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1. China building dam on Yarlung Zangbo river near Indian border (Jan. 25, 2023)

China building dam on Yarlung Zangbo river near Indian border

Recently it has been revealed through a satellite picture that China is building a new dam on the **Yarlung Zangbo (Brahmaputra)** river in Tibet near the **tri-junction of India, Nepal and Tibet**, which remains a matter of concern for India.

An overview of the news:

- By increasing the construction activities in the areas adjacent to the Indian border, China is installing military equipment and its related equipment there.
- The Chinese dam follows the announcement of plans to build a large dam downstream of the Yarlung Zangbo in 2021 to generate **70 gigawatts of electricity**.
- This is nearly three times the power produced by China's **Three Gorges Dam**, the largest hydroelectric power plant in terms of installed capacity.

Yarlung Zangbo (Brahmaputra) River:

- The Brahmaputra River is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo in China.
- Origin Source:- **Mansarovar Lake**
- Total length 2,880 km.
- Tibet:- 1,700 km.
- Arunachal Pradesh and Assam :- 920 kms.
- Bangladesh:- 260 km.

2. Working Group (ITWG) on Animal Genetic Resources (AGR) for Food and Agriculture (Jan. 25, 2023)

India has been elected as the Vice-Chair of the 12th session of the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group (ITWG) on **Animal Genetic Resources (AGR) to be held in Rome during January 18-20, 2023.**

An overview of the news

- **Dr. BN Tripathi, Deputy Director General (Animal Science)** and National Coordinator, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) **chaired the session and acted as ambassador.**

- This working group was formed by the FAO's Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA).
- The task of this group is to review technical issues, advise and submit recommendations to the Commission and implement the Commission's program relating to AGR at the global level.
- The 12th session of the ITWG reviewed the implementation of the Global Action Plan for Animal Genetic Resources, monitoring ANGR diversity and preparation of the third country report.
- The Global National Coordinators' Workshop prior to the ITWG session was held in Rome on January 16-17, 2023.

FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization)

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is a specialised agency of the United Nations that studies agricultural production, forestry and research related to agricultural marketing.
- **Establishment - 1945**
- **Headquarters - Rome (Italy)**

3. US President Biden nominates Julie Turner as North Korea human rights envoy (Jan. 24, 2023)

US President **Joe Biden** has nominated **Julie Turner** as **special envoy for human rights in North Korea** on 24 January.

An overview of the news

- The move to fill the post, which has been **vacant since 2017**, comes amid debate over human rights issues as well as efforts to counter Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program.
- Julie Turner is currently the **director for East Asia and the Pacific** in the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.
- Turner has served in the office for East Asia and the Pacific for more than 16 years, primarily focusing on initiatives related to the **promotion of human rights in North Korea**.
- The post of special envoy had become controversial in South Korea as the previous administration tried to bring North Korea to the negotiating table.
- Some activists said that human rights had been sidelined due to national security priorities.
- North Korea has repeatedly denied allegations of human rights abuses and blamed the sanctions for the dire humanitarian situation.

- **A landmark 2014 United Nations report** on North Korean human rights concluded that North Korean security chief and leader **Kim Jong Un** should face justice for Nazi-style atrocities.

4. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Film Festival (Jan. 24, 2023)

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Film Festival

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Film Festival will be **organised by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** through the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) **in Mumbai from January 27 to January 31, 2023.**

An overview of the news

- The SCO Film Festival is being organised during the Presidency of India in the SCO.
- The festival aims to build cinematic partnership, act as a bridge between the cultures of different countries in the SCO and create harmony among the film communities of the SCO members through a collective cinematic experience.
- A total of 57 films from SCO countries will be screened at the SCO Film Festival. In which 14 feature films will be screened in the competition section and 43 films will be screened in the non-competition section.
- Marathi film Godavari directed by Nikhil Mahajan and Gujarati film 'The Last Film Show' directed by Pan Nalin have been nominated from India.
- Shoojit Sircar's Sardar Udham, SS Rajamouli's period film RRR SCO focus are included in the country.

About SCO

- SCO is a multilateral organisation, which was **established on 15 June 2001.**
- **Headquarters - Beijing, China**
- **Member Country**
- Eight member countries - China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
- three observer states - Belarus, Iran and Mongolia

5. Brazilian government declares medical emergency in Yanomami (Jan. 23, 2023)

Recently in **Brazil**, the government has declared a **medical-emergency in the Yanomami region** amid reports of **child deaths** from diseases caused by illegal gold mining and malnutrition-related conditions.

An overview of the news

- The purpose of the state of emergency declaration is to **restore health services** for the Yanomami people that had come to a standstill during the previous government's tenure.
- In the four years of Bolsonaro's presidency, **570 Yanomami children died** from preventable diseases, mainly from **malnutrition** as well as **malaria, diarrhoea, and mercury used by wildcat gold miners**.
- The government announced food packages to the Yanomami, where about 26,000 Yanomami live in an area of rainforest and tropical savanna.
- The Yanomami area has been a victim of illegal gold mining gangs for decades.

About Yanomami tribes

- They are also called **South American Indians**.
- They live in the remote forests of the **Orinoco River Basin** in southern Venezuela and the northernmost part of the **Amazon River Basin in northern Brazil**.
- They live in small, scattered, semi-permanent villages, speak the **Ziriana language**, and hunt.
- Their population is about 26,000.
- **Davi Copenava**, a Brazilian leader who secured the land rights of the Yanomami people, has been awarded the **Right Livelihood Award-2019**, also known as **Sweden's alternative Nobel Prize**.

6. International seminar on knowledge sharing on conservation of natural and cultural heritage in Kathmandu (Jan. 22, 2023)

On the occasion of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, an **International seminar** on Knowledge sharing of **conservation of Natural and cultural heritage** was organised by the **Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in Kathmandu**.

An overview of the news

- It was organised in coordination with the **Embassy of India in Kathmandu**.
- Ambassador of India, **Naveen Shrivastav** informed about the Indian government's contribution to conserving cultural heritage.

- The Government of India provided **USD 50 million** in aid for the reconstruction of two UNESCO heritage sites—**Pashupatinath Temple and Bhandarkhal of Patan Durbar Square** after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal.
- The guest of honour of the event, Nepal's Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, **Sudan Kirati** appreciated the efforts of the Indian Embassy in bringing together conservation experts from India and Nepal for the reconstruction and restoration of the natural and cultural heritage.

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)

- It was established in **1984 in New Delhi** with the objective of heritage awareness and conservation in India.
- Currently INTACH is recognized as one of the largest heritage organisations in the world with more than **190 chapters** across the country.
- Over the last 31 years, INTACH has pioneered the conservation of intangible heritage along with natural and built heritage.

7. New Zealand's ruling Labor Party elected Chris Hipkins as the country's 41st prime minister (Jan. 22, 2023)

New Zealand's ruling Labor Party on 22 January elected **Chris Hipkins** as its leader and the country's **41st prime minister**, replacing **Ms Jacinda Ardern**.

An overview of the news

- Hipkins was the only candidate for the position and was confirmed by 64 MPs in what is known as the **Labor caucus**.
- Known as "**Chippy**", Hipkins played a key role in the response to COVID-19.
- He was first elected to Parliament in **2008 for the Labor Party**.
- He was appointed **Minister of Health in July 2020** before becoming the Minister of COVID Response.
- Before Hipkins can officially become prime minister, Ardern must submit her resignation to **King Charles III's** representative in New Zealand, Governor General **Cindy Kiro**.
- Kiro Hipkins will then be appointed to the role and sworn in.
- The Labour party has also selected Carmel Sepuloni as the deputy prime minister.

About New Zealand

- Prime Minister: **Chris Hipkins**
- Capital: **Wellington**

Currency : **New Zealand dollar**

8. UNESCO dedicates International Day of Education 2023 to Afghan girls, women (Jan. 21, 2023)

UNESCO has decided to dedicate the **International Day of Education** to be celebrated on **January 24, 2023, to Afghan girls and women.**

An overview of the news

- UNESCO Director-General **Audrey Azoulay** said that no country in the world should prevent women and girls from getting education and it is a universal human right that should be respected.
- The international community has a responsibility to ensure that the rights of Afghan girls and women are restored without delay.
- UNESCO and other international organisations should take concrete steps to address the issue of women and girls in **Afghanistan under Taliban rule.**
- According to UNESCO, currently around **80 percent of Afghan girls** and young women of school-age are out of school under Taliban rule, as they are denied access to secondary schools and universities.
- Since **15 August 2021**, Afghanistan has barred girls from attending secondary school, restricted the freedom of movement of women and girls, and excluded women from most areas of the workforce.

About UNESCO

- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** is a specialised agency of the **United Nations (UN).**
- It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture.
- It is also a member of the United **Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG)**, a coalition of UN agencies and organisations aimed at fulfilling the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**
- Headquarters: **Paris, France**
- Director General: **Audrey Azoulay**
- Founded: **16 November 1945 in London, United Kingdom**
- The organisation has **193 members** and **11 Associate members.**

9. India surpasses China to become most populous country in the world (Jan. 21, 2023)

According to projections by the **World Population Review (WPR)**, India has **surpassed China** as the **world's most populous nation**.

An overview of the news

- As per WPR, India's population was **141.7 crore as of the end of 2022**.
- According to official announcements, India's population is a **little over 5 million**, compared to **141.2 million** declared by China on 17 January.
- As per WPR estimates, India's population has increased to **142.3 crore** as of January 18.
- India, with **50 percent of its population below the age of 30**, is poised to be the fastest growing major economy in the world.
- According to WPR, although India's population growth has slowed down, it will **still increase till at least 2050**.
- India, the **third largest economy in Asia**, is currently self-sufficient in **food production**.
- India ranks **second in terms of production** of rice, wheat and sugar.
- Apart from being a major importer of edible oils, India is also the **largest consumer of sugar**.
- India is the **third largest market for the purchase of crude oil**, the **second largest consumer of steel and gold**.
- In addition, India is the **third largest domestic aviation market** in the world.

10. Union Ministry of Tourism participates in FITUR, the world's largest International Travel Exhibition in Madrid (Jan. 20, 2023)

The **Ministry of Tourism**, Government of India, is participating in **FITUR**, the world's largest international travel exhibition in **Madrid**.

An overview of the news

- **Feria Internacional del Turismo or FITUR** is being hosted in **Spain** from January 18-22.
- India's participation in FITUR is important for promoting tourism.
- The Ministry of Tourism has taken up 253 square metres of space, with over 30 participants exhibiting along with the India Pavilion, to participate in the exhibition.

- The India Pavilion was inaugurated by **Dinesh K Patnaik**, Indian Ambassador to Spain.
- The Indian delegation, led by **Rakesh Kumar Verma**, Additional Secretary in the Tourism Ministry, participated in key business meetings with the senior leadership of Melia Hotels International, Palladium Hotel Group, Expedia Group, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).
- The **first Global Tourism Investors Summit** will be organised by the Ministry of Tourism in **New Delhi** from 10 to 12 April.