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Prelim Bits 01-12-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Governor's role as Chancellor

Recently, a Supreme Court bench reiterated that the governor acting as Chancellor are not bound by the aid and advice of Council of Ministers.

- **Chancellor of Universities** - The Governor has been designated as the **Chancellor of most of the State public universities** created by state legislature.
- **Powers** - The Chancellor, by virtue of his office is a **Head of the University**, and vested with different powers.
 - Power to **appoint the Vice-Chancellors**.
 - Power to **annul decisions** of the various university bodies.
 - Power to **conduct inspections** in the university in some states (such as Bihar, Gujarat, and Jharkhand).
 - Power to **preside over the convocation** of the university, and confirms proposals for conferring honorary degrees.
- **Controversies** - In 2022, West Bengal tried to replace the Governor with the Chief Minister as the Chancellor, while Tamil Nadu tried to transfer the power of appointing the Vice-Chancellor to the state government.
- **Supreme Court recommendations** - Governor as a chancellor are **not bound by the aid and advice** of the council of ministers and shall **act only on his personal capacity**.
- The powers as a Chancellor have no relation to the exercise of the powers and duties as the Governor of the state.

*In 1981 judgment in **Hardwari Lal, Rohtak v. G.D. Tapase (Chandigarh)**, the High Court had held that "the Governor was the ex officio Chancellor of the University and by virtue of his office, he was not bound to act under the aid and advice of the council of ministers".*

References

1. [Indian Express| SC on powers of Governor as a Chancellor](#)
2. [PRS India| Governor's role as a Chancellor](#)

World Malaria Report 2023

According to World Malaria Report 2023, malaria cases continue to dip in India while it is increasing globally.

- **Published by** – World Health Organisation (WHO)
- **Aim** – To provide a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of trends in malaria control and elimination across the globe.
- **2023 report** – For the 1st time, it includes a dedicated chapter focused on the intersection between climate change and malaria.
- **Key findings** - Globally, there were 249 million cases in 2022, 5 million more than in 2021.
- Globally, the malaria deaths were higher than in 2019 but the malaria mortality rate decreases (i.e. deaths per 100 000 population at risk) continuously and is now at 14.3 in 2022.
- This year alone, **3 more countries were certified by WHO as malaria-free** (Azerbaijan, Belize, and Tajikistan).
- **India** – There were around 33 lakh malaria cases and 5,000 deaths in India last year, a **decrease** of 30% and 34 % respectively compared with 2021.
- **Threats** – Climate change, conflict and humanitarian crises, resource constraints and biological challenges such as drug and insecticide resistance also continue to hamper progress.

Nexus between climate change and malaria

Changes in temperature, humidity and rainfall can influence the behaviour and survival of the malaria-carrying Anopheles mosquito.

- Extreme weather events, such as heatwaves and flooding, can also directly impact transmission and disease burden.
 - For example, catastrophic flooding in Pakistan in 2022 led to a 5-fold increase in malaria cases in the country.
- Climate variability has also led to malnutrition, a risk factor for severe malaria among young children and pregnant women.

*In 2023, the **R21/Matrix-M (R21) malaria vaccine** became the 2nd vaccine recommended by WHO to prevent malaria in children.*

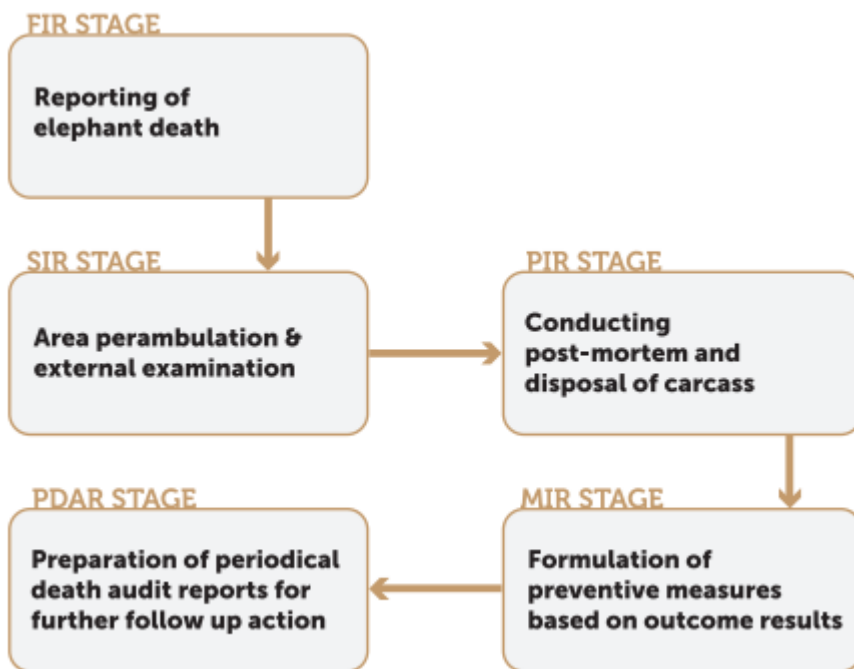
References

1. [The Indian Express| Global burden of Malaria is increasing](#)
2. [WHO| World Malaria Report 2023](#)

Elephant Death Audit Framework (EDAF)

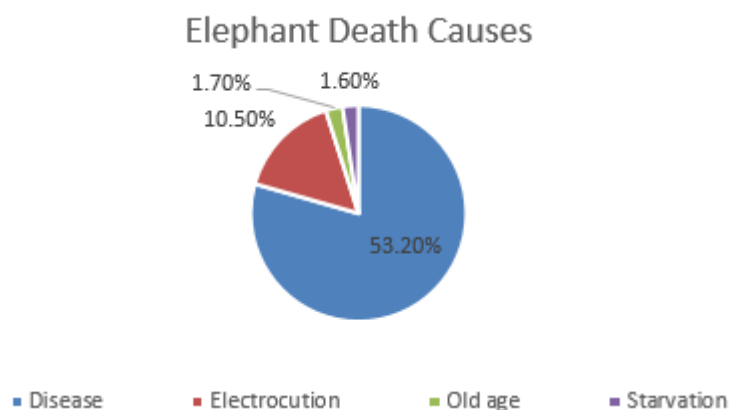
According to the recent Elephant Death Audit Framework, electrocution major cause of elephant deaths in Tamil Nadu.

- **Initiative by** - State of Tamil Nadu
- This is the ***1st of its kind initiative in the country.***
- **Objectives** - Prescribe a Systematic Standard Protocol (SSP) for conducting post-mortem to determine cause of death and understand the cases of preventable and unnatural deaths.
- Formulate remedial measures for prevention of unnatural and preventive deaths by conducting periodical death audits and monitoring these over time.



Key findings of the EDAF

- **Mortality** - 1,505 elephant deaths have been recorded since 2010, and 159 of them, or ***10.5% of all mortalities, were caused by humans or human-related activities***
- **Primary threat** - 802 deaths were due to ***diseases***, followed by electrocution.



- **Electrocutation** - It is an unnatural causes that were behind more than ***one in every***

10 elephant deaths.

- Since 2010, 128 animals have died of electrocution with 76 cases of electrocution being “intentional” which occurred as the result of negative interactions with humans.
- **Other unnatural causes** - **Poaching, poisoning, gunshots** as well as **train and road accidents**.
- 158 carcasses were deemed to be unfit for post-mortem which means the cause of death was unlikely to be ascertained.

India is home to over two-thirds of the World's Asian elephant population with only about 20% of their range is inside protected areas.

References

1. [The Hindu| Audit of Elephant deaths in Tamil Nadu](#)
2. [CMS.TN| Elephant Death Audit Framework \(EDAF\)](#)

Provisional State of the Global Climate report 2023

According to the recent United Nations (UN) report, 2023 is set to be the hottest year ever recorded.

- **Published by** - World Meteorological Organisation
- The final report is due to be published in the 1st half of 2024.
- **Climate chaos** - In 2023, Green House Gas (GHG) levels, global temperatures, sea level rise reached record high, while Antarctic sea ice reached record low.
- **Higher GHGs** - Concentrations of the 3 main heat-trapping gases (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) reached record high.
- **Higher global temperature** - This year, till October 2023, was already **around 1.4C above the pre-industrial baseline**.
- CO2 levels was 50% higher than the pre-industrial era and the **past 9 years were the hottest years** since modern records.
- The warming El Nino weather phenomenon, which emerged mid-year, was "likely to further fuel the heat in 2024".
- **Higher sea level rise** - The rate of **sea level rise over the past decade was more than twice** the rate of the 1st decade of satellite records (1993-2002).
- **Lesser Antarctic sea ice** - The maximum level of Antarctic sea ice this year was the lowest on record which was **a million square kilometres less than the previous record low** at the end of the southern hemisphere winter.
 - Swiss glaciers losing 10% of their ice volume in the past 2 years alone
- **Increasing socio-economic impacts** - Dwindling food security and mass displacement.

References

[The Hindu| Climate Chaos in 2023](#)

Iyothee Thass Pandithar

The Tamil Nadu government has installed a statue of Dalit rights and anti-caste activist Iyothee Thass Pandithar in Chennai.

- It will unveiled at Gandhi Mandapam on December 1, 2023.
- He was a prominent Tamil anti-caste activist and practitioner of Siddha medicine.
- **Birth** - On May 20, 1845 in the former Madras Presidency.
- **Languages known** - Tamil, English, Pali and Sanskrit.
- **Tribal activist** - He organised the tribal people in the Nilgiris in 1870's and then started **Advaidananda Sabha in 1876**.
- **Against Untouchability** - He founded **Panchamar Mahajana Sabha in 1891** along with Rettaimalai Srinivasan.
- He stressed that untouchables are not Hindus and shall be considered as **Adi-Tamilars**.
- **Renaissance of Buddhism** - He established the '**Sakya Buddhist Society**' in **Madras** in 1898 with branches all over South India, which is also known as Indian Buddhist Association.
- **Literature** - He launched '**Dravida Pandian**' magazine in **1885** along with John Rathinam and in 1907, he launched '**Oru Paisa Tamizhan**', a Tamil newspaper.
- **Empowered depressed class** - He succeeded in getting 1000's of acres of lands and distributed among the landless poor under the scheme of '**Panchami Lands**'.

***Panchama** are people who do not belong to the Varna system. They are called Avarna communities.*

- **Recognition** - The Siddha Institute of Studies (**National Siddha Institute**) at Tambaram, Chennai was established in 2005 and named after the anti-caste Buddhist leader.
- A **commemorative stamp** was issued in his honour in 2005.
- His **work was nationalized** and in 2008 he was given alimony to his legal heirs.

*Iyothee Thass Pandithar is also known as the '**Father of Social Reforms in South India**' and also described as '**Dravida Peroli**'.*

References

1. [The Hindu| A new statue for Iyothee Thass Pandithar](#)
2. [The Wire| Iyothee Thassar - A pioneer in Dalit history and Literature](#)

Other Important News

Jal Itihas Utsav

- Ministry of Jal Shakti to Organize 'Jal Itihas Utsav' at Shamsi Talab, Jahaz Mahal in Mehrauli, Delhi recently.
- **Aim** - To raise public consciousness about safeguarding water heritage sites, creating a sense of ownership among the masses as well as promote tourism and restoration of such heritage structures.

HD110067

- HD 110067 is a star with 6 known **sub-Neptune exoplanets**.
- The star is located in the constellation Coma Berenices, which is near Virgo in the northern sky. It is about 100 light-years away from Earth.
- The 6 planets in HD 110067 orbit the star in a rhythmic pattern. The planets form a "resonant chain" in successive pairs of 3:2, 3:2, 3:2, 4:3, and 4:3.
- NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) detected the star's brightness dipping in 2020. This indicated that planets were passing in front of the star.

Exercise Milan

- Exercise Milan is a **biennial naval exercise** hosted by the Indian Navy. The exercise includes Professional exercises, Seminars, Social events, Sporting fixtures.
- The Indian Navy 1st held the exercise in 1995, and has since significantly expanded in scope and scale to become the largest exercise held by India.
- The last edition of Milan, which is held off Visakhapatnam, saw participation from over 40 countries.
- The exercise was originally conceived in line with India's "Look East Policy".

Snakebites in India

- India has the biggest burden of deaths due to snakebites in the world, with most of the cases in rural India.
- Avoidable Deaths Network (ADN) have set up a hub in an Odisha village to look into lifesaving solutions for snakebites.
- **ADN** is a global membership network working on avoiding human deaths from natural hazards.
- In 2015, India ratified the **WHO's Snakebite Envenoming Strategy for Prevention and Control**, along with UN' Sendai Framework for halving the deaths by 2030.

Maski Rock edict

- The Maski rock edict is a minor rock edict of **Emperor Ashoka**.
- It was discovered in 1915 by C. Beadon at the archaeological site of Maski in the **Raichur district of Karnataka**, India.
- The Maski rock edict is important because it was the 1st edict of Emperor Ashoka to include his name. Earlier edicts referred to him as **Devanampiyasa**.

Paris Club

- Sri Lanka has recently reached an "agreement in principle" with India and the Paris Club group of creditors including Japan, on a debt treatment plan.
- The Paris Club is an **informal group of creditor nations** that work to find sustainable solutions for debtor countries that are unable to repay their bilateral loans.
- The Paris Club has **22 permanent members** which have originated from a 1956 meeting in which Argentina agreed to meet its public creditors in Paris.
- India is **not a member** to this club. The Paris Club usually coincides with the IMF program period.

World AIDS Day

- World AIDS Day is observed on **December 1st** each year, is an opportunity to highlight the work of eliminating HIV/AIDS.
- The theme for World AIDS Day 2023 is "**Let Communities Lead**".
- Nagaland tops the list of States India with the highest prevalence (1.61%) of AIDS. At 0.29%, Karnataka's HIV prevalence rate is higher than the national average of 0.22%.

Transplant Games

- For the 1st time, Kerala is organizing Transplant Games, a competitive sporting event for organ transplant recipients and donors.
- It is to showcase the success of organ transplantation in improving the quality of life and spread the message of organ donation.
- The **World Transplant Games Federation (WTGF)** is a non-profit organization based in the United Kingdom with representation from more than 70 countries.
- The WTGF organizes the **World Transplant Games (WTG)**, which are international multi-sport events that take place every **two** years.

INS Mahe, INS Malvan and INS Mangrol

- 3 **anti-submarine warfare ships** for Indian Navy launched at Cochin shipyard recently.
- The ships will be named INS Mahe, INS Malvan and INS Mangrol.
- The ships are part of the ASW Shallow Water Craft (CSL) project. The Mahe Class of ships will replace the in-service Abhay class ASW.

Drone Didi Yojana

- It is a **Central Sector scheme** to provide drones to 15,000 women's Self Help Groups (SHGs), which will be trained to give it on rent for spraying pesticides and fertilisers.
- **Duration** - 2024-25 to 2025-2026. Recently PM has renamed it as 'Namo Drone Didi'.



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