

## Prelim Bits 06-10-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### The State of the World's Amphibians, 2023

A new study, based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> global amphibian assessment (**GAA2**), revealed that climate change posed the greatest threat to amphibians.

- The “*State of the World’s Amphibians: The Second Global Amphibian Assessment*” is a comprehensive synthesis of the current global status of our planet’s amphibians.
- The Global Amphibian Assessment (GAA) is a recurring initiative that comprehensively assesses all known amphibian species for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN Red List).
- **Initiation of GAA2** - In 2015 by Amphibian Red List Authority.

#### Amphibian Red List Authority (ARLA)

- **Establishment** - 2009
- **Branch** - Under Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG) of the IUCN’s Species Survival Commission.
- **Aim** - To assess the conservation status of amphibian species in the world.
- **Managed by** - Re:wild, a wildlife conservation group.

*IUCN Species Survival Commission in July 2023 signed an MoU with the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) to set up the South Asia’s first-ever Center for Species Survival (CSS) in India.*

### Highlights of the report

- **Extinction** - More than 300 amphibians came closer to extinction, between 2004 and 2022.
  - 2 out of every 5 amphibians are threatened with extinction.
  - 3 out every 5 Salamanders are threatened making them as the most threatened group of amphibians.
- **Threats** - 41% of amphibians are globally threatened with extinction making them the most threatened vertebrate group.
- **Reasons** -
  - Habitat Loss
  - Climate Change
  - Disease
  - Fire
  - Invasive species
  - Over-exploitation
- Neotropics is the most threatened realm.

*The Neotropical realm is one of the 8 biogeographic realms which physically includes the tropical terrestrial ecoregions of the Americas and the entire South American temperate zone.*

- **Climate Captives** - Amphibians are unable to move very far to escape the climate change-induced extreme weather events.
- **Signs of Recovery** - It is observed in some areas where critical habitat has been protected.

## Biogeographic Realms



## References

1. [The Hindu | Global Amphibian Assessment Report](#)
2. [IUCN | GAA2](#)

## Udangudi Panangkarupatti

*Udangudi 'Panangkarupatti' (palm jaggery/ gur) has been given a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.*

- Karupukatti is a hard and golden brown coarse sugar which is added to food items as sweetener.

*A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.*

- This jaggery is prepared from the sap (Pathaneer) which is extracted from the Palmyra tree.

*Palmyrah (Borassus flabellifer) is the state tree of Tamil Nadu.*

- It is prepared in traditional way till date without any additional modern strategies.
- No chemical additives like Triple super phosphate and phosphoric acid are used unlike other areas.
- It is also exported to foreign countries, including Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore.

## Geographical uniqueness

- The jaggery is unique due to presence of red sand dune soil of this region.

- *Lower groundwater and atmospheric moisture* owing to dry conditions, enriches high sucrose content which in turn adds taste.
- The region's *dry climate* is also suitable for long duration storage.

## References

[The Hindu| GI tag for Udangudi Panangkaruppati](#)

## BlueWalker 3

*Observations of the BlueWalker 3 prototype satellite show it is one of the brightest objects in the night sky, outshining all but the brightest stars.*

- It is a *prototype satellite* of a satellite constellation belonging to *AST SpaceMobile*.
- Its antenna array is 64 square meters and is the *largest commercial antenna system* deployed in low Earth orbit.
- It is a predecessor to planned commercial satellites called *BlueBirds*.
- **Launch** - 2022
- **Objective** - To deliver mobile or broadband services anywhere in the world.
- It successfully relayed its first 5G connection to a smartphone in a cellular coverage gap on Earth.

| Satellite Constellation Project  | Owner                    |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| BlueBird satellites              | AST SpaceMobile.         |
| <a href="#">Starlink network</a> | SpaceX                   |
| Project Kuiper                   | Amazon                   |
| <a href="#">OneWeb</a>           | ISRO & Uk's OneWeb Group |

## Issues with the Brightness of BlueWalker 3

- The large antenna helps bounce cell signals back and forth across the globe. It also reflects a lot of light back to Earth, making it appear so bright in the sky.
- **Data collection** - The streaks of satellites could mask objects in the vicinity of Earth.
- **Astronomical observations** - The light interferes with astronomical observations thus hampering the progress in understanding of the cosmos.
- **Hampers radio astronomy** - This happens as it uses *wavelengths close to those of radio telescopes*.
- **Biodiversity** - Light pollution also affects people's circadian rhythms and migratory patterns for other animals.

*The North Star has a magnitude of plus-2 whereas BlueWalker 3 registered as bright as plus-0.4 with respect to the glow.*

## References

## Nobel Prize in Literature, 2023

*The Nobel Prize in Literature 2023 is awarded to the Norwegian author Jon Fosse for his innovative plays and prose which give voice to the unsayable.*

- Fosse was born in 1959 in Norway and writes in Norwegian Nynorsk.

*Bokmal and Nynorsk are the two different standards of writing in Norwegian language.*

- His writings spans a variety of genres consisting of plays, novels, poetry collections, essays, children's books and translations.
- His style of writing novels famously known as '*Fosse minimalism*'.
- His work has been translated into more than 40 languages.

### Notable works of Jon Fosse

- I Am the Wind
- Melancholy
- Boathouse
- The Dead Dogs
- A New Name: Septology VI-VII (finalist of the International Booker Prize, 2022)

*Last year, the Literature Nobel was awarded to French author **Annie Ernaux** for the courage and clinical acuity with which she uncovers the roots, estrangements and collective restraints of personal memory.*

## References

1. [The Hindu| Nobel Prize in Literature 2023](#)
2. [The Indian Express | Nobel laureate Jon Fosse](#)

## Sammakka Sarakka Jathara

*The Union cabinet has recently approved for the establishment of **Sarakka Central Tribal University** in Mulugu district of Telangana.*

- **Sammakka Sarakka Jathara** - It is a biennial festival conducted in Mulugu district of Telangana.
- The Jathara (pilgrimage) begins at Medaram where the rituals are conducted by the Koya priests.
- It was declared as a state festival in 1996 and is one of the most famous tribal festivals

in the world with *close to 1.5 crore attendees*.

*Sammakka Sarakka Jathara is considered among the largest gatherings of tribal people in the world and is called as the Kumbh Mela of the tribals.*

### Historical Background

- The event commemorates the 13th-century battle of mother-daughter duo (Sammakka-Sarakka) against the local rulers.
- It is against the imposition of taxes on the Koya people.
- In the battle, Sarakka died, while Sammakka disappeared and believed to have metamorphosed into a vermilion casket.

*The Ministry of Tourism, as a part of the Tribal Circuit under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, sanctioned Rs. 75.88 crore for the integrated development of a tribal circuit of Mulugu-Laknavaram-Medavaram-Tadvai-Damaravi-Mallur-Bogatha Waterfalls where the temple of Sammakka-Sarakka is located.*

### Central Tribal University

- Establishing tribal university in both Andhra and Telangana was accorded in *Andhra Pradesh Re-organisation Act of 2014*.
- Foundation stone for Central Tribal University near Vizianagaram in Andhra Pradesh was laid recently.
- It promote avenues of *higher education for the benefit of the tribal* population in the State.

*The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ramappa Temple is located near Mulugu in Telangana.*

### References

1. [The Hindu | Samakka Saralamma Jatra](#)
2. [The Indian Express | Sarakka Central Tribal University](#)