

## Prelim Bits 14-03-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### SIPRI Report

*New data on global arms transfers was published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).*

- **Imports** - India remained the world's largest arms importer from 2018 to 2022 followed by Saudi Arabia and Ukraine.
- Ukraine was the third biggest importer of major arms in 2022 (14<sup>th</sup> biggest during 2018-22) due to the ongoing Ukraine-Russia war.
- Pakistan is the eighth-largest arms importer during 2018-22, increased its imports by 14%, with China as its main supplier.
- **Exports** - The US was the world's topmost military exporter from 2018 to 2022, accounting for 40% of global exports.
- It is followed by Russia (16%), France, China and Germany.
- US arms exports increased between 2013-17 and 2018-22, while Russia's fell during the same period.
- **India** - India is the largest arms importer in the world since 2013.
- There was an 11% drop in India's arms import between 2013-17 and 2018-22.
- Russia was India's largest arms supplier in 2013-17 and 2018-2022.
- France emerged as the second-largest arms supplier to India in 2018-22, followed by the US.
- India also imported arms during this five-year period from Israel, South Korea, and South Africa.
- India's tensions with Pakistan and China largely drive its demand for arms imports.

*Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) is a Sweden-based defence think-tank.*

### References

1. [IE - India remains world's largest arms importer: SIPRI data](#)
2. [Hindustan Times - India: World's top arms importer in 2018-2022](#)
3. [SIPRI - Global Arms Transfers Data](#)

### Channar Revolt

*The bicentenary celebration of one of the earliest recorded anti-caste assertions in southern India was held in Nagercoil with the attendance of Chief Ministers of Kerala and Tamilnadu.*

- The anti-caste revolt fought in 1823 in the southern parts of Travancore Kingdom is

known as

1. 'Marumakkal Samaram' and 'Channar Revolt' in Kerala.
  2. 'Thol Seelai Porattam' in Tamil Nadu.
- The revolt is a militant public action fought with women from the Nadar caste, an OBC community in the forefront.
  - Their demand was that they be allowed to cloth the upper part of their body, a choice then limited to upper caste women.
  - Hence the Channar revolt is also known as '**the Upper Cloth Revolt**'.
  - The agitation spread across the southern talukas of the then Travancore kingdom.
  - The Hindu upper castes, particularly the Nair community that dominated the administration opposed the demand.
  - A royal proclamation acceding to the demand was made in 1859.

### Other anti-caste movements in the region

- The Vaikom Satyagraha (1924-1925) was held to allow all castes access to roads that went past the Vaikom Shiva temple.
- Vaikom Satyagraha saw the participation of Hindu upper castes in large numbers.
- A savarna march was organised from Vaikom to Thiruvananthapuram to press the demand of the satyagrahis.
- Sree Narayana Guru (1854-1928), fought against the caste system for social equality.
- His message was: '*Man is of one kind, one faith and one God*'.
- Vaikunta Swami, born in a Nadar family, started a radical spiritual movement that had equality at its core.
- Influenced by the Tamil Siddha tradition, Vaikunta Swami challenged the custodians of caste and the religious sphere it maintained and questioned all sets of authority.
- The Guruvayur temple entry movement in 1931 allowed entry to socially backward Hindus.

### References

1. [IE - Two anti-caste revolts, a shared inheritance](#)
2. [The federal - 200 years of Channar revolt](#)

### Least Developed Country

*Bhutan became the seventh nation to graduate from the United Nations' (UN) list of Least Developed Countries (LDC).*

- The Least Developed Countries (LDC) are developing countries listed by the UN that exhibit the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development.
- The concept first originated in the late 1960s and was codified under UN resolution 2768 passed in November 1971.
- **Definition** - According to the UN, Least developed countries (LDCs) are low-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development.
- They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks and have low levels of human assets.
- **LDC at present** - Currently, the UN lists 46 countries that qualify as LDCs.

- Of those, 33 are from Africa, nine from Asia, 3 from the Pacific and 1 from the Caribbean.
- **Criteria** - The UN identifies 3 criteria for a country to be classified as an LDC:
  1. Income - Gross National Income (GNI) per capita below the threshold of USD 1,230 over a three-year average.
  2. Human Assets - Perform poorly on a composite human assets index based on indicators including nutrition, health and education.
  3. Economic Vulnerability - Demonstrate economic vulnerability such as being prone to natural disasters and possessing structural economic constraints.
- The criteria are reviewed on a 3-year basis (triennial) by the UN.
- **Getting off the LDC list** - To graduate from the LDC list, a country must meet certain criteria in the above 3 areas in the triennial review.
  1. A nation must have a GNI per capita of at least USD 1,242 for 2 consecutive triennial reviews in order to meet the income requirement.
  2. By using measures like education, health, and nutrition, a nation must show that it has improved its human capital in order to achieve the human assets requirement.
  3. A nation also must show that it has improved its ability to withstand external economic shocks in order to pass the economic vulnerability test.
- **Advantages of being an LDC** - LDCs also enjoy duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) access to the markets of developed countries.
- LDCs are also eligible for loans with special terms for development, which include 'Official Development Assistance' (ODA) or 'aid'.

*Botswana is the first country to achieve graduation in 1994. Its strong economic performance driven by its diamond mining industry and investments in education and infrastructure was a major reason.*

## **Bhutan**

- Bhutan is a mountainous, landlocked country in Asia.
- It is consistently ranked one of the happiest in the world.
- Bhutan was included in the first group of LDCs in 1971.
- It has made remarkable progress on a variety of socio-economic metrics and fulfilled the requirements for graduation in 2015 and in 2018.
- Exporting hydropower to India accounts for 20% of Bhutan's economy.

## **References**

1. [IE - How Bhutan graduated from the 'Least Developed Country'](#)
2. [United Nations - Least Developed Countries](#)

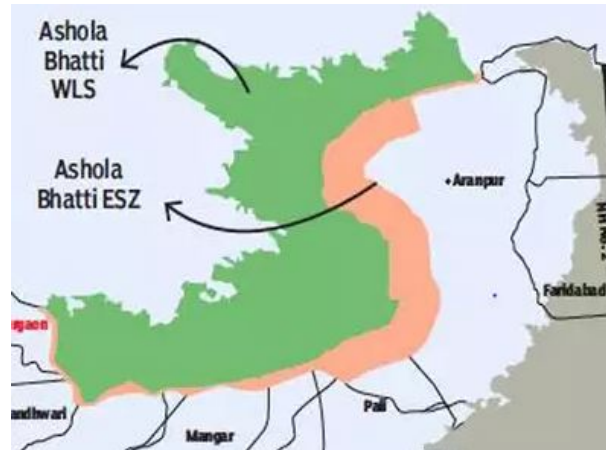
## **Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary**

*The Environment Minister opened the Neeli Jheel ecotourism site in the Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary to the public.*

- The Asola Bhatti sanctuary is situated in the South Delhi Ridge section of the Aravalli

range on the Delhi-Haryana border.

- It lies in Southern Delhi as well as northern parts of Faridabad and Gurugram districts of Haryana state.
- It is spread over an area of 6,784 acres and covers 32.71 sq km.
- It is also part of the Sariska-Delhi Wildlife Corridor which runs from the Sariska Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan to the Delhi Ridge.



- **Protection** - Mining for quartzite and sand in the area was banned in 1991.
- The Eco-Task Force of the Territorial Army has also been part of protection and plantation at the sanctuary since 2001.
- In 2019, the area around the boundary of Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary in Gurgaon and Faridabad was declared as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).
- **Flora** - The type of forest in the sanctuary is identified as 'thorny scrub'.
- A forest nursery and a seed bank were also set up at the sanctuary.
- **Fauna** - Leopards, striped hyena, jungle cat, golden jackal, Indian hare, Indian boar, black buck, sambar deer, spotted deer, and hog deer.
- **Neeli Jheel** - It has been developed as an eco-tourism site inside the sanctuary.
- Neeli Jheel is a lake formed in an abandoned mining pit.
- The 100 feet deep Neeli Jheel is an important source of water for wildlife in the sanctuary.
- Four solar-powered artificial waterfalls has been developed there, in which the water cascades down 100 feet to the lake below.
- The site will feature artificial waterfalls, selfie points, trails and facilities such as a cafeteria.

## References

1. [IE - How Asola Bhatti WLS is becoming more welcoming](#)
2. [Hindustan Times - Ecotourism spot opens at Asola Bhatti's](#)

## Suspension of Operations Pact

*The Manipur government decided to withdraw from the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with 2 hill-based tribal militant groups.*

- Suspension of Operations (SoO) is a tripartite pact between the Government of India, the Government of Manipur and Kuki insurgent groups in Manipur.

- As many as 17 are under the umbrella group Kuki National Organisation (KNO), and 8 are under the United People's Front (UPF).
- The SoO pact was signed on August 22, 2008 between the tripartite.
- The primary objective of SoO pact is initiating political dialogue.
- **So Far** - The Kuki outfits who were initially demanding a separate Kuki state have come down to a 'Kukiland territorial council'.
- Kuki Territorial Council would have financial and administrative powers independent of the Manipur Assembly and government.
- **Interlocutor** - AB Mathur, former special secretary of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).
- **Monitoring** - The Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) with representatives from all the signatories, has been formed to oversee the effective implementation of the SoO pact.
- **Terms under SoO** - Security forces, including state and central forces, are not to launch any operations, nor can the underground groups.
- The signatories of UPF and KNO shall abide by the Constitution of India, the laws of the land and the territorial integrity of Manipur.
- They are prohibited from committing all kinds of atrocities, extortion, among others.
- The militant cadres are to be confined in designated camps identified by the Government.
- The groups are given arms only to guard their camps and protect their leaders, other arms are deposited in a safe room.
- **Finance** - The UG cadres living in the designated camps are given a monthly stipend of Rs 5000, as a rehabilitation package.
- Financial assistance is also being provided to maintain the designated camps.
- **Related Topic** - [Kuki Insurgency](#)

## References

1. [IE - What is the Suspension of Operations \(SoO\) agreement?](#)