

U.N. Security Council Welcomes New Members Including Two First Timers

❖ Context

- Five newly elected **non-permanent members** to serve on the **United Nations Security Council** for the term 2023-2024, on January 3, 2023.

Key Highlights:

- **Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland** got a formal welcome into the U.N. Security Council, taking the two-year seats they won unopposed.
- In a tradition that Kazakhstan started in 2018, the five countries' **ambassadors installed their national flags** alongside those of other members outside the council chambers.
- **Mozambique and Switzerland** marked their first-ever terms on U.N.'s most powerful body.
- **Malta** joined for a second time, **Ecuador** a fourth and **Japan** a record 12th.
- Some **60 nations** have never had a seat since the group's formation in 1946.

Signature Diplomatic Accomplishment:

- Winning a council seat is considered a signature diplomatic accomplishment that can **raise a nation's global profile**.
- It also gives **small countries a bigger voice** than they might otherwise have in the major international peace and security issues of the day.
- The council deploys **peacekeeping missions**, can approve sanctions and speaks out, sometimes on conflicts and flashpoints, while also surveying such thematic issues as **terrorism and arms control**.
- While many matters are perennials on the agenda, council members also can use the platform to spotlight emerging concerns or topics of particular interest to them.

What is the United Nation Security Council?:

- The **United Nations Charter** established six main organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council.
- It gives primary responsibility for **maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council**, which may meet whenever peace is threatened.
- All members of the United Nations **agree to accept** and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.
- While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, **only the Security Council has the power** to make decisions that member states are then obligated to implement under the Charter.

Organization:

- The Security Council held **its first session on 17 January 1946** at Church House, Westminster, and London.
- Since its first meeting, the Security Council has taken **permanent residence at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City**.
- A representative of each of its members **must be present at all times at UN Headquarters** so that the Security Council can meet at any time as the need arises.

Permanent And Non-Permanent Members:

- The Council is composed of **Five permanent members**: China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and **Ten non-permanent members** elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly (with end of term year).

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

❖ Context

- Recently, **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)** said that **Forest (Conservation) Rules (FCR) 2022** will invariably violate the **Forest Rights Act, 2006**.

Key Highlights:

- The NCST had pointed out that the FCR 2022 had done away with the clause to mandatorily seek consent of Gram Sabhas before the Stage 1 clearance, leaving this process to be done later and even after Stage 2 clearance.
- In such a scenario, project proponents, having received partial clearance, will be pushing State and Union Territory governments for "diversion at the earliest", which would be "seriously impacting the process of recognition of rights under the FRA".

About NCST

- NCST was set up with effect from 19th February 2004 by **amending Article 338** and by **inserting a new article 338A** in the Constitution through the **89th Constitution Amendment Act, 2003**.
- **Status-** Constitutional body.
- **Composition:**
 - It consists of a **Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and 3 other Members** who are appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.
 - **At least one member should be a woman.**
 - The **Chairperson** has been given the rank of **Union Cabinet Ministers**.

- The **Vice Chairperson** has the rank of a **Minister of State**.
- Other members have the rank of a Secretary to the Government of India.
- **Tenure** the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the other Members **hold office for a term of 3 years**.
 - The members are not eligible for appointment for more than two terms.
- **Powers & Functions**
 - It **oversees the implementation of various safeguards** provided to STs under the Constitution and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.

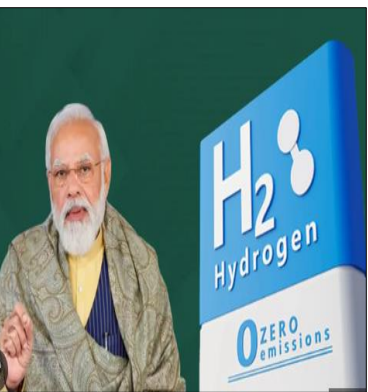
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- Vested with all the powers of a civil court while investigating any matter on inquiring into any complaint relating to deprivation of rights and safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes.

- To present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards.

News in Between the Lines

National Green Hydrogen Mission



❖ Context

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister has approved **National Green Hydrogen Mission**.

❖ Key Highlights:

- **Mission aims** to make India a Global Hub for production, utilization and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives.
- Mission will help in **India becoming energy independent** and in Decarbonisation of major sectors of the.
- **The Mission will result in the following likely outcomes by 2030:**
- Development of green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (Million Metric Tonne) per annum with an associated renewable energy capacity addition of about **125 GW in the country**.
- Over **Rs. Eight lakh crore** in total investments.
- Creation of **over six lakh jobs**.
- Cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports over Rs. One lakh crore.
- Abatement of nearly **50 MMT of annual greenhouse** gas emissions.
- **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** will formulate the scheme guidelines for implementation of the respective components.
- The Mission will facilitate demand creation, production, utilization and export of Green Hydrogen. Under the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition Programme (SIGHT).

1st All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water



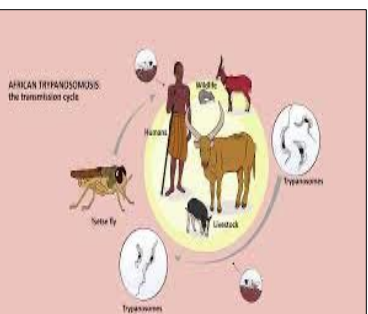
❖ Context

- 1st All India Annual State Ministers Conference on Water to be held in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh on 5th & 6th January, 2023**.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The Government is deliberating on the preparation of the **Action Plan and Vision Document of India@2047**.
- State Ministers of Water Resources, Public Health Engineering Department (**PHED**) and Irrigation from all States/ UTs of the country will participate.
- Participants to prepare a **blue print of Water Vision@2047** and prepare a road map to address the water problems of the country.
- Prime Minister has proclaimed the **'5P' mantra** which includes Political will, Public financing, Partnerships, Public Participation and Persuasion for sustainability.
- The Conference will have **5 thematic sessions:**
 1. Water Security in Water Deficit, Water Surplus and Hilly Regions.
 2. Water Use Efficiency including Reuse of Waste Water/ Grey Water.
 3. Water Governance.
 4. Climate Change Resilient Water Infrastructure.
 5. Water Quality.

African Animal Trypanosomiasis (AAT)



❖ Context

- Recently, **Ethiopia has released the first edition of an atlas to map a parasitic disease** affecting livestock in the country and the vector behind it.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The Country aims to establish a reference for the distribution of tsetse flies and **African animal trypanosomiasis (AAT)** in western Ethiopia.
- AAT is a **major livestock disease** constraining sub-Saharan Africa's agricultural production.
- It is **caused by the parasitic protozoa trypanosomes**, which are transmitted by the bite of tsetse flies — an African blood-sucking fly.
- The atlas, included data for a 10-year period, from 2010.
- AAT occurrence was confirmed in 86 per cent of the districts surveyed, noted the atlas.

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Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) Scheme

❖ Context

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the proposal of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting regarding **Central Sector Scheme "Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development" (BIND)** for infrastructure development of Prasar Bharati i.e. All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD).

❖ Key Highlights:

- The **"Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development"** scheme of the Ministry is the vehicle for providing financial support to Prasar Bharati.
- Prasar Bharati played a stellar role in communicating public health messages and awareness to the **public during the covid pandemic**.
- The scheme will enable the public broadcaster to widen its reach, **including in the LWE, border and strategic areas and provide high quality content to the viewers**.
- The Scheme will increase coverage of AIR FM transmitters in the country to **66% by geographical area and 80% by population** up from 59% and 68% respectively.
- It will also generate **indirect employment** by way of manufacturing and services related to supply and installation of broadcast equipment.



e-SCR Project

❖ Context

- Recently, **Chief Justice of India (CJI)** announced the **launch of the electronic Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) project** to provide free access to its about 34,000 judgements to lawyers, law students and the common public.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The **Electronic Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) project** is an initiative to **provide the digital version of the apex court's judgments** in the manner as they are reported in the official law report – 'Supreme Court Reports'.
- These verdicts will be available on the apex court website, its mobile app and on the judgment portal of the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG).
- This project would create an invaluable resource as the entire gamut of judgments from the inception of the Supreme Court in the year **1950 till date would be available on e-SCR and digital repository**.
- The Supreme Court has developed a search engine with the help of the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**, which uses elastic search techniques in the database of e-SCR.



Silent Valley National Park

❖ Context

- A bird survey conducted at the Silent Valley National Park in the last week of December identified 141 species, of which 17 were new.
- So far, 175 species of birds have been spotted in Silent Valley.

❖ Key Highlights:

- The survey was held in association with the **Kerala Natural History Society**.
- Brown wood owl, Banded bay cuckoo, Malabar woodshrike, White-throated kingfisher, Indian nightjar, Jungle nightjar, & Large cuckooshrike were among the 17 species newly identified in the Silent Valley.
- Birds such as Crimson-backed sunbird, Yellow-browed bulbul, Black bulbul, Indian white-eye and Indian swiftlet were found in abundance in Silent Valley.

❖ About Silent Valley National Park

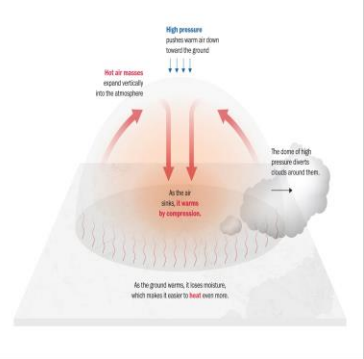
- It is **part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**.
- The **river Kunthi** descends from the Nilgiri Hills above an altitude of 2000 m and traverses the entire length of the valley finally rushing down to the plains through a deep gorge.
- **Location:** It is within the revenue districts of Palakkad and Malappuram.
- **Area:** Core area of 89.52 KM2 and buffer zone 148 KM2.
- **Climate:** The climate is tropical with summer rains constituting the bulk of the precipitation.
- **Vegetation**
 - Silent Valley Reserve Forest can be classified under four forest types viz.
 - West-coast tropical evergreen forest (600 to 1100 m),
 - Southern subtropical broad leaved hill forest (1300 to 1800 m),
 - Southern montane wet temperate forest (above 1900 m),
 - Grassland.



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Heat Dome



❖ Context

- Recently, Several parts of Europe witnessed an unprecedented winter heat wave over New Year's weekend.

❖ Key Highlights:

- According to the report, at least seven countries recorded their hottest January weather ever.
- These included Poland, Denmark, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Belarus, Lithuania and Latvia.
- The continent is experiencing an extreme warm spell **because of the formation of a heat dome over the region.**

❖ Heat Dome

- A heat dome occurs when an **area of high-pressure traps warm air over a region**, just like a lid on a pot, for an extended period of time.
- The longer that air remains trapped, the more the sun works to heat the air, producing warmer conditions with every passing day.
- Heat domes generally stay for a few days but sometimes they can extend up to weeks, which might cause deadly heat waves.
- Scientists suggest that any region of high pressure, whether a heat dome or not, forces air to sink and once it reaches the ground, it gets compressed and becomes even warmer.
- Moreover, **when air sinks, it gets drier and further raises the temperature of the area.**

Right Of Free Speech



❖ Context

- The Supreme Court ruled that a **government cannot be held responsible** for remarks made by its ministers even if the statement relates to affairs of the state.

❖ Key Highlights:

- SC mentioned that right of free speech and expression, **guaranteed under Article 19 (1) (a)**, cannot be curbed by any additional grounds other than those already laid down in **Article 19 (2)**.
- **Under Articles 105 and 194**, Members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies have a special right to free speech in Parliament and other legislative bodies, with the exception of any restrictions imposed by the Constitution or the body's standing rules.
- **A statement made by a minister**, even if traceable to any affairs of the state or for protecting the government, cannot be attributed vicariously to the government by invoking the **principle of collective responsibility**.
- According to **Article 75 (3)** of Constitution, the Union Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha.
- **Article 164 (2)** makes the council of minister in a state collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly of the state.
- Collective responsibility is **based on the principle of the solidarity of the cabinet.**

Intelligent Tray Retrieval System (ITRS)



❖ Context

- Recently, Union Minister for MSME, inaugurated virtually **Intelligent Tray Retrieval System (ITRS)**.

❖ Key Highlights:

- It is **manufactured by M/s SJK Innovations Pvt. Ltd**, a MSME-Make in India Company at MOPA (GOA) International airport.
- The ITRS is an Artificial Intelligence based **fully automatic machine that helps in providing enhanced passenger security with advanced screening technology.**
- The machine is equipped with image analysis software with advanced tools that makes it easy for the screener to take correct decisions against every baggage.
- This in turn helps the passenger to complete the screening much faster and easier when compared to the conventional machines.
- The machine also contains a dedicated module for the high threat baggage's which needs immediate attention at the airport.