

GEOGRAPHY- PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC

Zealandia

GNS Science, a New Zealand research institute, has published two new maps covering Zealandia's tectonic profile and shape.

About:

- Zealandia is an almost entirely submerged mass of continental crust located in the southern Pacific Ocean that subsided after breaking away from Gondwanaland 83–79 million years ago.
- It has variously been described as a continental fragment, a microcontinent, a submerged continent, and a continent.
- The land mass may have been completely submerged by about 23 million years ago, and most of it (93%) remains submerged beneath the Pacific Ocean.
- Political Divisions Under Zealandia Are: New Zealand, New Caledonia, Norfolk island, Lord howe island group and Elizabeth and Middleton reefs.
- Names: It is also known as Tasmantis due to its proximity to Tasman sea. Te Riu-a-Māui is another name for Zealandia.
- The name and concept for Zealandia was proposed by Bruce Luyendyk in 1995.



Continent

- Definition: Originally the term "continent" was applied to any area of land, of any size, not separated by water, including islands. However, today, continents are understood to be large, continuous, distinct masses of land, ideally (but not necessarily) separated by expanses of water.
- Criteria: No required minimum size to qualify as "large" (or "very large") has been defined, nor the requisite degree of physical separation. Continents are therefore defined by convention rather than some strict criteria. The criteria used can be of geographical, historical, cultural, anthropological, political, or even of philosophical nature.
- Numbers: Number of continents varies from 4 to 7 depending on the criteria.

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.

Sanskritik Sadbhav Mandap

Union Minister of Minority Affairs laid foundation stone for “Sanskritik Sadbhav Mandap” in Rampur (Uttar Pradesh).

About:

- The “Sanskritik Sadbhav Mandap” is being constructed with the cost of Rs 92 crore by Union Minority Affairs Ministry under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK).
- This community centre will be utilized for various socio-economic-cultural activities, skill development training, coaching, relief activities during disaster such as Corona and different sports activities.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)

- The erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) has been restructured and renamed as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram for effective implementation. it is implemented by Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- the scheme seeks to provide better socio economic infrastructure facilities to the minority communities particularly in the field of education, health & skill development.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

The Room Where It Happened

The Trump administration unsuccessfully attempted to block release of the book titled "The Room Where It Happened" contending that Bolton had breached nondisclosure agreements he signed as a condition of his employment and that the book endangered national security. The book was recently released on June 23.

About:

- The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir is a memoir by John Bolton, who served as National Security Advisor for U.S. President Donald Trump.
- The room mentioned in the title forms the crux in this memoir of the White House, detailing the workings of the Trump administration.
- According to Bolton, Trump was only concerned with being re-elected and not the nation. the president tended to side with foes and got suspicious of the government itself. It is these behavioural patterns, Bolton argues, that led Trump on to the path of impeachment.
- Bolton further adds that for Trump foreign policies are akin to “closing a real estate deal”, concerning his own interests more than anybody else’s.

Kholongchhu Hydroelectric Project

The Concession Agreement for the 600 MegaWatt Kholongchhu (Joint Venture) Hydroelectric Project between Bhutan government and Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Limited was signed.

About:

- The 600 MW run-of-the-river project is located on the lower course of the Kholongchhu River in Trashiyangtse District in Eastern Bhutan.
- It will be implemented by Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Limited, a Joint Venture company formed between Druk Green Power Corporation of Bhutan and Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited of India.
- This is the first Joint Venture Hydroelectric Project between India and Bhutan. The project is expected to be completed in the second half of 2025.

Related Info :

- Hydropower sector is the flagship area of India-Bhutan bilateral cooperation.
- The 720 MW Mangdechhu hydroelectric project was jointly inaugurated earlier in August last year by the Prime Ministers of India and Bhutan.
- With this, four hydroelectric projects of bilateral cooperation totalling over 2100 MW, are already operational in Bhutan.

Balochistan

Four heavily armed gunmen attacked the Pakistan Stock Exchange building in Karachi. Pakistan's Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) later claimed responsibility for the attack.

Balochistan:

- The Balochistan region is divided almost evenly between Pakistan (where it's called Balochistan) and Iran. A part of it lies in Afghanistan too. Politically, it comprises the Pakistani province of Balochistan, the Iranian province of Sistan and Baluchestan, and the southern areas of Afghanistan.
- Formerly under British rule, Balochistan was declared independent on August 11, 1947 and it formed a parliament. But Pakistan illegally occupied (because people were never asked what they wanted) it on March 27, 1948.
- The land holds significant reserves of gas, gold, copper, oil and uranium, but is mostly untapped by Iran. The Pakistani area continues to be poor too, because the country is accused of allegedly siphoning the area's resources away from its people and towards Punjab.
- Pakistan is accused of systematically repressing and marginalising Balochs. It's said that over 1,40,000 have been displaced since 2004-2005. Balochs are denied jobs and even basic facilities like water and electricity.

Baloch Liberation Army (BLA):

- The BLA, the armed wing of the Baloch movement, has carried out several violent attacks in Pakistan. It has about 6,000 cadre spread across the Balochistan Province and in the bordering areas of Afghanistan. It has been banned by Pakistan since 2006.
- BLA rebels have claimed that they are aiming for both freedom from Pakistan and internal reform of the Baloch society. They are opposed to the traditional sardar or Kawailey system at home.
- The BLA has often been accused of launching attacks on Pakistan's military targets and on Chinese-built infrastructure. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is passing through Balochistan.

India Bans Chinese Apps

Government of India has banned 59 apps originating from China, including very popular ones like the short video platform TikTok, UC Browser, file sharing app ShareIt, and CamScanner etc.

About:

- The ban has been enforced by The Ministry of Information Technology by invoking its power under section 69A of the Information Technology Act and the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking of Access of Information by Public) Rules 2009.
- Title of Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 is "Power to issue directions for blocking for public access of any information through any computer resource".
- According to ministry, these Apps are engaged in activities which is prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order.
- The notification is expected to be followed by instructions to Internet service providers to block these apps. Users are likely to soon see a message saying access to the apps has been restricted on the request of the government.
- This action could be a warning to bigger Chinese businesses in India, and to China itself.

INDIAN ECONOMY**Floating Rate Savings Bonds 2020 (Taxable)**

The Union Finance Ministry has decided to launch Floating Rate Savings Bonds 2020 (Taxable) from July 1, giving an opportunity to invest in secured government instruments.

About:

- The new scheme has been brought in place of 7.75 per cent Savings (Taxable) Bonds, 2018, which was withdrawn from the close of banking business on May 28, 2020,
- The interest on the seven-year bond will be paid semi-annually on January 1 and July 1 every year.
- The interest on January 1, 2021 will be paid at 7.15 per cent. The rate for next half-year will be reset every six months, the first reset being on January 1, 2021.
- The bonds will be repaid on the expiry of seven years from the date of issue. However, premature redemption will be allowed for specified categories of senior citizens.
- The interest on the Bonds will be taxable under the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will be issuing the bonds on behalf of the government.
- The Bonds could be held by a person resident in India and a Hindu Undivided Family (HUF).

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC**HAM radio**

Recently HAM (amateur) radio operators have volunteered to help a special task force that has been constituted in Bengaluru to ensure that citizens placed under home quarantine follow the protocol for it.

Key Points

- Amateur radio, also called HAM radio, is a noncommercial two-way radio communications. They use many frequency bands across the radio spectrum.
- HAM radio is a real-time communication network. This is much like wireless communication which is quick and transparent.
- Amateur Radio operators set up and operate organized communication networks locally for governmental and emergency officials, as well as non-commercial communication for private citizens affected by the disaster.
- Amateur Radio operators are most likely to be active after disasters that damage regular lines of communications due to power outages and destruction of telephone, cellular and other infrastructure-dependent systems.

Indian Scenario

- According to the Indian Wireless Telegraphs (Amateur Service) Amendment Rules, 1984, 'Amateur service' means a service of self training intercommunications and technical investigation carried on by Amateurs that is, by persons duly authorized under these rules interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest.
- It is a non-commercial radio communication service.
- Amateur radio operators are commonly known as hams. The term "Ham radio" is used to describe the hobby of Amateur radio and not the equipment.
 - Similarly the term "Ham" is used to describe a radio amateur enthusiast and not the equipment.
- Any citizen of India who is above 12 years of age can become a ham by qualifying in the Amateurs Station Operators' examination (ASO) and obtaining a valid Amateur wireless telegraph station license

Covaxin

COVAXIN, India's first vaccine candidate against novel coronavirus, developed by vaccine maker Bharat Biotech gets the approval of Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for Phase I and II clinical trials.

About:

- COVAXIN is an inactivated vaccine, created from a strain of the infectious SARS-CoV-2 virus, that has shown promise in preclinical studies, demonstrating extensive safety and effective immune responses.
- COVAXIN has been developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV).
- The SARS-CoV-2 strain was isolated in NIV, Pune and transferred to Bharat Biotech. The indigenous, inactivated vaccine will be developed and manufactured by Bharat Biotech's BSL-3 (Bio-Safety Level 3) High Containment facility located in Genome Valley, Hyderabad, India.
- Human clinical trials of the experimental COVID-19 are scheduled to start across the country in July 2020.

Continuous Galvanized Rebar Production Facility

Union Minister of Steel inaugurated Continuous Galvanized Rebar Production Facility at Mandi Gobindgarh in Punjab. This will support the much awaited need of supplying galvanized rebar to the construction industry.

About:

- Galvanized reinforcing steel is bare reinforcing steel coated with a protective layer of zinc metal.
- The zinc coating serves as a barrier to corrosive elements that the rebar is exposed to when embedded in concrete.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, EVENTS, AWARDS ETC**International Day Of Parliamentarism**

International Day of Parliamentarism is being celebrated on June 30 under the theme “Parliaments in a time of Pandemic.”

About:

- The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution A/RES/72/278, recognized the role of parliaments in national plans and strategies and in ensuring greater transparency and accountability at national and global levels.
- It is also the date, in 1889, on which the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) — the global organization of parliaments — was established. The IPU has permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly and is Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- This Day celebrates parliaments and the ways in which parliamentary systems of government improve the day-to-day lives of people the world over.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q. “If the global community has to come out stronger in the face of any crisis, there is a need to establish a multilateral global order.” Critically examine.

Multilateral global order or multilateralism refers to a set of governing arrangements of fundamental rules, principles, and institutions among nations. The United Nations (UN) is an example of a multilateral international institution which aims at making a sustainable and inclusive multilateral global order.

Significance of multilateral global order especially in the present day situation :

- Multilateral global order as facilitating cooperation
 - Issues such as counterterrorism, combating infectious disease (eg. Covid-19 pandemic, SARS, Swine flu), poverty alleviation, and climate change can be tackled effectively only with an orderly multilateral system.
- Multilateral global order as supporting conflict prevention
 - Multilateral global order through multilateral institutions (like the UN) is a significant force in conflict prevention especially among the major powers.
 - Multilateral fora on many occasions have served as tools to assist key states in de-escalating and containing spiraling crises.
- Multilateral global order to achieve common goals
 - An orderly global order is significant in making a rules-based free trade system, multilateral cooperation and international law to solve truly global problems, such as the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and working for the spread of democracy across the globe.

Challenges related to present multilateral global order

- Increasing unilateralism and protectionism: The ‘America First policy’ of the USA and its decision to not be a part of the Paris Agreement, BREXIT etc. are some of the many examples of protectionism in the present day which creates challenges to the multilateral global order.
- Exclusive and unsustainable multilateral institutions:
 - The current composition of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) does not represent contemporary realities, the permanent members (P-5) of UNSC use the veto power just to serve the strategic interest of themselves and their allies.
 - In World Trade Organisation (WTO), the advanced countries are determined to promote the kind of corporate-friendly rules that align with their own economic interests.
- Interference in the functioning of global bodies by influential countries: WHO is mandated to control the spread of contagious diseases, frame public health programmes, and formulate standards on nutrition and hygiene.
 - However, interference in the functioning of WHO has been observed at many occasions. Eg. Under pressure from the US government, WHO is alleged to adopt an approach that favours interests of US pharma companies.

Conclusion

- Achieving a sustainable and inclusive global order is the need of the hour so that it’s benefits can reach even to the poor people of the poorest countries. Rules of multilateralism that should be adopted to reach at an orderly and inclusive global order are:
- The multilateral global order should be inter-national and state-led, based on principles of sovereign equality and national self-determination.
- Such an order should promote economic openness and interdependence between most countries worldwide
- The order should be constructed around a set of widely agreed-upon rules and principles, enshrined in and premised on general respect for international law.
- The relations among the nations should be based on generalized principles of conduct, involving ‘non-discrimination’ and ‘indivisibility’.