

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. Sri Lanka ranks 5th among the 10 countries with highest food price inflation - World Bank ( Aug. 24, 2022 )**

**Sri Lanka ranks 5th among the 10 countries with the highest food price inflation, according to the latest World Bank assessment.**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- According to the World Bank assessment, **Lebanon, Zimbabwe, Venezuela and Turkey** ranked first four countries, while **Iran, Argentina, Suriname, Ethiopia and Moldova** ranked behind Sri Lanka.
- The World Bank said record high food prices have triggered a global crisis that drives millions of people to extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition.
- The Ukraine war, supply chain disruptions, and the COVID-19 pandemic have pushed food prices to an all-time high.
- Rising food prices have a greater impact on people in low- and middle-income countries.
- These countries spend a larger share of their income on food than people in high-income countries.

#### ***Domestic food price inflation at high worldwide :***

- According to the data, almost all low and middle income countries have high inflation between April and July 2022.
- The World Bank says countries should lift trade restrictions or export bans on fertilizers.
- The use of fertilizers should be made more efficient by giving proper incentives to the farmers.
- Investing in innovation to develop best practices and new technologies can help increase production per kilogram of fertilizer.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -**

#### ***Top 10 Countries hit hardest by Food Inflation :***

1. Lebanon
2. Zimbabwe
3. Venezuela
4. Turkiye
5. Sri Lanka

- Iran
- 6.
7. Argentina
8. Suriname
9. Ethiopia
10. Moldova

**2. Defence Minister to attend SCO Defence Ministers' meeting at Tashkent, Uzbekistan ( Aug. 24, 2022 )**

**Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will attend the SCO Defence Ministers' meeting at Tashkent in Uzbekistan on 24 August.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- He will attend the Annual Meeting of the Defence Ministers' of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States.
- Chinese Defence Minister General Wei Fenghe and Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu are also expected to attend the SCO meeting.
- Other defence ministers of member countries of the grouping will also attend the meet.
- The SCO Defence Ministerial meeting is taking place about three weeks before the annual summit of this grouping.
- **The annual summit** will be held in **Samarkand on September 15-16.**
- During his visit to Tashkent, the Defence Minister will call on the Defence Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Lieutenant General Bakhodir Kurbanov.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -**

***What is Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) ?***

- It is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation.
- It was founded in 2001.
- The SCO Charter was signed in 2002, and came into force in 2003.
- It is a Eurasian political, economic and military organisation.
- Its aim is to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.
- China, Russia and four Central Asian states – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan – were founding members of the SCO.
- Official Languages - Russian and Chinese

Chairmanship - On the basis of rotation for a year by Member States

### **3. IREDA signs MoU with MAHAPREIT to provide loans for Green Energy projects ( Aug. 23, 2022 )**

**Indian Renewable Energy Development Association Limited (IREDA) yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mahatma Phule Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Technology Limited (Mahapreet).**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- The MoU was signed by Shri Pradeep Kumar Das, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of IREDA and Shri Bipin Shrimali, CMD, Mahapreet.
- As per this MoU, IREDA will provide financial facilities to Mahapreet for the renewable energy projects to be implemented for developing the infrastructure of state utilities, local bodies and renewable energy parks.
- Under this partnership, IREDA will also bear the appropriate techno-financial responsibility of renewable energy and energy efficiency and conservation projects for Mahapreet.
- Through this partnership, we will be able to assist the Government of India in achieving its target of 50% share of energy from non-fossil fuels by 2030.
- This is IREDA's ninth MoU in the last two years to provide consultancy services for the sustainable development of the country.

#### ***Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) :***

- It was incorporated as a Public Limited Company in the year 1987 as a 'Non-Banking Financial Institution'.
- It is a Miniratna (Category 1) type company functioning under the administrative control of 'Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India.
- Its function is to encourage projects related to new and renewable energy sources and to provide them financial assistance for their development.
- It has been notified as a 'Public Financial Institution' under section 4'A' of the 'Companies Act, 1956'.

### **4. MoU between Indian Navy and Space Applications Center (ISRO) ( Aug. 23, 2022 )**

**Recently a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Space Applications Centre (ISRO) and the Indian Navy on data sharing and cooperation on satellite based naval applications in oceanography and meteorology.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- This will enhance cooperation and usher in a common platform of mutual cooperation.
- Scientific advances by the Space Applications Centre will be synergized with the efforts of the Indian Navy to ensure the nation's defence with the rapid development in the field of satellite data retrieval and applications.

***The collaboration will cover various dimensions :***

- Sharing of non-confidential observational data.
- Includes provision of subject experts (SMEs) for processing satellite data for use in military operations and development of new equipment, calibration and validation of ocean models for use of meteorological information generated from the Space Applications Centre (SAC).
- Providing calibration and validation of ocean models.

***Space Applications Centre :***

- The Space Applications Centre is a premier R&D centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- It is a one-of-a-kind centre that deals with various disciplines ranging from payload development to social use.
- It is located in Ahmedabad in the state of Gujarat, India.

**5. World Water Week - 2022 ( Aug. 23, 2022 )**

**World Water Week - 2022 is being held in Stockholm, Sweden from 23 August to 1 September.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- Theme of World Water Week 2022 - **“Seeing the unseen: The value of water”**.
- The event has been organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI).
- The theme of World Water Week 2022 is covered under three main approaches -

1. The value of water for people and sustainable development

2. the value of water for nature and climate change
3. the financial and economic value of water

- The event will provide many opportunities for people around the world to unite, promote ideas, innovate and discuss the future.
- Around 300 sessions will be organised under World Water Week on water related topics including food security, health, agriculture, technology, biodiversity, climate change etc.
- World Water Week will attract top scientists, UN experts, local community groups, entrepreneurs, top politicians, students, CEOs and many more.
- This will help in achieving reforms towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **6. India nominates GARBA to be inscribed on UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list ( Aug. 23, 2022 )**

### **India has nominated the dance form Garba to be inscribed in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List.**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- After including 'Durga Puja' in UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage last year, India has now nominated 'Garba' dance for 2022.
- India was selected by UNESCO in July 2022 to serve on the Specialized Intergovernmental Committee on the 2003 Convention for the Protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- India received 110 votes from 155 state parties making the selection final.

#### ***Garba Dance :***

- It is a type of Indian dance usually performed on festivals and other special occasions in the state of Gujarat, India.
- Traditionally this nine day Hindu festival is performed during Navratri.
- It is a dance performed by women around it by filling an earthen pot, called a garbo, with water.
- A betel nut and silver coin are kept inside the pot, which is called Kumbh. A coconut is placed on top of it.
- The dancing women move round the pot and a singer and a dholak or tabla player give the music.
- 'Garba' is born according to a lamp, which is called Garbhadeep, which means the lamp placed inside the pot.

***India's 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' recognized by UNESCO :***

- (1) Tradition of Vedic chanting (3) Ramlila, traditional performance of Ramayana (3) Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre (4) Ramman, religious festivals and rituals of the Garhwal Himalayas, India (5) Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala (6) Kalbelia Folk Songs and Dances of Rajasthan (7) Chhau Dance (8) Buddhist Chanting of Ladakh: Recitation of Sacred Buddhist Scriptures in the Ladakh Region of the Himalayas, Jammu and Kashmir, India (9) Sankirtana, Traditional Singing, Nagade of Manipur and dance (10) Brass and copper utensils made by Thathers of Punjab (11) Yoga (12) Navroz, (13) Kumbh Mela (14) Durga Puja, Kolkata.
- UNESCO was established in the year 1945 to develop the "intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind" in the form of lasting peacekeeping.
- UNESCO officially recognizes sites of cultural and natural importance as World Heritage.
- India has a total of 40 Tangible Heritage Sites (31 Cultural, 8 Natural and 1 Mixed) and 14 Intangible Cultural Heritages recognized by UNESCO.

**7. India handed over 21,000 tonnes of urea to crisis-hit Sri Lanka ( Aug. 23, 2022 )**

**India on 22 August handed over 21,000 tonnes of chemical fertiliser to the crisis-ridden neighbour Sri Lanka.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- This has been done under a special assistance program that will help farmers in Sri Lanka and help strengthen bilateral cooperation for food security,
- This is India's second such aid to the beleaguered island nation in recent months.
- In May 2022, India had assured to supply 65,000 metric tonnes of urea to Sri Lanka immediately to avoid any disruption in the current **Yala farming** season in Sri Lanka.
- **Yala** is the paddy cultivation season in Sri Lanka which lasts between May and August.

***Ban of Fertiliser in Sri Lanka :***

- To move towards a green economy, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa last year decided to ban imports of chemical fertilizers, causing a food shortage that has reduced crop yields by 50%.
- This decision of the government badly affected the food production.
- As a result, the President of Sri Lanka declared an economic emergency to curb rising food prices.

***India's support to Srilanka :***

- India has pledged about \$4 billion in loans, lines of credit and credit swaps to the debt-ridden Sri Lanka from January this year.
- Sri Lanka's annual fertilizer imports cost is USD 400 million.
- India has provided financial assistance of about USD 3.5 billion to help safeguard Sri Lanka's food, health and energy security by supplying food, medicines, fuel, kerosene and other essential commodities.
- In addition, India has recently supplied around 40,000 tonnes of rice under the extended USD 1 billion line of credit.

### **8. Inauguration of the 10th National Conference of Women Police Officers (NCWP) in Shimla ( Aug. 22, 2022 )**

**Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai inaugurated the 10th National Conference of Women in Police (NCWP) on 21 August at Shimla.**

#### **IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- This conference is being organised in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh on 21st and 22nd August.
- This national level conference is being organised in collaboration with the Union Home Ministry, Bureau of Police Research and Development and Himachal Police.
- Hundreds of women constables to DGP and Para Military officers are participating in this conference.
- This conference provides a platform for women police officers.
- The conference showcases the achievements of women police officers and the issues and challenges faced by women in the 21st century.
- The conference also discussed the changing crimes and new roles and responsibilities of women in the age of technology.

#### ***Objective of the conference :***

- The objective of organising this conference is to further develop the quality of leadership among women and to discuss the challenges faced by women police officers and personnel.

### **9. Govt awards GI tag to Mithila Makhana to boost farmers' income ( Aug. 22, 2022 )**

**The Central Government has granted Geographical Indication (GI) tag to Mithila Makhana.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- According to the GI Registry Certificate, it has been registered as GI Mithilanchal Makhana Producer Association.
- Usually, this name assures quality and uniqueness, which is essentially due to its place of origin.
- Any association of persons, producers, organization or authority established by or under law can apply for GI tag.
- This step will help the Makhana growers to get maximum value for their produce.
- Once a product has got this tag, no person or company can sell anything similar to that name.
- This tag is valid for a period of 10 years after which it can be renewed.
- Other benefits of GI registration include legal protection of that commodity, prevention against unauthorized use by others and promotion of exports.

***What is a Geographical Indication ?***

- A Geographical Indication (GI) is primarily an agricultural, natural or manufactured product (handicrafts and industrial goods) originating in a given geographical area.
- Such a name assures quality and uniqueness which is due to its origin in the specified geographical area.

***Some Famous Geographical Indications :***

- Basmati Rice, Darjeeling Tea, Chanderi Fabric, Mysore Silk, Kullu Shawl, Kangra Chai, Thanjavur Painting, Allahabad Surkha, Farrukhabad Print, Lucknow Zardozi and Kashmir Walnut Wood Carving, Mahabaleshwar Strawberry, Banarasi Saree, Tirupati Laddu, Jaipur Blue Pottery.

***Importance of geographical indication :***

- Geographical Indication tag provides equal rights and protection to the holders of intellectual property rights like copyright, patent, trademark etc.
- These are the factors for the promotion of fame and culture of any country.
- They play an important role in the prestige of any country.
- They are an integral part of India's rich culture and collective intellectual heritage.
- The rural economy of remote areas benefits immensely by granting GI tag to specific types of products.



**10. Union Home Minister Amit Shah presides over 23rd Central Zonal Council Meeting in Bhopal ( Aug. 22, 2022 )**

**Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the meeting of the Central Zonal Council in Bhopal on 22nd August where issues related to connectivity, electricity, sharing of river water and common interest were discussed.**

**IMPORTANT FACTS -**

- The meeting was attended by Chief Ministers, Ministers, Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries and senior officials of Member States and Central Government.
- In this meeting of the Central Zonal Council, the states of **Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand** are included.
- UP CM Yogi Adityanath, Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami, Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel and Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan were present in the Central Zonal Council meeting.
- The Central Government holds regular meetings of the Zonal Councils from time to time as part of the overall strategy to strengthen and promote cooperative and competitive federalism in the country.
- These regional councils enable dialogue and discussion on issues affecting one or more states.

***About Zonal Councils :***

- In 1956 first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru give the idea of creation of Zonal Councils.
- There are five Zonal Councils in India which were established in 1957 under Section 15-22 of the States Reorganization Act, 1956.
- A Standing Committee is constituted by each Zonal Council consisting of the Chief Secretaries of their respective Zonal Councils of the Member States.
- These Standing Committees meet from time to time to resolve the issues.
- Chairman - The Union Home Minister is the Chairman of each of these Councils
- Vice-chairman - Chief Minister of the host state

***Five Zonal Councils :***

1. **The Northern Zonal Council** - States of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Union Territory of Chandigarh are included.
2. **The Central Zonal Council** - States of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are included.

3. **The Eastern Zonal Council** - States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Sikkim and West Bengal are included.
4. **The Western Zonal Council** - States of Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra and the Union Territories of Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli are included.
5. **The Southern Zonal Council** - States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry are included.

***Objectives of the Zonal Councils :***

- National integration
- Enabling Centre and States to collaborate and exchange ideas and experiences
- Stopping the growth of regionalism, linguism and specific tendencies
- To establish an environment of cooperation among the states for successful and speedy execution of development projects

***Significance of Zonal Councils :***

- Zonal councils provide a forum for discussion on issues affecting one or more states or issues between the Centre and the states.
- It helps in developing a coordinated approach through deliberation and exchange of views among the states on important issues of social and economic development.
- They provide a forum for resolving disputes between the Centre and the states.

**Kindly also see 11 June and 9 July 2022 post.**