

INTERNSTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

❖ **Reforming UNSC**

➤ **CONTEXT: Ukraine war makes obvious UNSC must be reformed : UNGA chief**

- Csaba Korosi is a Hungarian diplomat currently serving as President of the 77th UNGA.
- Mr. Korosi is recently on his bilateral visit to India. It is his first bilateral visit to any country since he assumed his role as President of the UN General Assembly in September 2022.

➤ **Opinion on UNSC reforms:**

- UNGA President stated that the UN Security Council does not reflect today's realities, is paralysed and unable to discharge its basic function of maintaining international peace and security when one of its permanent members has attacked its neighbour.
 - ✓ According to him, the Security Council cannot discharge its basic function as one of the permanent members of the Security Council attacked its neighbour.
 - ✓ The Security Council should be the body to take action against the aggression. But because of the veto power, the Security Council cannot act.
 - ✓ He stated that there is a push from a growing number of member nations to reform the powerful UN organ.

➤ **Background:**

- Russia, a veto-wielding permanent member of the UN, attacked Ukraine in February 2022.
- Russia has vetoed UNSC resolutions on Ukraine.
- Russia also voted against a resolution in the UNGA which called on countries not to recognise the four regions of Ukraine that Russia has claimed.

➤ **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**

- It is one of the UN's six main organs and is aimed at maintaining international peace and security.
- It held its first session on 17th January 1946 in Westminster, London.
- Headquarters: New York City.
- Membership: The Council is composed of 15 Members:
- Permanent members with veto power: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- More than 50 United Nations Member States have never been Members of the Security Council.

➤ **UNSC elections:**

- Each year the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members (out of 10 in total) for a two-year term.
- The 10 non-permanent seats are distributed on a regional basis as follows:
 - ✓ Five for African and Asian States.
 - ✓ One for the Eastern European States.
 - ✓ Two for the Latin American and Caribbean States;
 - ✓ Two for Western European and other States
- To be elected to the Council, candidate countries need a two-thirds majority of ballots of the Member States that are present and voting in the Assembly.
- The UNSC elections were traditionally held in the General Assembly hall with each of the 193 member states casting its vote in a secret ballot.

➤ **UN Reforms**

- Reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) encompasses five key issues:
 - ✓ Categories of membership,
 - ✓ The question of the veto held by the five permanent members,
 - ✓ Regional representation,
 - ✓ The size of an enlarged Council and its working methods, and
 - ✓ The Security Council-General Assembly relationship.

➤ **Need for**

- Changing world order: In the 77-year-old history of the UN, the composition of the Security Council has been altered only once. I.e., In 1963 when the General Assembly decided to expand the Council from 11 to 15 members, with the addition of four non-permanent seats.
- ✓ Since then, the world has changed. The geopolitical relations in the world have altered, the economic responsibilities in the world in countries have also changed.
- Equitable World Order: There is a need for a more equitable world in order to uphold the principles of democracy at the global level.
- Inclusivity: Developing countries like the African countries, need to be made stakeholders in the multilateral institutions and involved in the decision-making process.
- Mitigation of New Threats: With rising protectionism, increased incidents of terrorism and the threat of climate change, the multilateral system must become more resilient and responsive.

- **How?**
 - Any reform of the Security Council would require the agreement of at least two-thirds of UN member states in a vote in the General Assembly and must be ratified by two-thirds of Member States.
 - All of the permanent members of the UNSC (which have veto rights) must also agree.
- **Challenges:**
 - **Lack of Political Will:** Although there is a general agreement towards change in the system, different countries have different perceptions of the requirement for change.
 - **Coffee Club:** It is an informal group comprising 40-odd member states, mostly middle-sized states who oppose bigger regional powers grabbing permanent seats, has been instrumental in holding back reforms to the United Nations Security Council over the past six years.
 - **Chinese Opposition:** China being a permanent member blocks the growth of India becoming a Permanent Member.

PRELIMS**1. Red-headed vulture (Sarcogyps calvus)****➤ CONTEXT: For the first time since 2017, birders spotted a red-headed vulture (Sarcogyps calvus) in the Bhatti mines area of Delhi.**

- The red-headed vulture species feed on carcasses of medium sized and large mammals.
- Family: The red-headed vulture belongs to the family Accipitridae.
- Scientific Name: Sarcogyps calvus
- Habitat: These red-headed vulture species are distributed in Southeast Asia and the Indian Subcontinent.
- Size: The red-headed vulture is a large bird, measuring 75 to 85 cm in length and weighing 3,500 to 5,500 grams.
- IUCN Status: The IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) has categorized and evaluated these bird species and has listed them as "Critically Endangered".

2. State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)**➤ CONTEXT: The Nodal Centre for Biological Invasions (NCBI) at the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) has come out with a management plan to eradicate "Senna spectabilis", the exotic invasive plant that is posing a severe threat to the State's wildlife habitat. The results of the field trials were presented at a recent national conference on bio-invasions organised by the Kerala State Biodiversity Board.**

- State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) advise state governments on biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of its components, and equitable sharing of benefits resulting from the use of biological resources.
- The SBBs also regulate commercial utilisation or bio-survey and bio-utilization of any biological resource by Indians through the granting of approvals or other requests.
- Local Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).

✓ Local Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) are in charge of promoting biological diversity conservation, sustainable use, and documentation, as well as documenting biological diversity knowledge.**➤ Structure**

- A Chairman
- Five ex officio members maximum to represent the pertinent State Government Departments
- No more than five specialists in the preservation of biological variety, sustainable use of biological resources, and fair distribution of benefits resulting from the use of biological resources may make up the committee.
- The different State Governments appoint each member of the SBB.

➤ Functions

- SBBs perform functions required to carry out the provisions of Biological Diversity Act 2002 or as prescribed by the State Governments.
- The State Boards require prior notification for obtaining biological resources from Indian citizens or corporate associations or organisations registered in India.
- This power of the State Biodiversity Boards, which is only applicable to Indian citizens or organisations, can be easily exploited by vested interests of commercial behemoths with significant overseas shareholders.

➤ Constitution

- A fund to be known as the State Biodiversity Fund shall be established and credited to:
- Any grants or loans made by the National Biodiversity Authority.
- All funds received by the State Biodiversity Board from other sources as determined by the State Government.

3. Leprosy

➤ **CONTEXT: Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya virtually addresses National Anti-Leprosy Day.**

- The theme of this year was “Let us fight Leprosy and make Leprosy a history”
- India target a Leprosy Mukta Bharat by 2027 under National Leprosy Eradication Programme, three years ahead of the SDG”.
- India successful in achieving prevalence rate 1 case per 10,000 population at national level in 2005 has come down from 0.69 per 10,000 population in 2014-15 to 0.45 in 2021-22. Further, annual new case detection rate per 100,000 population has come down from 9.73 in 2014-15 to 5.52 in 2021-22.
- The programme also work towards spreading awareness and reducing stigma attached with the disease. Surveillance was also strengthened by introducing ASHA-based Surveillance for Leprosy Suspects (ABSULS) where grassroot level workers constantly engaged in examining and reporting suspects.
- Special emphasis under the Focused Leprosy Campaign (FLC) was given to areas that were difficult to access or had child cases and cases with disabilities. Since 2015, with the constant efforts under NLEP, have been able to prevent many cases of disability due to leprosy.
- The last mile target of 2027 is going to be tougher than what has been achieved so far. But with the experiences, whole of government and whole of society approach, new strategies and the Nikusth 2.0 portal, India can achieve it.
 - ✓ Nikusth 2.0 is an integrated portal for leprosy case management under National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP).
- National Strategic Plan & Roadmap for Leprosy (2023-27) and National Guidelines for Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) Surveillance in leprosy were also released during the event along with launch of Nikusth 2.0 Portal.

➤ **Leprosy Day**

- World Leprosy Day is observed every year on the last Sunday of January.
- In India, it is observed on 30th January every year, coinciding with the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
 - ✓ He was deeply committed to the cause of leprosy-affected persons.
- It aims to create awareness against the stigma and discrimination attached to the disease, by making the general community aware that it is a disease spread by a type of bacteria and it can be easily cured.
- The theme of World Leprosy Day 2023 is “Act Now. End Leprosy.”
 - ✓ The theme stresses three main points: elimination of leprosy is possible, immediate action is required, which includes resources and commitment leprosy is preventable and treatable, hence people still suffering from it is a needless thing.

➤ **About Leprosy**

- It is also known as Hansen’s disease and is a chronic infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium leprae.
- The disease affects the skin, the peripheral nerves, mucosal surfaces of the upper respiratory tract and the eyes.
 - ✓
- It is known to occur at all ages ranging from early childhood to old age.
- Transmission: It is transmitted via droplets, from the nose and mouth, during close and frequent contact with untreated cases. The disease is not spread through casual contact with a person who has leprosy like shaking hands or hugging, sharing meals or sitting next to each other.
- Impacts: Left untreated, the disease may cause progressive and permanent disabilities.
- Spread: It is reported from all six WHO Regions; the majority of annual new case detections are from South-East Asia. It is a neglected tropical disease (NTD) which still occurs in more than 120 countries, with more than 200 000 new cases reported every year.
- Treatment: It is a curable disease. The currently recommended treatment regimen consists of three drugs: dapsone, rifampicin and clofazimine. The combination is referred to as multi-drug therapy (MDT).
- WHO response: WHO provides technical support to Member States on leprosy prevention and control. The Global Leprosy Strategy 2021–2030 “Towards zero leprosy” was developed through a broad consultative process with all major stakeholders during 2019 and 2020.

4. World Economic Outlook

➤ **CONTEXT: IMF released it’s latest World Economic Outlook update**

- In its January update of the World Economic Outlook (WEO) report, the IMF has marginally improved the forecast for global growth in 2023 — a relief, given the fears of a global recession in 2023. The turnaround reflects “positive surprises and greater-than-expected resilience in numerous economies”.
- The IMF releases the WEO twice every year, in April and October, apart from updating it twice — in January and July.

➤ **Global growth will bottom out in 2023**

- In the October 2022 WEO, the IMF forecast that the global growth rate will decelerate from 3.4% in 2022 to 2.7% in 2023. In fact, at that time the IMF told “More than a third of the global economy will contract this year or next, while the three largest economies (the United States, the European Union, and China) will continue to stall.
- In the January update, however, the IMF effectively rules out a global recession: “Negative growth in global GDP or global GDP per capita (which often happens when there is a global recession) is not expected.
- Instead, it expects global growth to bottom out in 2023 before starting to gather speed in 2024.
- As such, the global growth, which was estimated at 3.4 percent in 2022, is now projected to fall to 2.9 percent in 2023 before rising to 3.1 percent in 2024.
- Compared with the October forecast, the estimate for 2022 and the forecast for 2023 are both higher by about 0.2 percentage point, reflecting positive surprises and greater-than-expected resilience in numerous economies.
- China, Russia, the US, Germany, and Italy are some of the key economies that have seen the most significant upward revisions in their 2023 GDP forecasts. The United Kingdom saw a substantial (almost 1 percentage point) downgrade in its 2023 GDP.

➤ **Global inflation has peaked but relief will be slow**

- Inflation, which destabilised the global economy, is expected to have peaked in 2022 but the disinflation (the fall in inflation rate) will be slow and take all of 2023 and 2024.
 - ✓ About 84 percent of countries are expected to have lower headline (consumer price index) inflation in 2023 than in 2022. Global inflation is set to fall from 8.8 percent in 2022 (annual average) to 6.6 percent in 2023 and 4.3 percent in 2024—above pre-pandemic (2017–19) levels of about 3.5 percent.
- Price rise is slowing for two main reasons.
 - ✓ One, monetary tightening all across the world — higher interest rates drag down overall demand for goods and services and that, in turn, slows down inflation.
 - ✓ Two, in the wake of a faltering demand, prices of different commodities (both fuel and non-fuel) have come down from their recent highs.
- In 2023, advanced economies are expected to have an inflation of 4.6% while emerging economies will continue to face an inflation of 8.1%.

➤ **India will stay the world’s fastest growing major economy in 2023 and 2024**

- There’s been no change in India’s growth outlook since October 2022.
 - ✓ “Growth in India is set to decline from 6.8 percent in 2022 to 6.1 percent in 2023 before picking up to 6.8 percent in 2024, with resilient domestic demand despite external headwinds,” This means India will remain the world’s fastest growing major economy both in 2023 as well as 2024.
- India’s GDP growth rate is expected to be significantly higher than all its comparable economies, especially China (which is set to grow at 5.4% in 2023 and 4.5% in 2024).

5. Exercise Topchi 2023

➤ **CONTEXT: This year’s edition of Exercise Topchi was recently conducted.**

- Indigenously manufactured weapon systems were the highlight of the Indian Army’s ‘Exercise Topchi’.
- Exercise Topchi is an annual firepower demonstration and training exercise.
- This edition of “Exercise Topchi” showcased the integrated employment of firepower and surveillance assets to include guns, mortars, rockets, drones, and aviation assets.
- In line with the ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’, the highlight of the exercise was display and firing by indigenously manufactured artillery equipment viz K-9 Vajra, Dhanush, Indian field gun (IFG)/ light field gun (LFG) system and Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. The use of pesticides and fertilizers in agriculture has led to a decline in the population of pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Discuss

- Agriculture is an essential part of human civilization, providing food and other resources for human survival. However, the use of pesticides and fertilizers in agriculture has led to negative consequences for the environment, particularly for pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Pollinators are essential for the reproduction of plants, and their decline threatens the food security and biodiversity of the planet.
- Impact of pesticides and fertilizers on pollinators:
 - Pesticides and fertilizers are widely used in agriculture to protect crops from pests and diseases and to increase crop yields. However, these chemicals can have negative effects on pollinators like:
 - Detrimental to Health: Pesticides can harm bees and butterflies by killing them directly or by making them more susceptible to diseases.

- Change Biology of Flowers: Fertilizers, on the other hand, can change the quality and quantity of flowers, making them less attractive to pollinators.
- Contamination of pollen and nectar sources: According to various reports, pesticide contamination is widespread, with more than 90% of pollen samples from beehives in agricultural landscapes and more than 90% of stream samples contaminated with more than one pesticide.
- This can lead to a decline in the health and population of pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and other insects.
 - Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD): It is the phenomenon of sudden and unexplained loss of bees from a hive. It is a complex problem that likely results from a combination of factors, including pesticides, disease, habitat loss, and other stressors.
 - Mitigating the Effects of Pesticides and Fertilizers on Pollinators:
 - There are several strategies that can be used to mitigate the negative effects of pesticides and fertilizers on pollinators.
 - Use alternative methods: One approach is to use alternative pest management methods, such as biological control or integrated pest management.
 - These methods rely on natural predators, parasites, or pathogens to control pests, rather than chemicals.
 - Additionally, farmers can use selective pesticides and fertilizers, which target specific pests or plants and have less impact on non-target organisms.
 - Restore Pollinator Habitat: Another approach is to protect and restore pollinator habitats. This can include planting wildflowers and other plants that provide food and nesting sites for pollinators, and reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides and fertilizers in these areas.
 - Additionally, farmers can create a mosaic of different habitats on their land, such as hedgerows, woodlots, and wetlands, which can provide a variety of resources for pollinators throughout the year.
 - Related Government Initiatives:
 - The Indian government recognizes the importance of pollinators and has implemented several initiatives to protect them from the negative effects of pesticides and fertilizers. Some of the major initiatives include:
 - National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM): This mission aims to promote beekeeping and honey production in India. It provides financial assistance to beekeepers for the purchase of bee colonies and beekeeping equipment.
 - Integrated Pest Management (IPM): The government has launched the IPM program to reduce the dependence on pesticides in agriculture. The program promotes the use of natural predators and other non-toxic methods to control pests.
 - National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA): The NMSA promotes sustainable agriculture practices that are beneficial for pollinators. The mission focuses on reducing the use of chemicals in agriculture and promoting organic farming.
 - National Action Plan for Pollinators (NAPP): The NAPP is a comprehensive plan to protect and conserve pollinators in India. The plan includes measures to reduce the use of pesticides and promote the conservation of pollinators and their habitats.

Conclusion

The loss of pollinators has a significant impact on food security, biodiversity, and the environment. The Indian government recognizes the importance of pollinators and has implemented several initiatives to protect them from the negative effects of pesticides and fertilizers. However, more efforts are needed to mitigate the negative effects of pesticides and fertilizers on pollinators and to promote sustainable agriculture practices.

MCQs

1. With reference to UNSC, consider the following statements:
 1. China, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States are the permanent members of the UNSC.
 2. Only the Security Council has the power to make decisions that member states are obligated to implement.
 3. The group of four is primarily focused on U.N. Security Council (UNSC) reform and Permanent membership of the body for G4 members.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 and 2 only **b) 2 and 3 only** c) 1 and 3 only d) 1, 2 and 3
2. Which of the following major initiatives under National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP)
 1. Leprosy Case Detection Campaign (LCDC) in Low endemic districts.
 2. Focused Leprosy Campaign (FLC) in high endemic districts for case detection.
 3. ASHA Based Surveillance for Leprosy Suspects (ABSULS).
 4. Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign on 30th January every year.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below

a) 1 and 2 only b) 2 and 3 only **c) 3 and 4 only** d) 1 and 3 only

3. Which of the following statement is correct regarding Exercise Topchi, often mentioned in news?
- It is an annual firepower demonstration and training exercise by Indian army**
 - Submarine demonstration of Indian navy
 - Anti Naxal operation by CRPF
 - A annual exercise by Indian Coast Guard
4. With reference to 'World Economic Outlook' (WEO) report consider the following
- The World Bank releases the WEO twice every year
 - It ranks countries based on per capita GDP based on purchasing power parity.
- Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2
5. With reference to India, consider the following Central Acts.
- Import and Export (Control) Act, 1947.
 - Mining and Mineral Development (Regulation) Act, 1957.
 - Customs Act, 1962.
 - Indian Forest Act, 1927.
- Which of the above Acts have relevance to/bearing on the biodiversity conservation in the country?
- 1 and 3 only
 - 2, 3, and 4 only
 - 1, 2, 3 and 4**
 - None of the above Acts
6. Which of the following is/are established under Biological Diversity Act 2002
- National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)
 - State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)
 - Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)
- Choose the correct answer using the codes given below
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3**
7. The term "Senna spectabilis" often mentioned in news is a/an:
- Invasive alien tree species**
 - Invasive alien fish species
 - New species of butterfly discovered recently
 - Dinosaur Fossil found recently
8. With reference to red-headed vulture (*Sarcogyps calvus*) consider the following
- It is endemic to Indian subcontinent.
 - These species have been declared extinct in 2017.
- Which of the above statement/s is/are not correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2
9. Consider the following statements regarding Mid-day Meal Scheme
- It is a centrally sponsored scheme under Ministry of Education
 - Scheme guarantees one meal to all children in government and aided schools and madrasas supported under Samagra Shiksha.
- Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?
- 1 only**
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
10. The Union government will soon kick off the process to set up the 16th Finance Commission, with reference to this consider the following statement.
- The five-year deadline for Finance Commissions (FC) specified by Article 280 of the Constitution.
 - The 15th FC is the first finance commission which granted a six-year time frame till 2025-26 from 2020-2021.
- Which of the above statement/s is/are not correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only**
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2