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DAILY NEWS DIARY

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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.

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ESSAY PAPER

Editorial

**Q- The root cause of Chennai's distress during rains lies in mismanagement of its water bodies.
Comment?**

INTRODUCTION = Tamil Nadu is reeling under the fury of the northeast monsoon with heavy floods forcing a near shutdown in Chennai. At least four people have died in the city after rainwater inundated large parts of the residential areas and commercial hubs late last week. Schools and colleges were closed and railway traffic disrupted.



Though the low pressure formation in the Bay of Bengal, which caused the heavy downpour, has lost its severity, there is fear that the city may see floods of the scale it experienced in 2015, when over 400 people died as record rain fell during the wettest November in a century.

Causes -

1. As in 2015, an extreme weather event is blamed for the flooding — more heavy rainfall is predicted. Climate experts have warned that such extreme weather events are likely to be frequent in the coming years.
2. Since the 2015 rain in Chennai, the impact of which was exacerbated due to poor reservoir management, the administration has done extensive work to build storm water drains in flood-prone areas and declogged the city's two rivers, Adyar and Cooum.
3. But much more has to be done, especially since the root cause of the city's distress during rains lies in mismanagement of its water bodies –
The unplanned growth of the city has led to the filling up of lakes and tanks and shrunk wetlands. For instance, the shopping hub of T Nagar was built on a lake bed and the city airport came up on the floodplains of Adyar.
4. Similarly, the city has expanded in the south to encroach on a large wetland, Pallikaranai, where residential colonies, institutional areas and even a large garbage dump have been built.
5. A mass rapid transport system has severely restricted the flow in Buckingham Canal, which was designed also as a protective barrier against floods and sea ingress.
6. Over 300 lakes, tanks and canals have disappeared in the past decades and, according to the administration, over 1.5 lakh illegal constructions choke the cityscape.

This is the story of most Indian cities that have been callous about precious natural assets such as rivers, streams and lakes, which were the primary reason for the evolution of these habitations as urban centres.

Way Forward -

Chennai will have to reclaim at least a part of its lost water spaces and preserve whatever is left, including its two rivers which have been reduced to large drains, in order to better withstand the vagaries of climate-change-induced weather events. The solution lies in preparedness to face storms, floods, sea ingress. Cities like Chennai also face extreme water stress in summer months.


GS 2

❖ Indian Society

Q- Discuss the problem of Ganja network widening in India in light of a recent example in news?


BACKGROUND = Visakhapatnam is known for its salubrious climate, tranquil beaches, peaceful social fabric, Central public sector units, educational institutions and cosmopolitan culture. But of late, the district has gained notoriety as the “ganja hub” of the country.

- In the district, about nine of the 11 mandals that fall under the thickly forested area of the Eastern Ghats, which is known as the Agency area, are into ganja cultivation.
- The traditional crops such as turmeric, ginger, rajma and millets have given way to this weed, the seed of which was first sown by smugglers from Kerala and Tamil Nadu about four decades back.
- Today, as per a conservative estimate by the Excise Department, it is grown on over 7,000 to 10,000 acres spread over 150 to 200 villages in the nine mandals.



WEEDING OUT THE MENACE

<p>> The area under ganja cultivation in north AP spreads over 15,000 acres in Vizag and East Godavari districts and along the Andhra Odisha Border (AOB)</p>	<p>> Cost of one kg of dry ganja in metro cities: Over ₹50,000</p> <p>> In 2017, Vizag rural police seized 31,648 kg ganja worth ₹6 crore</p>	<p>> The Narcotics Control Bureau plans to set up a zone in Vizag to deal with the drug menace</p> <p>> The illegal ganja trade is pegged at ₹15,000 crore per annum in Andhra Pradesh</p>
<p>> The Sheelavathi variety of ganja grown in Vizag Agency is in high demand</p>	<p>> In 2018, police seized around 16,000 kg worth ₹3.2 crore</p>	<p>> The special task force team has destroyed ganja plantations across over 500 acres this season</p>
<p>> Cost of one kg of dry ganja in Vizag Agency: ₹4,000</p>	<p>> In 2019, 21,970 kg ganja worth ₹4.19 crore was seized</p>	



The Menace -

1. The crop is being grown extensively in mandals where the banned CPI (Maoist) holds sway.
2. It is estimated that one acre yields about one tonne of ganja a year, Its value runs into hundreds of crores of rupees.
3. The weed grown here has a booming market across India. Though it is procured by middlemen from farmers at about ₹2,000 per kg, it has a market value ranging from ₹7,000 to ₹15,000 in the upcountry market.
4. The smuggling network was developed over the years by the middlemen from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, who made the initial foray and now it is a well-oiled machinery, which includes the local people.

Though the Maoists deny any links with the trade, the fact that it is grown right in their hotbed waters down their claim. “They are mixing extremism and narcotics with dexterity and it has been established that they get a cut in the trade.

❖ Governance

Q- Discuss the possible alternative to the Mullaperiyar Decommissioning Row?

BACKGROUND = The Kerala government made a strong pitch in the Supreme Court to decommission the 126-year-old “deteriorated” Mullaperiyar dam operated by Tamil Nadu and build a new one, saying climate change, erratic and heavy rainfall and floods make the spectre of catastrophe real and near.

- Kerala’s affidavit coincides with a red alert issued in Chennai following torrential rains. The Chennai rains came in the heels of several days of downpour in Kerala.



- **The only permanent solution** for removing the eternal threat owing to the safety concerns of the 126-year-old existing dam in Mullaperiyar and for protecting the safety of the lakhs of people living in the downstream of Mullaperiyar dam, **is to build a new dam in the downstream reaches of the existing Mullaperiyar dam,** the State.
- **Origin –**
The suggestion dates back to 1979. Kerala had suggested it in meetings with the Union Minister for Water Resources and the Chief Ministers of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. “But Tamil Nadu had not concurred with the proposal of new dam.”

- **Examples -**

1. The State referred to the decommissioning of another 19th century lime concrete structure, the Victoria dam in Australia, which was decommissioned in 1990 following seepages and a new dam constructed.
2. The State also referred to the Uttarakhand flood, also known as the Chamoli disaster of February 2021, mainly attributed to the climate change in the environs of the Nanda Devi National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site.

- **Way Forward -**

1. The State urged the court to have the Supervisory Committee reconsider the peak value of upper rule level of 142 feet formulated by Tamil Nadu in consultation with the Central Water Commission (CWC). If the water level at Mullaperiyar was kept at a higher level, releases from it would be affecting the already filled Idukki reservoir.

A cascading failure of Mullaperiyar and Idukki will result in a catastrophe which is beyond imagination affecting the life and property of 50 lakh of people residing below the Idukki dam. The ageing dam was situated in the Seismic Zone III area.



Q- Consider the following statements –

- 1) The Ministry of Finance has been tasked to keep an eye on the inflow and subsequent outflow of foreign funds to NGOs under the foreign contributions regulations law.
- 2) As Intelligence Bureau (IB) inputs have shown that foreign funds entering India were used to fund activities that destabilise national peace and security.

Which of the above statements is/are CORRECT regarding the Foreign Contributions Regulations law in 2020?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both
- d. Neither



Q- Consider the following statements:

- 1) Indian National Congress (INC) was under the control of the Extremist when World War-I broke out in 1914.
- 2) The INC decided to support the British war efforts in World War-I, both as a matter of duty and in a spirit of bargaining to get concession.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: b

Indian National Congress (INC) was under the control of the Moderates after the Surat Split of 1907. When the 1st World War broke out in 1914, INC was dominated by Moderates. The Extremists had lost their influence. Hence, statement 1 is NOT correct. The nationalist response to British participation in the World War-I was threefold: The Moderates supported the empire in the War as a matter of duty. The extremists, including Tilak (who was released in June 1914), supported the war efforts in the mistaken belief that Britain would repay India's loyalty with gratitude in the form of self-government. The revolutionaries decided to utilise the opportunity to wage a war and liberate the country.

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