



News Analysis (14 Mar, 2019)

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Global Environment Outlook

United Nation Environment Program (UNEP) has recently released the 6th edition of the Global Environment Outlook Report (GEO).

It outlines the current state of the environment illustrates possible future environmental trends and analyses the effectiveness of policies.

About GEO

- The Global Environment Outlook is often referred to as **UN Environment's flagship environmental assessment.**
- UN Environment launched the **first Global Environment Outlook in 1997.**
- It is a flagship report because **it fulfills the core functions of the UNEP.**



Key Findings of the GEO-6 report

- As greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise amid **an increased risk of droughts, floods and superstorms made worse by climbing sea levels**, there is a growing **political consensus that climate change poses a future risk to billions**.
- **A quarter of all premature deaths and diseases worldwide are due to manmade pollution** and environmental damage - around 9 million deaths in 2015 alone.
- Lacking access to clean drinking supplies, **1.4 million people die each year from preventable diseases such as diarrhea and parasites** linked to pathogen-riddled water and poor sanitation.
- **Chemicals pumped into the seas cause “potentially multi-generational” adverse health effects.**
- Land degradation through mega-farming and deforestation occurs in areas home to 3.2 billion people.
- The report **called for a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and pesticide use** to improve air and water quality.
- Food waste for instance, which accounts for 9% of global greenhouse gas emissions, could be slashed.
- The world currently throws away a third of all food produced. In richer nations, 56% goes to waste.
- The **report advises adopting less-meat intensive diets and reducing food waste in both developed and developing countries.**
- This would reduce the need to increase food production by 50% to feed the projected

9-10 billion people on the planet in 2050.

United Nation Environment Program

- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), **was established in 1972 to guide and coordinate environmental activities within the United Nations (UN) system.**
- UNEP **promotes international cooperation on environmental issues, provides guidance to UN organizations.**
- Through its scientific advisory groups, UNEP encourages the international scientific community to participate in formulating policy for many of the UN's environmental projects.
- UNEP is **headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya.**
- The organization also encourages participation by the private sector to promote the sustainable use of the world's natural resources.

Cabinet Approves Proposal to Align with Global Trademark System

Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for the accession of India to:

- The **Nice Agreement** on the **International classification of goods and services for the purposes of registration of trademarks.**
- The **Vienna Agreement** for setting up an **International classification of the figurative elements of trademarks.**
- The **Locarno Agreement** for establishing an **International classification for industrial designs.**
- All three agreements are administered by the **World Intellectual Property Organization.**

Benefits of the Accession

- Accession to the Nice, Vienna and Locarno Agreements will help the Intellectual Property (IP) Office in India to harmonize the classification systems for examination of trademark and design applications, in line with the classification systems, followed globally.
- It would give an opportunity to include Indian designs, figurative elements, and goods in the international classification systems.
- The accession is expected to instill confidence in foreign investors in relation to the protection of IPs in India.
- The accession would also facilitate in exercising rights in decision-making processes regarding review and revision of the classifications under the agreement.

World Intellectual Property Organization.

- WIPO is one of the **oldest specialized agencies of the United Nations.**
- WIPO was created in 1967 "to encourage creative activity, to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world".
- **WIPO currently administers 26 international treaties.**
- It is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland.**
- Every year **World Intellectual Property Day is being celebrated on 26th April.**

Intellectual Property

- Intellectual property (IP) is a category of property that includes intangible creations of the human intellect, and primarily encompasses copyrights, patents, and trademarks.
- It also includes other types of rights, such as trade secrets, publicity rights, moral rights, and rights against unfair competition.

Important Facts For Prelims (14th March 2019)

First TIR shipment via Chabahar Port

- **The first shipment under the United Nations 'Transports Internationaux Routiers' (TIR) convention has arrived in India from Afghanistan through Iran's Chabahar Port.**
- India joined the TIR Convention (the United Nations Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets) on 15th June 2017.
 - **TIR is a multilateral treaty that allows goods to be outlined in a TIR carnet and sealed in load compartments.**
 - Customs officials verify the carnet and check the seals, with no need for physical checking of the contents, enabling shipments to pass through countries without being opened at borders.
 - More than 34,000 operators are authorized to use the TIR system and in 2017, around 1.2 million TIR Carnets were issued worldwide.
 - **FICCI has been appointed by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC), Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India as National Issuing & Guaranteeing Association for its operation in India.**
 - The system worldwide is managed by the International Road Transport Union (IRU), Geneva and overseen by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

International Road Transport Union (IRU)

- It is the **world road transport organization**, which upholds the interests of bus,

coach, taxi and truck operators to ensure economic growth and prosperity via the sustainable mobility of people and goods by road worldwide.

- It was founded on 23 March 1948 and has its **headquarter at Geneva, Switzerland.**
- Its work spans more than 100 countries and has **regional offices in Brussels, Moscow, Istanbul, and New York.**
- It is an independent democratic organization whose member meet, debate and vote twice a year at the General Assembly and two Transport Councils.
- It also works closely with business, governments, the UN and international organizations.

Pink Tax

- **It refers to the extra cost that women have to pay on products designed and marketed specifically to them, as compared to other generic or male equivalent same products.**

For e.g., most salons charge more for women's haircut than men's.

- According to a recent study by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs, hair care products for women were 48% more expensive than the same products for men. Even toys for girls are priced higher than those for boys.
- **It's a double whammy for women** as on one hand, they get less pay in comparison to men for the same level of work and on the other hand, have to spend more on generic products specifically marketed to them.
- Some argue that that women's garments and accessories require minute detailings and thus are priced high.
- While some others argue that the expectations that are placed on women's appearance increase the price of the products specifically designed for them.
- To avoid Pink Tax, generic versions of products can be bought if the difference in quality is not much.

Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary

- Recently, the army has decided to remove sharp iron spikes cemented on the ground to keep elephants off its Narengi Cantonment in Guwahati bordering the Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **The Amchang Wildlife sanctuary is situated in the eastern fringe of the Guwahati, Assam.**
- It is flanked by the **three Reserve forests-Khanapara, Amchang, and the South Amchang.**
- It extends from the river Brahmaputra on the north to the hilly forests of Meghalaya on the south forming a continuous forest belt through Maradakdola Reserve Forests and the Mylleiem Reserve Forests of Meghalaya.
- **Species Diversity at Glance**

- **Mammals** – Chinese pangolin, Flying fox, Slow loris, Assamese macaque, Rhesus macaque, Hoolock gibbon, Porcupine.
- **Tree yellow butterflies (gancana harina)** are found at the Amchang wildlife sanctuary which are indigenous to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and northeast India.
- **Birds:** Lesser Adjutant, Greater Adjutant, White-backed Vulture, Slender-billed Vulture, Khaleej Pheasant Green Imperial Pigeon, Lesser Pied Hornbill etc.
- **Reptiles:** Python, Monitor Lizard, Indian Cobra etc.
- **Forest Types:** Khasi Hill Sal Forests, East Himalayan Mixed Deciduous Forest, Eastern Alluvial Secondary Semi-evergreen Forests and East Himalayan Sal Forests.

Foreign Exchange Swaps

- RBI has decided to **inject rupee liquidity into the system through long-term foreign exchange buy/sell swap.**
- **Under the Swap, a bank would sell US dollars to the RBI and simultaneously agree to buy the same amount of US dollars at the end of the swap period.**
- The RBI would conduct dollar-rupee buy/sell swap auction of \$5 billion for a three-year tenor.
- It aims to augment liquidity management and inject rupee liquidity.
- It will lower the dependence on open market operations which have been a significant amount of the overall borrowing as higher open market operations distort the interest rates curve.

Quality of Living Rankings -2019

- Mercer has recently released **Quality of Living Rankings -2019.**
- Conducted annually, the Mercer survey analyses the living standards of cities, as is perceived internationally, to enable multinational companies and other organizations to suitably compensate their staff on international assignments.
- Globally, **Vienna, Austria has topped the ranking followed by Zurich, Switzerland.**
- In India, **Hyderabad &, Pune has topped the survey and ranked at 143.**

Mercer

- Mercer is a global consulting leader in advancing health, wealth and careers.
- It releases its **Quality of Living ranking.**
- The survey identifies those cities with the highest personal safety ranking based upon internal stability, crime, the effectiveness of law enforcement and relationships with other countries.

Small Finance Banks (SFBs)

- Recently **Investment Information and Credit Agency (ICRA)** reported that SFBs are likely to grow at 25-30% over the medium term.
- **Small Financial Banks(SFBs)**
 - These Banks are aimed at ensuring the financial inclusion through the supply of credit to small business units; small and marginal farmers; micro and small industries; and other unorganized sector entities, through high technology-low cost operations.
 - The minimum paid-up equity capital for small finance banks is Rs. 100 crore.
 - These Banks perform basic banking activities of acceptance of deposits and lending.

Investment Information and Credit Agency (ICRA)

It is an Indian independent and professional investment information and credit rating agency set up in 1991 by leading financial/investment institutions, commercial banks.

Pink bollworm

- Virulent attack of the pest Pink bollworm is **destroying the fiber crop across India**, particularly in the West, Central and Southern parts.
- **Pink bollworm has developed resistance** to Cry1Ac and Cry2Ab (or Bollgard-II) — the two biotech solutions currently available in India to tackle pink bollworm
- Researchers have suggested ways to deal with Pink Bollworm like **shortening cotton season, destroying crop residues, deep summer plowing, crop rotation, mating disruption, insecticides.**

Pink bollworm

- **It is an insect known for being a pest in cotton farming.** The pink bollworm is **native to Asia** but has become an invasive species in most of the world's cotton-growing regions.
 - The **female moth lays eggs in a cotton boll, and when the larvae emerge from the eggs, they inflict damage through feeding.**
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