

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY**Ramayana Circuit**

Ramayana Circuit is one of the fifteen thematic circuits identified for development under the Swadesh Darshan scheme of Ministry of Tourism. The destinations under the circuit will be developed by bridging infrastructural gaps like provision of drinking water, accommodation facilities, etc.

- Then the 15 places will be connected to form a circuit.
- The scheme will be a joint effort of the states and the central government. It has a larger aim of providing job opportunities to local artisans, as it promotes local art and craft.
- Destinations under Ramayana Circuit
- The Ministry has initially identified fifteen destinations for development under the Circuit theme namely:
 - Ayodhya, Nandigram, Shringverpur & Chitrakoot (Uttar Pradesh)
 - Sitamarhi, Buxar & Darbhanga (Bihar)
 - Chitrakoot (Madhya Pradesh)
 - Mahendragiri (Odisha)
 - Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh)
 - Nashik & Nagpur (Maharashtra)
 - Bhadrachalam (Telangana)
 - Hampi (Karnataka)
 - Rameshwaram (Tamil Nadu)

Other such Tourism Circuits

- Krishna Circuit, Buddhist Circuit and Spiritual Circuit are three of the other 12 circuits under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, which seeks to boost religious tourism in India.
- As of now, 10 destinations have been finalised under the Krishna Circuit, which will pertain to his journey in India.
- The 9 remaining circuits, though not for religious tourism, aim to connect all major cultural heritage spots and other touristy spots of India, making travel-planning easier.
- A similar scheme, the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD), with the same objectives as the Swadesh Darshan scheme, aims to develop 13 pilgrimage cities across India.

GEOGRAPHY**Heat Waves**

Recently, Europe went through a heatwave with highest temperature records, which resulted in the death of people and fire outbreak. Same patterns were also observed in India, Pakistan, parts of the Middle East and Australia.

What is a heatwave?

- Classifying a heatwave varies from country to country because what is seen as extremely hot in one place may seem within the normal range in another.
- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) issued guidelines in classifying heat waves which listed several factors to be considered such threshold for variables in temperature and human perspective of extremes.

Classification in India

- India Meteorological Department (IMD) considers a heatwave when the maximum temperature crosses 40°C in the plains and 30°C in the hills.
- Where the normal maximum is 40°C or less, the heatwave departure from normal is 5°C to 6°C and the severe heatwave departure is 7°C or more.
- Where the normal maximum is more than 40°C, the heatwave departure from normal is 4°C to 5°C while the severe heatwave departure is 6°C or more.
- In places where the maximum temperature reaches 45°C or more, the IMD declares a heatwave irrespective of the normal.

Why it is happening?

- The heatwave in Europe is a result of warm air masses from Africa.

- More events are expected to follow during this northern hemisphere summer.
- Climate change is cited as a reason for these trends.
- As per WMO, the heatwave is consistent with climate scenarios. It predicts more frequent, drawn out and intense heat events as greenhouse gas concentrations lead to a rise in global temperatures.
- Apart from heat waves, various climate models have predicted alternating periods of prolonged droughts and heavy flooding in some areas.

How it affects Health?

- The heat poses a risk to people's health, agriculture and the environment.
- It is a departure from normal (what people are used to) makes heat waves dangerous. A reading of 35°C, which many people in India would be able to cope with, can make people severely ill in Germany.
- Babies and older people are particularly vulnerable because their bodies are not as well able to regulate their own temperatures as those of young adults.
- High temperatures can cause exhaustion, heat stroke, organ failure, and breathing problems.
- Population living in urban areas are more vulnerable because heatwave traps them in heat islands as steel, concrete, and asphalt structures absorb heat.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

US law to give India NATO ally-like status

The U.S. Senate has passed a legislative provision that brings India at par with America's NATO allies and countries like Israel and South Korea for increasing defence cooperation.

How will it benefit India?

- The act provides for increased U.S.-India defence cooperation in the Indian Ocean in the areas of humanitarian assistance, counterterrorism, counter-piracy and maritime security.
- It will clear the way to provide state-of-the-art weapons and sensitive technology to India.
- It will make India a big associate of US in defence deals also it will increase India's status.
- Earlier, the US-India had signed Communication, Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018 for sharing sensitive information.

About NATO

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European countries.
- It is based on the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949.
- NATO constitutes a system of collective defence whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party.

INDIAN ECONOMY

Centre ratifies convention to curb company profit shifting

The government announced that it had ratified the international agreement to curb base erosion and profits shifting (BEPS). This has been done in a bid to stop companies from moving their profits out of the country and depriving the government of tax revenue.

Base Erosion and Profit Shifting

- BEPS is a tax avoidance strategy used by multinational companies by exploiting gaps and mismatches in tax rules to artificially shift profits to low or no-tax locations.
- In order to combat this, many countries entered into agreements to share tax information with each other to enhance transparency and make such profit shifting that much harder.
- Here, profits are shifted from jurisdictions that have high taxes (such as the United States and many Western European countries) to jurisdictions that have low (or no) taxes (so-called tax havens).
- The BEPS Action Plan adopted by the OECD and G20 countries in 2013 recognised that the way forward to mitigate risk from base erosion and profit shifting was to enhance transparency.

About the convention

- India has ratified the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (multilateral instruments (MLI)).
- This was signed by the Finance Minister in Paris on June 7, 2017 on behalf of India, along with representatives of more than 65 countries.
- The MLI is a result of concerted work by the G20 countries to tackle the issue of base erosion and profit shifting, something that affects them all.
- India was part of the Ad Hoc Group of more than 100 countries and jurisdictions from the G20, OECD and other interested countries, which worked on the finalizing the text of the Multilateral Convention.

Impact of the MLI

- The MLI will be applied alongside existing tax treaties, modifying their application in order to implement the BEPS measures.
- It will modify India's tax treaties to curb revenue loss through treaty abuse and base erosion and profit shifting strategies by ensuring that profits are taxed where substantive economic activities generating the profits are carried out.

National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP)

The National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020 is a National Mission document providing the vision and the roadmap for the faster adoption of electric vehicles and their manufacturing in the country.

This plan has been designed to enhance national fuel security, to provide affordable and environmentally friendly transportation and to enable the Indian automotive industry to achieve global manufacturing leadership.

Other initiatives

- As part of the NEMMP 2020, Department of Heavy Industry formulated FAME India Scheme in the year 2015.
- It was aimed to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same.

FAME I

- In this phase, market creation through demand incentives was aimed at incentivizing all vehicle segments i.e. 2-Wheelers, 3-Wheelers Auto, Passenger 4-Wheeler vehicles, Light Commercial Vehicles and Buses.
- The demand incentive was available to buyers of EV in the form of an upfront reduced purchase price to enable wider adoption.
- Based on outcome and experience gained during the Phase-II of FAME India Scheme was launched.

FAME II

- This phase will mainly focus on supporting electrification of public & shared transportation, and aims to support through subsidies 7000 e-Buses, 5 lakh e-3 Wheelers, 55000 e-4 Wheeler Passenger Cars and 10 lakh e-2 Wheelers.
- The scheme will be applicable mainly to vehicles used for public transport or those registered for commercial purposes in e-3W, e-4W and e-bus segments.
- However, privately owned registered e-2W will also be covered under the scheme as a mass segment.
- In addition, creation of charging infrastructure will be supported in selected cities and along major highways to address range anxiety among users of electric vehicles.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**Tamil Yeoman declared Tamil Nadu's state butterfly**

Tamil Yeoman (Cirrochroa thais) butterfly species endemic to Western Ghats has been declared the state butterfly of Tamil Nadu.

About Tamil Yeoman

- Uniformly orange in colour with a dark brown outer ring, Tamil Yeoman is among the 32 butterfly species found in the Western Ghats.
- This butterfly species moves in groups in large numbers, but only in a few places.
- Also known as Tamil Maravan, which means warrior, these butterflies are found mainly in the hilly areas.
- An expert team was involved in identifying butterfly species to be declared state butterfly.
- The team had shortlisted two butterfly species – Tamil yeoman and Tamil Lacewing.
- The Tamil Yeoman was selected. Both butterfly species are unique in their own ways.
- The Tamil Lacewing butterfly is very rare and difficult to sight which may have been a reason for the government to prefer Tamil Yeoman.

Why it's special?

- For the first time Tamil Nadu has declared its state butterfly and only fifth in the country to do so.
- Maharashtra was the first to declare Blue Mormon as its state butterfly, followed by Uttarakhand (Common peacock), Karnataka (Southern bird wings) and Kerala (Malabar banded peacock).

How global warming could impact jobs in India?

The report, 'Working on a warmer planet: The impact of heat stress on labour productivity and decent work' anticipates an increase in "heat stress" resulting from global warming. It projects global productivity losses equivalent to 80 million full-time jobs in 2030, and the projection of 34 million jobs would make India the worst affected.

How global warming impacts jobs?

- Effects: Excess heat during work is an occupational health risk and restricts workers' physical functions and capabilities, work capacity and thus, productivity.
- Loss in jobs: In 2030, 2.2% of total working hours worldwide will be lost because of higher temperatures, a loss equivalent to 80 million full-time jobs. This is equivalent to global economic losses of US\$2,400 billion.

Concerns for India:

- Asia: The region projected to lose the most working hours is southern Asia, at 5% in 2030, corresponding to around 43 million jobs, respectively. A third of the southern Asian countries have already incurred losses greater than 4%.
- India, which lost 4.3% of working hours in 1995 because of heat stress, is projected to lose 5.8% of its working hours in 2030, which corresponds to 34 million jobs.
- Sector- wise Impact: The report projects losses in working hours as 9.04% in agriculture (in shade), 5.29% in manufacturing, 9.04% in construction, and 1.48% in services. Although most of the impact in India will be felt in the agricultural sector, more and more working hours are expected to be lost in the construction sector, where heat stress affects both male and female workers.

Global scenario:

- Globally, the two sectors projected to be hit worst are agriculture and construction, with agriculture worse affected.
- The ILO says 940 million people around the world work in the agricultural sector, which is projected to account for 60% of working hours lost due to heat stress by 2030. In construction, an estimated 19% of global working hours is likely to be lost.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Embrace reality even if it burns you.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: India experiences to be one of the countries that face deadliest heat waves. Discuss the criteria for heat waves and causes for the same.

Answer: Heat waves are the result of certain configuration of temperature, humidity and air movement that culminate in unusually high temperatures. These occur during the summer season in North western parts of India and they occur between March and June, sometimes extending to July. They cause death of livestock and crop losses apart from damage to rail, road and electrical infrastructure

Criteria: IMD has prescribed the following criteria for heat waves:

- Heat wave will only be considered if maximum temperature of a station reaches 40 degree celsius for the plains and 30 degree celsius for hilly areas
- In case normal maximum temperature of a station is lower or equal to 40 degree celsius, heat wave departure from normal is 5 to 6 degree celsius and severe heat wave departure from normal is 7 degree celsius or more
- In case normal maximum temperature of station is more than 40 degree celsius, heat wave departure from normal is 4 to 5 degree celsius and severe heat wave departure from normal is 6 degree celsius or more
- When actual maximum temperature remains 45 degree celsius or more regardless of normal maximum temperature, heat waves should be declared

Causes

- Climate change has resulted in higher daily peak temperatures and more intense heat waves are becoming common globally as well
- High humidity is also linked to heat waves
- When high pressure from aloft 10 to 25 thousand feet remains strong in an area for days to weeks, heat waves occur
- Air sinks towards the surface under high pressure and the buildup of heat results
- Three quarters of heat waves over land can be traced to human activity induced global warming, according to a study in Nature Climate Change
- According to an IPCC report, frequency of heat waves has gone up in EU, Asia and Australia due to global warming and climate change
- The report said human activities more than doubled chances of heat waves in certain parts of the world

Facts and Stats

- The current heat wave gripping India is the 5th deadliest in the world
- Prior to this, the worst heat wave was in 1998 when 2541 people died as a result of it
- The worst heat wave till date was the one in 2003 in the EU which left over 70,000 persons dead
- Indian heat wave figures 4 times in list of top 10 world disasters-2015, 2003, 2002 and 1998 according to EMDAT-Emergency Events Database maintained by Centre for Research on Epidemiology of Disasters in Brussels

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS BASED MCQS

1. Consider the following statements w.r.t the Ramayana Circuit.
 1. It is a thematic circuit implemented under the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) Scheme.
 2. Mahendragiri of Odisha is a destination for development under the Circuit.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) **2 only**
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
2. Which of the following statements w.r.t heat waves are correct ?
 1. A Heat Wave is a period of abnormally high temperatures, more than the normal maximum temperature that occurs during the winter season in the North-Western parts of India.
 2. Intense heat waves are becoming increasingly frequent globally due to climate change.
 3. It has a devastating impact on human health as well as the health of

Select the correct answer from the codes given below:

(a) 1 and 2
(b) **2 and 3**
(c) 1 and 3
(d) 1, 2 and 3
3. Consider the following statements w.r.t NATO.
 1. It is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European countries.
 2. Recently India has joined as a member of this alliance.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

(a) **1 only**
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Consider the following statements w.r.t Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS).
 1. It is a tax avoidance strategy used by multinational companies.
 2. The government has announced to ratify the international agreement to curb BEPS.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) **Both 1 and 2**
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Which of the following is incorrect w.r.t the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020?
 1. It is a National Mission providing the vision and the roadmap for the faster adoption of electric vehicles manufacturing.
 2. As part of the NEMMP 2020, Department of Heavy Industry formulated FAME India Scheme in the year 2015.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below:

(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) **Both 1 and 2**
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Recently in the news Cirrochroa Thais, which is a Butterfly species, has been declared as the state butterfly of which state?

(a) **Tamil Nadu**
(b) Meghalaya
(c) Rajasthan
(d) Kerala