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DAILY NEWS DIARY

Of

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FOR PRELIMS AND MAINS

Warm Greetings.

- DnD aims to provide every day news analysis in sync with the UPSC pattern.
- It is targeted at UPSC – Prelims & Mains.
- Daily articles are provided in the form of Question and Answers
- To have a bank of mains questions.
- And interesting to read.
- Providing precise information that can be carried straight to the exam, rather than over dumping.

Enjoy reading.

THE HINDU - TH  
INDIAN EXPRESS - IE  
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ECONOMIC TIMES - ET  
TIMES OF INDIA - TOI



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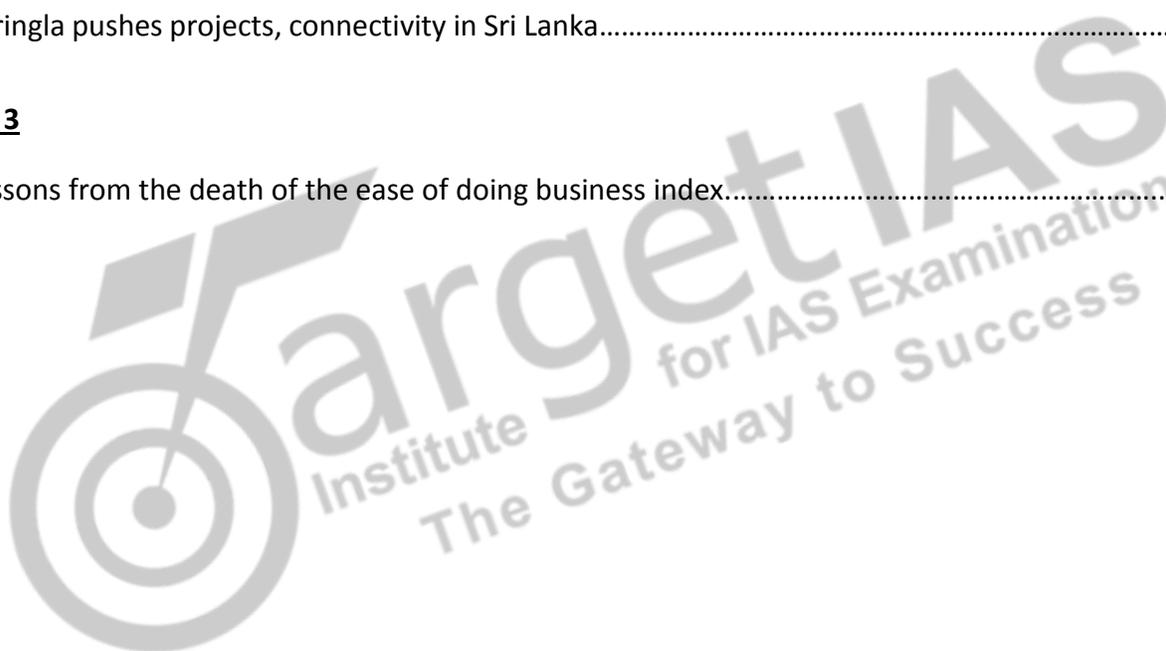
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## ESSAY PAPER

### Editorial

**Q) Asses the issues regarding the India's fading green cover.**

**Background:** The importance of participation of local communities, adequate financing and incentives in the restoration of India's declining forest cover.

#### **Significance of Forest Cover:**

- Forests cover nearly 30% land surface of the earth.
- They provide a wide variety of ecosystem services and support countless and diverse species.
- They stabilise the climate, sequester carbon and regulate the water regime.

#### **Issue:**

- Despite various international conventions and national policies in place to improve green cover, there is a decline in global forest cover.
- The State of the World's Forests Report 2020, says that since 1990, around 420 million hectares of forest have been lost through deforestation, conversion and land degradation.
- India lost 4.69 MHA of its forests for various land uses between 1951 to 1995.
- Dependence on forests by nearly 18% of the global human population has put immense pressure on ecosystems; in India, this has resulted in the degradation of 41% of its forests.

#### **Steps taken to improve the Forest Cover:**

- Restoration is bringing back the degraded or deforested landscape to its original state by various interventions to enable them to deliver all the benefits.
- 2021-2030 has been declared as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration for improving environmental conditions and enhancing human communities.
- India joined the Bonn Challenge with a pledge to restore 21 MHA of degraded and deforested land which was later revised to 26 MHA to be restored by 2030.
- The first-ever country progress report under the Bonn Challenge submitted by India by bringing 9.8 million hectares since 2011 under restoration is an achievement.

- There have been remarkable initiatives to involve local people in the protection and development of forests by forming joint forest management committees (JFMC).
- However, continued degradation and deforestation need to be tackled effectively to achieve the remaining target of restoration by addressing various challenges.

**Key challenges:**

- Forest restoration and tree planting are leading strategies to fight global warming by way of carbon sequestration. However, planting without considering the local ecology can result in more damage.
- Planting a forest in the wrong places such as savannah grasslands could be disastrous for local biodiversity.
- Also, naturally regenerated forests tend to have more secure carbon storage.
- Nearly 5.03% of Indian forests are under protection area (PA) management needing specific restoration strategies. The remaining areas witness a range of disturbances including grazing, encroachment, fire, and climate change impacts that need area-specific considerations.
- Though India's increasing economic growth is helping to eliminate poverty, there is continued degradation and a growing scarcity of natural resources. The intricate link between poverty and environmental degradation was first highlighted by India at the first UN global conference on the human environment in Stockholm.
- Encroachment of nearly 1.48 MHA of forest and grazing in nearly 75% of forest area is also linked to the livelihood of local communities.
- Adequate financing is one of the major concerns for the success of any intervention including restoration.
- The involvement of multiple stakeholders in forest restoration is bound to cause a conflict of interests among different stakeholders; along with low priority and insufficient funding, it becomes even more challenging.

**Way Forward:**

It is fundamental to consider the local ecology before implementing any restoration efforts to retain their biodiversity and ecosystem functions. Restoration, being a scientific activity, needs research support for its success. Critical examination is necessary before putting restoration interventions into practice. The relevance of local research duly considering ecological aspects, local disturbances and forest-dependent communities is important to formulate guidelines for locally suitable interventions and to meet India's global commitment. Alternate ways of financing such as involving corporates and dovetailing restoration activities with ongoing land-based programmes of various departments can help to make it easy for operation.

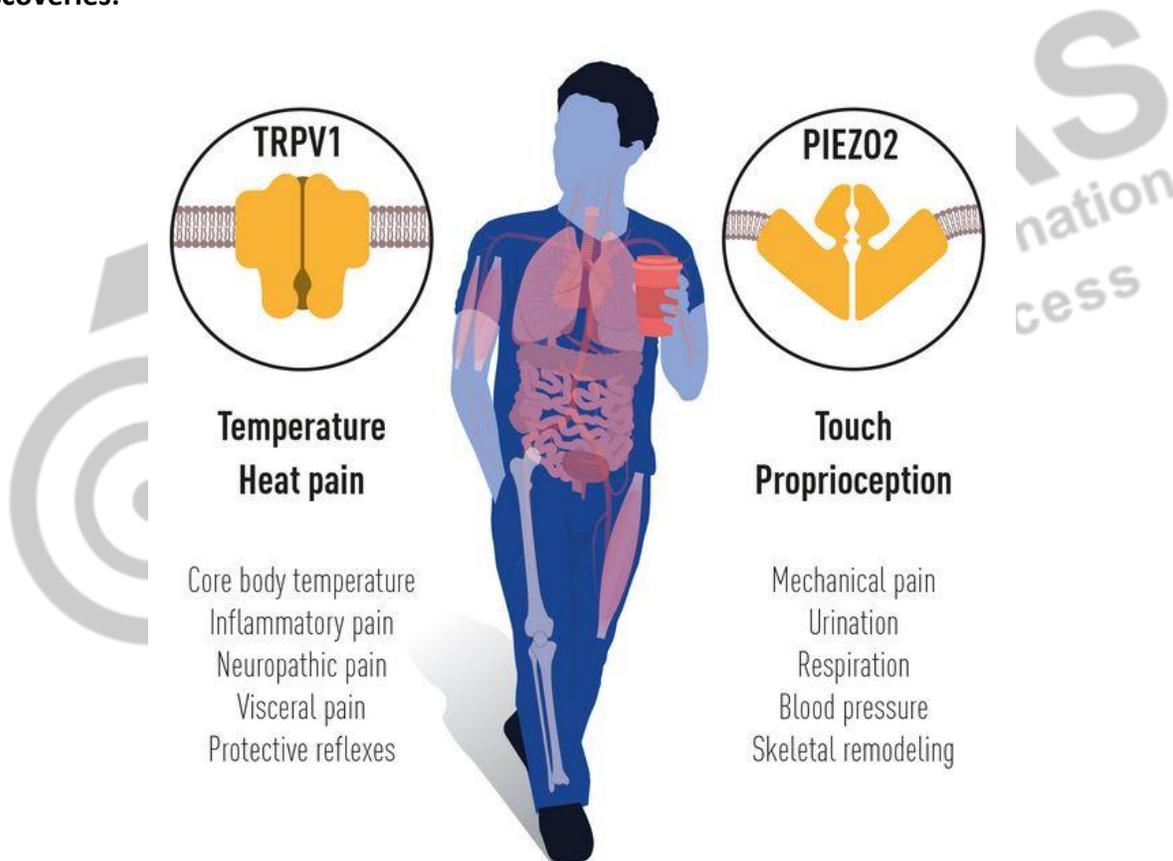
**Q) Explain the discoveries made by the scientists David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian.**

**Background:** U.S. scientists David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian have won the Nobel Medicine Prize for discoveries on receptors for temperature and touch.

**Laureates:**

- David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian, working independently in the United States, made a series of discoveries in the late 1990s and early 2000s.
- They figured out the touch detectors in our body and the mechanism through which they communicate with the nervous system to identify and respond to a particular touch.

**Discoveries:**



- They discovered the molecular sensors in the human body that are sensitive to heat, and to mechanical pressure, and make us “feel” hot or cold, or the touch of a sharp object on our skin.
- In 1997, Dr. Julius and his team published a paper in Nature detailing how capsaicin, or the chemical compound in chili peppers, causes the burning sensation.

- They created a library of DNA fragments to understand the corresponding genes and finally discovered a new capsaicin receptor and named it TRPV1.
- This discovery paved the way for the identification of many other temperature-sensing receptors.
- They identified another new receptor called TRPM8, a receptor that is activated by cold. It is specifically expressed in a subset of pain-and-temperature-sensing neurons.
- They identified a single gene PIEZO2, which when silenced made the cells insensitive to the poking. They named this new mechanosensitive ion channel Piezo1.

**Functioning:**

- The human ability to sense heat or cold and pressure is not very different from the working of the many detectors that we are familiar with.
- When something hot, or cold, touches the body, the heat receptors enable the passage of some specific chemicals, like calcium ions, through the membrane of nerve cells.
- It's like a gate that opens up on a very specific request. The entry of the chemical inside the cell causes a small change in electrical voltage, which is picked up by the nervous system.
- There is a whole spectrum of receptors that are sensitive to different ranges of temperature.
- When there is more heat, more channels open up to allow the flow of ions, and the brain is able to perceive higher temperatures.

**Therapeutic implications**

- Breakthroughs in physiology have often resulted in an improvement in the ability to fight diseases and disorders. This one is no different.
- There are receptors that make us feel pain. If these receptors can suppress, or made less effective, the person had felt less pain.
- Chronic pain is present is a number of illnesses and disorders. Earlier, the experience of pain was a mystery.
- But as we understand these receptors more and more, it is possible that we gain the ability to regulate them in such a way that the pain is minimized.

## GS-2

## SNIPPETS

## ❖ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**Q) India urges Sri Lanka to hold provincial polls. Comment.****Context:**

India has urged Sri Lanka to hold elections to its provincial councils without further delay, along with the full implementation of the 13th Amendment.

**Issue:**

- The five-year terms of the provincial councils born out of the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987 as a step to devolve political power to all the provinces last expired in 2018 and 2019, during the time of the former Maithripala Sirisena–Ranil Wickremesinghe government.
- Despite the then oppositional Rajapaksa camp demanding that the polls be held to the nine provinces, the Sirisena administration, which amended the Provincial Councils Elections Act in 2017, postponed holding the elections, as it grew increasingly unpopular amid internal rifts.

**13<sup>th</sup> Amendment:** The 13<sup>th</sup> amendment of the Sri Lankan Constitution is an outcome of the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, which was signed by the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayawardene.

**Q) What is the significance of India's connectivity with Sri Lanka?****Context:**

India's Foreign Secretary who is on a visit to Sri Lanka has stressed the need for the conclusion of connectivity projects in Sri Lanka.

**India's negotiations with Srilanka:**

- India has underscored the need for early conclusion of bilateral projects in Sri Lanka.
- It has sought the enhancement of connectivity by air and sea between the neighbouring countries, which are seeking to reset ties amid a strain in ties.
- The foreign secretary, referring to halted, or delayed projects awaiting a push for revival or completion has asserted:
  - With the easing of the situation in Sri Lanka, it may be time to work on connectivity initiatives like the Jaffna to Chennai flight, ferry services between Karaikal and

Kankesanthurai, and Dhanushkodi and Talaimanar and the Buddhist corridor with the new international airport at Kushinagar.

**Note:**

During his virtual bilateral summit with Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2020, the Prime Minister of India had announced a \$15 million grant for the promotion of Buddhist ties, aimed at deepening people-to-people linkages between the two countries.

**GS-3****❖ ECONOMY****Q) What are the advantages and issues associated with Ease of Doing Business ranking?****Context:**

The Ease of Doing Business Index (EoDB) came under attack on grounds that its data was modified in response to pressure from countries like China and Saudi Arabia. As a result of an independent audit, the index has now been abandoned by the Bank.

**Methodology used in EoDB ranking:**

- World Bank researchers developed the EoDB ranking system under the assumption that better laws and regulatory frameworks would increase the ease of doing business and improve economic performance.
- It collected data from respondents in various countries regarding existing laws and regulations on multiple dimensions, validated them through internal scrutiny, and then combined them into an overall index that allowed us to rank countries.
- Each dimension was weighted equally and added up to create a scale.

**India specific issues with the EoDB ranking:**

- If we want to create an internationally comparable index, we must ask similar questions.
- Difference in level of development not taken into account: Yet, many of these questions may not be locally salient in economies at different levels of development.
- For example, EoDB asked questions about the ease of getting an electric connection.
- However, it is not getting a connection that is the problem, rather the reliability of electricity supply that hampers Indian industries.
- In addition, most of the questions focused on hypothetical cases about limited liability companies.

- However, the World Bank's own enterprise survey shows that 63 per cent of Indian enterprises are sole proprietorships and only 14 per cent are limited partnerships.
- Focusing on protecting minority owners' rights in this tiny segment of Indian industries and using it to rank the business climate in India does not seem particularly useful.
- The index placed tremendous faith in formalised systems while simultaneously disdaining bureaucratic structures embedded in this formalisation.

**Significance of EoDB ranking:**

- A bigger problem is that EoDB had acquired such power that countries competed to improve their rankings.
- Countries assume that their EoDB ranking will attract foreign investors.
- Empirical evidence about this presumed impact is questionable.
- There is indeed some evidence that the score on EoDB is associated with FDI, but this association exists mainly for more affluent countries.
- For instance, in 2020, China was the largest recipient of FDI despite ranking 85th on the EoDB.
- One of the less visible parts of the EoDB exercise was the underlying political message.
- Regulation, often treated synonymously with bureaucratic hurdles, is bad, and abandoning regulations will bring positive results.

**Conclusion**

The presumed economic consequences, as well as political benefits associated with improving the rankings, encouraged many countries to try and "game" the system by making superficial improvements on indicators that are being measured and, when that failed, by putting explicit pressure on the World Bank research team.



Q) With respect to Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Every offence punishable under this Act shall be cognizable.
2. It is mandatory for the judge to award the Death penalty for certain offences after a previous conviction.

Options:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both
- d. None



Q) Consider the following pairs:

Tiger Reserve	State
1. Indravati	Chhattisgarh
2. Valmiki	Bihar
3. Kawal	Telangana
4. Mudumalai	Tamil Nadu

Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?

- a. 1 and 4 only
- b. 2, 3 and 4 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER: d

**Explanation:****Tiger Reserve****State**

- Indravati Chhattisgarh
- Valmiki Bihar
- Kawal Telangana
- Mudumalai Tamil Nadu

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