**Current Affairs : 04 May 2023**

**OCEAN'S 20: BLUEPRINT FOR A BLUE ECONOMY**

**Context**

* The Comptroller & Auditor General of India (CAG) will chair SAI20, the **Engagement Group for Supreme Audit Institutions (SAl) of G20 countries** in Goa.

**Priority Areas for the SAI20**

* **Two priority areas** have been selected for deliberations; **Blue Economy** and **Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI).**
* As Chair of SAI20, India's CAG aims to help create a framework for G20 nations to **ensure inter-generational equity and mitigate climate change while developing ocean resources**.
* For SAI20, the CAG is **to prepare technology-driven tools** to assess authorised development in coastal stretches and track marine water quality.

**Primary Functions of SAIs**

* SAI20 member countries are being engaged in a collaborative exercise **to evolve globally relevant audit toolkits along with a compendium of case studies and challenges**in the broader framework of auditing coastal spaces, which include:
  + Legal and institutional frameworks,
  + Compliance to coastal regulation,
  + Biodiversity conservation,
  + Capacity building and compliance to SDGs.

**Blue Economy**

* Blue, or ocean economy, whose global annual **value is estimated as $2.5 trillion,**encompasses **an array of coastal activities, including fishing and tourism.**
* **In 2018,** the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had for the first time laid out the **Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles.**
* Investors can use this framework to fund ocean-based industries.
* Financiers can use it as a reference point to see how marine investment can impact livelihood and poverty eradication.

**Indian Blue Economy**

* India has marked the blue economy as **one of the 10 core sectors** for national growth.
* **A National Blue Economy Policy** that aims to harness maritime resources while preserving the country’s rich marine biodiversity has been prepared by the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

**Challenges to Indian Blue Economy**

* **Hazards of cyclones and sea-level rise** are likely to be **higher in the coastal regions due to climate change.**
* GIS maps from the European Space Agency indicate that **15 per cent of India’s coastal areas have witnessed changes between 1992 and 2018 due to agriculture.**
* Depleting forest cover and urbanisation.
* Population living along the country’s coastal areas **is expected to rise from 64 million in 2000 to 216 million by 2060.**

**HEAT INDEX**

**India to launch its own heat index next year to quantify heat hazard, generate impact-based heat wave alerts for specific locations.**

**About Heat index:**

* Heat index is a measure of how hot it feels when humidity is factored in along with the air temperature, and the figures were calculated using data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
* It is also known as the **apparent temperature.**
* When the body gets too hot, it begins to perspire or sweat to cool itself off.
* If the perspiration is not able to evaporate, the body cannot regulate its temperature.
* Evaporation is a cooling process. When perspiration is evaporated off the body, it effectively reduces the body's temperature.  When the atmospheric moisture content (i.e. relative humidity) is high, the rate of evaporation from the body decreases.
* In other words, the human body feels warmer in humid conditions. The opposite is true when the relative humidity decreases because the rate of perspiration increases.
* The body actually feels cooler in arid conditions.
* There is direct relationship between the air temperature and relative humidity and the heat index, meaning as the air temperature and relative humidity increase (decrease), the heat index increases (decreases).

**WORLD BANK GROUP**

**Indian origin Ajay Banga was confirmed as the next President of World Bank.**



**About:**

* The WB is an international financial institution that provides loans and grants to the governments of low and middle-income/developing countries for the purpose of pursuing capital projects.
* It was established along with the IMF at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference.
* The WB is the collective name for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and International Development Association (IDA), two of five international organisations owned by the WB Group.
* **The WB Group, which is the parent organisation of the WB, includes -**

1. **IBRD:**It provides loans, credits and grants.
2. **IDA:**It provides low or no-interest loans to low-income countries.
3. **International Finance Corporation (IFC):** It provides investment, advice and asset management to private companies and governments.
4. **Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA):**It insures lenders and investors against political risk such as war.
5. **International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID):**It settles investment-disputes between investors and countries.

* These all serve the dual objectives of the WB Group, which are to end extreme poverty by 2030 and increase shared prosperity for the bottom 40% of the population worldwide.
* As of 2022, the WB is run by a President and 25 executive directors. IBRD and IDA have 189 and 174 member countries, respectively, and the S., Japan, China, Germany and the U.K. have the largest voting power.

**What is the Leadership of the WB?**

* The President of the WB, who is the President of the entire WB Group, is responsible for chairing meetings of the boards of directors and for overall management of the Bank.
* Traditionally, the President of the Bank has always been a U.S. citizen nominated by the US, the largest shareholder in the bank.
* The nominee is subject to confirmation by the board of executive directors to serve a five-year, renewable term.
* The boards of directors consist of the WB Group President and 25 executive directors. The President is the presiding officer and ordinarily has no vote except to break a tie.
* The executive directors as individuals cannot exercise any power or commit or represent the Bank unless the boards specifically authorised them to do so.

**WHAT ARE CHANNAPATNA TOYS?**

**Toy manufacturers in Channapatna, Karnataka, applauded the Government's decision to prohibit the import of toys from China and said that the government's action is contributing to augmenting their profitability.**

**About Channapatna Toys:**

* Channapatna toys are a particular form of **wooden toys and dolls** that are **manufactured in the town of Channapatna** in the Ramanagara district of **Karnataka**.
* Channapatna is also known as **Gombegala Ooru (toy-town**).
* **History**:
  + The historic ruler of Mysore, **Tipu Sultan,** is the one **attributed to introducing these wooden toys** to the current town of Channapatna.
  + **He invited artists from Persia to train the local artists** **in wooden toy making, which**then helped this industry thrive locally.
* **Features**:
  + Most of these toys are **handmade**.
  + They are also **painted in organic colours** extracted from vegetables and plants and natural dyes, making the Channapatna Toys 100% chemical free.
  + **Traditionally,** they are mostly **made of Ivory Wood**. However, nowadays, **sandalwood and mango wood are also used.**
  + Their **shapes are mostly round and cubes with blunt edges,** so they are **completely safe for kids**.
* They **received the geographical indication (GI) tag** in 2005.

**PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT (POCSO ACT)**

**The Bombay High Court recently said that the POCSO Act was enacted not to punish minors in a consensual relationship and to brand them as criminals.**

**About Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act):**

* It is the **first comprehensive law** in India **dealing specifically with the sexual abuse of children, enacted in 2012.**
* It is administered by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**(MoWCD).
* **Objective**: The Act was designed to **protect children aged less than 18 from sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography** offences and provide for the **establishment of Special Courts** for the trial of such offences and related matters and incidents.
* **Salient Features**:
  + **Gender-neutral law:** The POCSO Act **establishes a gender-neutral tone** for the legal framework available to child sexual abuse victims **by defining a child as “any person” under the age of 18.**
  + It **defines various types of sexual abuse**, such as penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography.
  + It **considers a sexual assault to be aggravated in certain circumstances**, such as **when the abused child is mentally ill** or when the **abuse is committed by someone in a position of trust** or authority over the child, such as a family member, etc.
  + **People who traffic children** for sexual purposes **are also punishable** under the provisions relating to abetment in the Act.
  + The **attempt to commit an offence**under the Act **has been made liable for punishment** for upto half the punishment prescribed for the commission of the offence.
  + **No time limit for reporting abuse**: A victim **can report an offence at any time**, even a number of years after the abuse has been committed.
  + **Mandatory reporting**: The Act also m**akes it the legal duty of a person aware of the offence to report sexual abuse**. In case s/he fails to do so, the person can be punished with six months imprisonment or a fine.
  + **Safeguards to victims:**The Act incorporates **child-friendly procedures** for reporting, recording of evidence, investigation and trial of offences. **These include:**
    - **Recording the statement of the child at the residence**of the child or at the place of his choice, **preferably by a woman police officer** not below the rank of sub-inspector.
    - **No child is to be detained in the police station** **at night** for any reason.
    - **Police officers to not be in uniform** while recording the statement of the child.
    - **The statement** of the child is to be **recorded as spoken** by the child.
    - **Medical examination** of the child is to be conducted **in the presence of the parent of the child**or any other person in whom the child has trust or confidence.
    - **No aggressive questioning or character assassination** of the child in-camera trial of cases.
    - The Act specifically laid down that the **child victim should not see the accused at the time of testifying** and that the trial be held in camera.
    - It also required that the Sp**ecial Court complete the trial, as far as possible, within a period of one year**from the date of cognisance.

**Amendment to the Act:**

* The Act was amended for the **first time in 2019**to enhance**the punishments for specific offences** in order to deter abusers and ensure a dignified childhood.
* This amendment **enhanced the punishment to include the death penalty for aggravated penetrative sexual assault of the child.**
* It also provides for **levy of fines and imprisonment of up to 20 years to curb child pornography.**

**TAWANG MONASTERY**

**Tawang Monastery recently expressed its discontent over China renaming different places in Arunachal Pradesh.**



**About Tawang Monastery:**

* **Location**:
  + It is located in the **Tawang district in Arunachal Pradesh**.
  + It is situated **on a mountain** in the town of Tawang **at an altitude of over 3000 m**.
* It is the **largest monastery in India and the second largest in the world** **after the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet.**
* It is **known in Tibetan as GaldenNamgeyLhatse**, which translates to "**celestial paradise in a clear night**."
* It was **founded by Merak Lama LodreGyatso in 1680-1681** in accordance with the **wishes of the 5th Dalai Lama, NgawangLobsangGyatso**.
* It belongs to the **Gelug school of Mahayana Buddhism**.
* **Structure**:
  + The monastery is **three stories high** and is enclosed by a **282 m-long compound wall.**
  + The **8 m high gilded statue of Lord Buddha** dominates the sanctum.
  + It has a **residential building** for the monks, **a library**, a **museum** and a **school** for basic education.
  + The monastery has **many ancient scriptures, including the Kangyur**, a **collection of the teachings of the Buddha**, and the **Tengyur, a collection of commentaries on the teachings of the Buddha.**

**Gelug school of Mahayana Buddhism**:

* The Gelug or Gelug-pa, also **known as the Yellow Hat sect, is the newest** of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism.
* It was **founded by Je Tsongkhapa (1357–1419**), a Tibetan philosopher, tantric yogi and lama, and further expanded and developed by his disciples
* It **emerged as the pre-eminent Buddhist school in Tibet** since the end of the 16th century.
* The **Dalai Lamas are often mostly associated with this school**.
* The **Ganden Tripa ("Ganden Throne Holder") is the official head** of the school, though its **most influential figure is the Dalai Lama**.
* Gelug school placed special **emphasis on monastic training and study**, as well as practice.

**EUROPEAN UNION’S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ACT**

**Why in News?**

* Members of the European Parliament reached a preliminary deal this week on a new draft of the European Union’s ambitious Artificial Intelligence Act.

**About Artificial Intelligence:**

* Artificial intelligence (AI) is the **ability of a computer or a robot controlled by a computer to do tasks that are usually done by humans because they require human intelligence and discernment**.
* The term is frequently applied to the project of developing systems endowed with the intellectual processes characteristic of humans, such as the ability to reason, discover meaning, generalize, or learn from experience.
* AI algorithms are trained using large datasets so that they can identify patterns, make predictions and recommend actions, much like a human would, just faster and better.

**Experts’ Concern with Artificial Intelligence:**

* Recently, a group of more than 1,000 AI experts, including Elon Musk, have written an open letter **calling for a six-month pause**in developing systems more powerful than OpenAI’s newly launched GPT-4.
* This AI moratorium has been requested because **powerful AI systems should be developed only once we are confident that their effects will be positive and their risks will be manageable**.
* An example of why there is a need for AI moratorium –
  + As many as **300 million full-time jobs around the world could be automated in some way by the latest AI**, according to Goldman Sachs economists.

**Should AI be Regulated before it’s too late?**

* Artificial Intelligence is already suffering from three key issues – **privacy**, **bias** and **discrimination**.
* Currently, governments do not have any policy tools to halt work in AI development.
* If left unchecked, it can start infringing on – and ultimately take control of – people’s lives.
* Businesses across industries are increasingly deploying AI to analyse preferences and personalize user experiences, boost productivity, and fight fraud.
  + For example, ChatGPT Plus, has already been integrated by **Snapchat**, **Unreal** **Engine** and **Shopify** in their applications.
* This growing use of AI has already transformed the way the global economy works and how businesses interact with their consumers.
  + However, in some cases it is also beginning to infringe on people’s privacy.
* Hence, **AI should be regulated so that the entities using the technology act responsible and are held accountable**.

**Benefits of Regulating AI outweigh Potential Losses:**

* It is true that regulating AI may adversely impact business interests. It may slow down technological growth and suppress competition.
* However, taking a cue from **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**, the governments can create a more AI-focused regulations and have a positive long-term impact.
  + GDPR is the European Union’s law which ensures the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.
* **Governments must engage in meaningful dialogues with other countries on a common international regulation of AI**.