



16 October, 2023

World Health Summit 2023

Context: The World Health Summit is the unique international strategic forum for global health held annually in Berlin from October 15th to 17th.

- **Event Date and Location:** The World Health Summit 2023 is scheduled to occur from October 15 to 17 in Berlin, Germany. It will also be accessible online.
- **Theme:** The overarching theme for this year's summit is "A Defining Year for Global Health Action."
- **Stakeholder Participation:** The summit aims to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders, including individuals from politics, science, the private sector, and civil society, hailing from various parts of the world.
- **Summit Purpose:** The primary objective of the summit is to shape the global health agenda by promoting innovative solutions for improved health and well-being for all.
- **Central Topics:** The key focus areas for discussions at the World Health Summit 2023 include:
 - Learning from the Experience of COVID-19 to Enhance Preparedness and Response to Future Pandemics.
 - Reinforcing Commitment to Universal Health Coverage.
 - Promoting Sustainable Health for Both People and the Planet.
 - Exploring Measures by G7/G20 to Advance Global Health Equity and Security.
 - Utilizing the Potential of Digital Technologies for Global Health.
 - Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the World Health Organization (WHO).
 - Introducing Innovations to Expedite Efforts Against Tuberculosis.

India at WHS 2023

- India emphasizes a comprehensive strategy to reduce NCDs' impact.
- The "75/25 initiative" aims to screen and provide care for 75 million individuals with hypertension and diabetes by 2025.
- The government incorporates NCD treatment as a budgetary commitment in 2023-2024.
- India launched the National Program for Prevention and Control of NCDs in 2010.
- Ayushman Bharat initiative aligns with SDGs and UHC.
- Population-Based Screening targets individuals aged 30 and above for common NCD risk assessment.
- E-Sanjeevani offers teleconsultation services for NCDs.
- Collaboration with other ministries promotes healthy lifestyles.
- Digital health technologies improve NCD management.
- The National NCD portal captures data for screening and care.
- India emphasizes global collaboration for NCD control.

Non-Communicable Diseases

- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are health conditions that do not result from infectious agents and are not transmitted from person to person. Common examples include cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes.
- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) result in 41 million annual deaths, constituting 74% of global fatalities.
- Each year, 17 million individuals succumb to NCDs before age 70, with 86% of these early deaths occurring in low- and middle-income nations.
- Among all NCD fatalities, 77% take place in low- and middle-income countries.
- Cardiovascular diseases are the primary cause of NCD deaths, claiming 17.9 million lives yearly, followed by cancers (9.3 million), chronic respiratory diseases (4.1 million), and diabetes (including kidney disease deaths) affecting 2.0 million people.
- These four disease categories are responsible for more than 80% of premature NCD deaths.
- Risk factors for NCD mortality encompass tobacco use, physical inactivity, harmful alcohol consumption, unhealthy diets, and air pollution.
- Detecting, screening, treating NCDs, and providing palliative care are vital elements in addressing the NCD crisis.

M8 Alliance

- M8 Alliance is the academic foundation of the World Health Summit.
- It consists of 31 global members, including the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP).
- Initiated in 2009 by Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin during the first World Health Summit.
- The International Presidency of the World Health Summit rotates annually among M8 Alliance members.
- Comprises Academic Health Centers, Universities, and National Academies of Medicine and Sciences.
- Aims to shape the global health agenda and find science-based solutions for global health challenges.
- Issues the M8 Alliance Declaration with recommendations after each World Health Summit.
- Organizes annual Regional Meetings, Expert Meetings, and Summer Schools.
- Collaborates on various issues, including Migrant and Refugee Health.

UAVs in Indian Defence

Context: The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan has commissioned two studies to determine the necessary count of UAVs for the three Services.

- The first study on UAVs recommended acquiring 31 **MQ-9B High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE)** UAVs and 155 Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) UAVs.
- The goal of these studies is to optimize platform numbers and resources while avoiding duplication.

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- An upgrade of Israeli Heron MALE UAVs with weaponization and satellite communication, estimated at ₹21,000 crore, is expected to gain clearance.
- The Defence Ministry approved the procurement of 31 MQ-9B UAVs from General Atomics.
- The Cabinet Committee on Security has given in-principle sanction for the procurement of 39 AH-64 Apache attack helicopters for the Army.
- India signed a deal for six more Apaches for the Army in February 2020, and delivery is set to begin in February 2024.

Indigenous Drones in India

- **DRDO Abhyas:** High-speed expendable aerial target (HEAT) developed by Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) for the Indian Armed Forces.
- **DRDO Ghatak:** Stealthy unmanned combat air vehicle (UCAV) developed for the Indian Air Force by ADE. Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) is responsible for the design.
- **DRDO Archer**
- **India-US Joint ALUAV Target Drone**
- **RUAV 200**
- **Adani Hermes 900**
- **Trinetra UAV**
- **Hal Cats:** Part of the HAL Combat Air Teaming System program, with investment from HAL and Newspace R&D.
- **DRDO Rustom:** Medium Altitude Long Endurance UAV developed for all three Indian Armed Forces, set to replace or supplement Heron UAVs.
- **TAPAS-BH-201:** High-altitude, long-endurance UAV developed by ADE, akin to General Atomics' MQ-1 Predator.
- **DRDO Fluffy:** A target drone used by the Indian Armed Forces, with limited launch capabilities.
- **DRDO Imperial Eagle:** Light-weight mini-UAV developed by Aeronautical Development Establishment and commercial vendors for military use.
- **DRDO Kapothaka:** Reconnaissance technology demonstration mini-UAV, forerunner of the Nishant UAV system.
- **DRDO Lakshya:** High-speed target drone used for training and reconnaissance.
- **DRDO Netra:** Light-weight autonomous UAV for surveillance and reconnaissance missions.
- **DRDO Nishant:** UAV for intelligence gathering, reconnaissance, and various missions with a 4.5-hour endurance.
- **DRDO Utkal:** Disposable target drone launched from the air, designed for subsonic or supersonic aircraft.
- **IAI-HAL NRUAV:** Rotorcraft project developed for the Indian Navy by IAI in Israel and HAL in India.
- **Maraal**
- **NAL Slybird:** Small UAV developed by NAL for police and military use.
- **PAWAN UAV:** Unmanned aerial vehicle developed for the Indian Armed Forces and Israel Aircraft Industries.

Uses of Drones

- **Surveillance:** Drones excel in monitoring enemy movements, gathering intelligence, and identifying potential threats, enhancing military preparedness.
- **Reconnaissance:** Drones are valuable for collecting vital information about terrain, enemy positions, and mission-affecting factors, aiding in more effective military planning and execution.
- **Targeted Strikes:** Armed with missiles and weapons, drones offer precision in striking enemy targets, especially in situations where manned aircraft might be impractical or risky.
- **Search and Rescue:** Drones play a crucial role in search and rescue operations, locating and extracting lost or injured soldiers in remote or hazardous areas.
- **Communication and Coordination:** Drones establish communication links between military units, delivering real-time data to commanders, thereby improving coordination and situational awareness in the field.
- **Cost-Efficiency:** Drones are cost-effective, often assembled from readily available components, making them accessible tools for military use.

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

Context: Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are considering the possibility of becoming members of the RCEP bloc.

- Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are exploring membership in the RCEP, four years after India's exit from the trade agreement.
- Sri Lanka has applied for RCEP membership, and President Ranil Wickremesinghe seeks support during his visit to the BRI Forum in Beijing.
- Bangladesh's government is considering RCEP membership, with a decision expected after the January 2024 national elections, as recommended by its Commerce Ministry.

RCEP

- The RCEP, or Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, is a free trade agreement involving 15 Asia-Pacific nations: Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. These countries represent approximately 30% of the global population (2.2 billion people) and 30% of the world's GDP (\$29.7 trillion), making it the largest trade bloc in history.
- Signed in November 2020, the RCEP marks the first free trade agreement among major Asian economies, including China, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea.

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- The concept for RCEP was initially developed at the 2011 ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia, and formal negotiations began during the 2012 ASEAN Summit in Cambodia. While India was initially involved in the negotiations, it later opted out. However, India retains the option to join the bloc at any point, and other countries or customs territories in the region can also join from July 1, 2023.
- The formal signing of the RCEP took place on November 15, 2020, during the virtual ASEAN Summit hosted by Vietnam. The trade pact became effective on January 1, 2022, for the first ten countries that ratified it.
- The combined GDP of potential RCEP members was projected to exceed \$100 trillion by 2050, which is roughly double the estimated size of TPP economies.
- The RCEP was expected to expand the global economy by \$186 billion according to a 2020 projection.
- The RCEP encompasses a diverse range of countries in terms of income levels. Over a 20-year period, it is expected to eliminate around 90% of tariffs on imports among its member nations and establish common regulations for e-commerce, trade, and intellectual property.
- Analysts anticipate that the RCEP will bring substantial economic benefits to the signatory nations, contribute to post-pandemic economic recovery, and shift the economic center of gravity toward Asia, with China taking a leading role in shaping regional trade rules, potentially overshadowing the United States in economic and political influence in the region.
- However, reactions to the RCEP vary, with some expressing neutrality or negativity. Certain analysts believe that the economic gains from the trade agreement might be relatively modest.
- Notably, the RCEP has faced criticism from organizations like the Australian Institute of International Affairs, which has raised concerns about labor rights, human rights, and environmental sustainability issues being neglected within the agreement.

Why did India not join RCEP?

- RCEP lacked clear assurance of market access in countries like China and non-tariff barriers on Indian companies.
- India had a trade deficit with 11 out of 16 RCEP countries in FY2019.
- India's trade deficit with RCEP countries almost doubled in 5-6 years, from \$54 billion in 2013-14 to \$105 billion in 2018-19, with China accounting for \$52 billion.
- India couldn't ensure an auto-trigger mechanism to raise tariffs on imports when they crossed a certain threshold.
- India sought to exclude most-favored-nation obligations from the investment chapter to avoid giving benefits to countries with which it has border disputes.
- India was concerned that RCEP would force it to extend benefits given to other countries in sensitive sectors like defense.
- Signing RCEP could lead to the circumvention of India's rules of origin criteria.
- RCEP required India to abolish tariffs on a significant percentage of goods from various countries, potentially making imports cheaper.
- A past NITI Aayog report highlighted that free trade agreements have not worked well for India, with low FTA utilization.
- Specific industries like rubber, dairy, and services trade faced challenges under RCEP.

(Note: "Willful Defaults and NPA" will be covered tomorrow.)

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

World Food Day



About World Food Day:

- World Food Day is marked on **October 16** annually to raise awareness about **food security** and **hunger alleviation** efforts.
- In November **1979**, the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** member countries decided to observe **October 16** as **World Food Day** from **1981**.

Theme: The theme for World Food Day in 2023 is "**Water is life, water is food. Leave no one behind.**"

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- **SDG 1** aims to eliminate extreme global poverty by **2030**.
- **SDG 2** focuses on ending hunger, improving **food security** and **enhancing nutrition**.

Historical Background:

- The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, a specialized agency of the United Nations, established World Food Day in **1945**.
- In **1979**, it gained recognition as a global holiday, with **150** countries celebrating it following official recognition by the United Nations.

Origin of World Food Prize:

- The World Food Prize was established in **1987**, with initial support from **General Foods Corp**.
- It recognizes individuals making remarkable contributions to **food security** and agricultural progress.

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Kaziranga National Park



Recently, the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve reopened with a literary tribute to a British-era forest officer who rid its name of any hunting connotations.

About the Kaziranga National Park:

- Kaziranga National Park is located in the State of **Assam**, covering an area of **42,996 hectares** (ha).
- It is the single largest undisturbed and representative area in the **Brahmaputra Valley** floodplain.
- It was declared as a **National Park in 1974**.
- It has been designated as a tiger reserve since **2007**.
- It was declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985**.

Flora: This National Park boasts Indian gooseberry, **cotton tree**, **elephant apple** and abundant aquatic flora in its water bodies.

Fauna: This park is the habitat of **one-horned rhinoceros**, **elephants**, wild water buffalo, swamp deer, and a growing **tiger** population.

According to the 2014 tiger census, Kaziranga had an estimated 103 tigers, the third highest population in India.

Other National Parks in Assam: Assam is also home to several other national parks, including **Dibru-Saikhowa National Park**, **Manas National Park**, **Nameri National Park**, and **Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park**.

Estivation



What is Estivation?

- Estivation (or aestivation) is a **biological phenomenon** where an animal enters a long period of **dormancy or inactivity**.
- It occurs in response to **high temperatures** or **drought-like conditions**, serving as a survival strategy.

Purpose of Estivation:

- Estivation helps animals **conserve energy** and **water** during challenging environmental conditions.
- Animals seek shelter in cool underground **burrows**, **crevices** or **cocoons** during estivation.

Protection from Desiccation:

- Estivation also helps prevent **desiccation**, which is extreme **dryness of the skin**.
- It reduces the risk of **predation** by **predators**.

Examples of Estivating Species:

- The West African **lungfish** (*Protopterus annectens*) burrows into drying mud and secretes a **cocoon of mucus** during drought.
- Desert tortoises (*Gopherus agassizii*) dig burrows and retreat during hot summer months.
- Many **land snails** seal themselves in their shells with a **mucous plug** and remain inactive until external conditions improve.

Palk Strait



Recently, India and Sri Lanka launched a ferry service across the Palk Strait for improved regional connectivity.

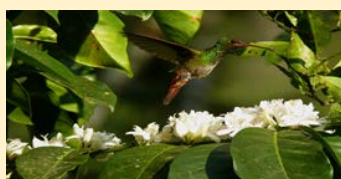
About Palk Strait:

- It lies between **Tamil Nadu, India** and **Sri Lanka**.
- It was named after **Robert Palk**, a **former governor of Madras Presidency** during the **British Raj**.
- It is bounded by **Pamban Island**, **Adam's Bridge (Rama's Bridge)**, **Gulf of Mannar** and **Mannar Island**.
- It connects the **Bay of Bengal in the northeast** with the **Gulf of Mannar in the southwest**.
- Southwest portion referred to as **Palk Bay**.
- It receives inflow from several rivers, including the **Vaigai River** in Tamil Nadu.
- **Port of Jaffna**, the commercial center of northern Sri Lanka, is situated on the strait.

About Adam's Bridge (Rama Setu):

- Located in the chain of limestone shoals between **Pamban Island**, Tamil Nadu and **Mannar Island**, Sri Lanka.
- Some sandbanks are dry and the area has shallow waters (1 to 10 meters), hindering navigation.
- It is believed to have formed due to **tectonic movements** and **sand getting trapped in corals**.
- It holds significance in **Hindu mythology** as **Lord Ram's bridge** and in Islamic legend as **Adam's Bridge**, where Adam is said to have stood in repentance.

Pollinators



Recently, a study revealed that tropical crops, including coffee, cocoa, watermelon and mango, are under threat due to a significant decline in insect pollinators.

About Pollinators:

- Pollinators are organisms, such as bees, **butterflies**, **birds** and **bats**, that facilitate the **transfer of pollen** from the male parts of flowers to the female parts, aiding in the reproduction of plants.
- They play a crucial role in **agriculture** and **ecosystems** by ensuring the **fertilization** and **reproduction** of **flowering plants**, including many **food crops**.
- Approximately **75%** of the world's flowering plants and about **35%** of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators for reproduction.

Types of Pollinators: Pollinators include a wide range of species, such as **bees**, **butterflies**, **moths**, **birds**, **bats** and even some mammals.

Pollinator Decline: Pollinators, especially bees, have been facing population declines due to factors like **habitat loss**, **pesticide use**, **climate change** and **disease**.

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Protists



About Protists:

- Protists are a **diverse group of organisms** that don't fit into traditional categories like **animals, plants, bacteria** or **fungi**.
- Considered the common ancestral link between **plants, animals** and **fungi**.
- Protists are **eukaryotes** with a **nucleus** and **membrane-bound** organelles.
- Most are unicellular, but some are multicellular without specialized **tissues** or **organs**.
- Most protists have mitochondria for **energy production**, except in **oxygen-deprived** environments.

Habitat: Predominantly, they are found in aquatic environments like **freshwater, marine**, and even damp soil.

Ecological Role: Many protists, such as algae, are photosynthetic and critical primary producers in ecosystems.

Disease-Causing: Some protists, like those causing **malaria** and **sleeping sickness** are responsible for serious human diseases.

Place in News

Baltic Sea

Recently, Finland has initiated an investigation into the suspected sabotage of the Baltic-connector gas pipeline, which links the country with Estonia.

Baltic-Connector Gas Pipeline:

- The **Baltic-Connector gas pipeline** is a crucial component of **Finland's** gas supply infrastructure.
- It **connects Finland with Estonia**, enhancing energy security.

Alternative Energy Sources: Finland has access to **alternative energy sources** to ensure energy security in the event of pipeline disruption.

Baltic Sea Geography:

- The Baltic Sea is an arm of the **Atlantic Ocean**.
- It is enclosed by multiple countries, including **Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden** and more.
- It separates the **Scandinavian Peninsula** from the rest of continental Europe.



Personality in News

Banda Singh Bahadur

Banda Singh Bahadur (1670 – 1716)

- He was born as **Lachman Dev**.
- At age 15, he left home to become a Hindu ascetic and was named "**Madho Das**."

Conversion to Sikhism:

- He established a monastery in **Nanded**, where he became a disciple of **Guru Gobind Singh** in **1708**.
- Guru Gobind Singh renamed him "**Banda Bahadur**."

Leadership and Struggle:

- He assembled a fighting force in **Khanda, Sonipat**.
- He led a significant struggle against the **Mughal Empire**.

Major Action:

His first major action was the sacking of the Mughal provincial capital, **Samana**, in November **1709**.

Administrative Reforms:

- After establishing his authority and **Khalsa** rule in Punjab, he **abolished the zamindari system**.
- He **granted property rights** to the **tillers of the land**, introducing land reforms.



POINTS TO PONDER

- ❖ With which company has NSDE partnered for the Retail Skill Development Programme? - Coca-Cola
- ❖ Which company has fired its staff due to indulgence in bribe-for-jobs scandal? - TCS
- ❖ What is the name of Operation carried out by India to safely bring back Indians from Israel? - Operation Ajay
- ❖ Recently in news, the Vizhinjam International Port is in which state? – Kerala
- ❖ What is the name of the proposed 'One Nation, One Student ID'? - APAAR

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