

About

- **MAHASAGAR** (Marine Habitat and Species Affluence in Governance and Awareness Response) is a government initiative dedicated to marine biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of marine resources in India.

Objectives

- **Primary Aim:** To protect, restore, and maintain marine ecosystems.
- **Sustainable Exploitation:** Ensuring responsible use of marine resources to combat issues like pollution, overfishing, and habitat degradation.

Scope of MAHASAGAR

The program encompasses:

- India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
- Key marine habitats, including coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds, and coastal wetlands.

Key Approaches

- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management:** MAHASAGAR coordinates efforts among various ministries, state governments, and agencies for cohesive policy implementation.

- **Awareness and Enforcement:** Raises public awareness and enforces environmental laws to protect marine biodiversity.

Major Initiatives

- **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs):** Establishes and strengthens MPAs in ecologically sensitive regions to protect marine habitats.
- **Community Involvement:** Works with coastal communities, offering alternative livelihood options to reduce dependency on marine resources.
- **Research and Monitoring:** Facilitates research on marine biodiversity, monitoring ecosystems to ensure conservation effectiveness.
- **International Collaboration:** Aligns with global environmental goals and collaborates with international bodies to exchange knowledge and technology for marine conservation.