

# 1. Parliamentary Standing Committee Report on Water Resources

**Topic: Reports and Indices**

## Basic need **unmet**

While seven States in the country have 100% tap water coverage in schools, three have abysmally low coverage of less than 15%



### States with 100% tap-water coverage

State
Andhra Pradesh
Goa
Tamil Nadu
Haryana
Himachal Pradesh
Telangana
Punjab

### Least coverage

State	% of schools with tap water supply
Uttar Pradesh	7.93
West Bengal	10.89
Jharkhand	12.99

**In News:** According to the report tabled by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources, Groundwater levels in Delhi, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, and 20 other cities dipped by more than 20 metres from 2017 to 2020.

#### More on the Topic:

- While Haryana’s Faridabad has become 100 per cent dependent on groundwater use, cities including Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh are “on the verge of becoming totally dependent on it”.
- Delhi, Jaipur and Hyderabad are among the major cities severely affected by the issue of water contamination.

#### India Ground Water Statistics:



- According to the latest report of the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), **About 14 per cent of India's 7,089 groundwater assessment units** across states have been categorised as **over-exploited, while another four per cent fall in the critical category.**
- An “over-exploited” category indicates groundwater extraction exceeding the annually replenishable groundwater recharge, while the “critical” category is one where the stage of groundwater extraction is between 90-100 per cent. The overall stage of groundwater extraction in the country is 60.08 per cent.
- **The stage of groundwater extraction is very high, more than 100 per cent, in the states and union territories of Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.**
- The overall stage of groundwater extraction has **marginally decreased from 61.6 per cent to 60.08 per cent comparing in 2020 to 2022.**

#### Reasons for the Depletion:

- **Unregulated usage of Groundwater through subsidised electricity and cultivation of high water intensive crops** is one of the important reason for growing water over exploitation.
- **Inadequate funds and lack of functional autonomy to National Water Mission** is sighted as another major reason.
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) stated that that **increasing population, urbanisation and concretisation are some of the reasons behind the groundwater depletion in these cities.**

#### Recommendations:

- All the States should enact Groundwater Legislation based on the Model bill proposed by the Ministry of Jal Sakti.
- Introduce community participation in ground water management.
- Centre should provide assistance to the States through various schemes/programmes for managing Groundwater.
- India Easement Act, 1882 should be amended. It provides the landowner the right to utilise the water underground and treat it as a community resource.

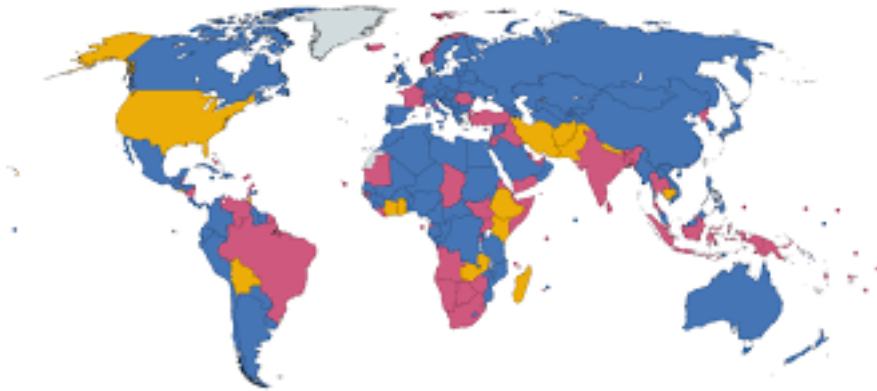
**Source: Indian Express**

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## 2. Vienna Convention

**Topic: International Relations**



**In News:** Britain was reminded of its main obligations under the Vienna Convention by summoning Britain's top diplomat, After a group of people chanting pro-Khalistan slogans pulled down the Indian flag at the High Commission in London.

### More on the Topic:

- The treaty being referred to by the MEA in this instance is the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), which “provides a **complete framework for the establishment, maintenance and termination of diplomatic relations on a basis of consent between independent sovereign States**”, as per an introductory note on the treaty in UN’s Audiovisual Library of International Law.
- Most notably, **the Convention codifies the longstanding custom of diplomatic immunity**, in which diplomatic missions are granted privileges that enable diplomats to perform their functions without fear of coercion or harassment by the host country.
- It affirms the concept of “inviolability” of a diplomatic mission, which has been one of the enduring cornerstones of international diplomacy.
- The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations entered into force on April 24, 1964 and is nearly universally ratified, with Palau and South Sudan being the exceptions.

### What does the Vienna Convention say about obligations of a “receiving State”?

- Article 22 of the Convention deals with obligations with regards to the premises of the Mission.
- Basically, the security of any High Commission or Embassy is the responsibility of the host nation. While diplomatic missions can also employ their own security, ultimately, the host nation is accountable for security.

**Source: AIR**



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### 3. SRIJAN Portal

Topic: E- Governance



Self-Reliant Initiatives through Joint Action

**In News:** Over 26 thousand defence goods have been uploaded to the SRIJAN Portal and made available to the industry for indigenisation.

#### More on the Topic:

- The Department of Defence Production Portal "SRIJAN" was virtually inaugurated by the defence minister as part of the Make in India initiatives in the defence industry during the Ministry of Defense's "Atmanirbhar Bharat Week" celebrations in August 2020.
- The portal offers details on the defence products and equipment that the country's defences Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) are now importing or plan to import. The government will take the appropriate steps To make these products indigenous.
- The portal is a **"one-stop shop" internet platform that gives suppliers access to take up things that can be taken up for indigenization.**
- The portal systematically presents data, including item names, images and specifications, import values, etc. There is a search function as well.

Source: Hindu

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## 4. 'Missing' continent of 'Zealandia'

**Topic: Geography**



**In News:** The Scientists have discovered the 'missing' continent of 'Zealandia' over 300 years from initial reports of the landmass, with 1.89million square miles of former continent found deep underwater.

### More on the Topic:

- So-called “Zealandia” was a continent that stretched 1.89million square miles in size and is the missing piece of former supercontinent Gondwana.
- That super continent of old also included Eastern Australia and Western Antarctica, but Zealandia had "pulled away" from the other continents more than 550 million years ago, gradually sinking into the waters.
- The existence of Zealandia was first recorded in 1642 by Dutch businessman and sailor **Abel Tasman**.
- He was on a mission to find the "great Southern Continent" or Terra Australis.
- While Tasman failed to find this new land, he did encounter the local Māori when he landed on the Southern Island of New Zealand.
- Despite their hostility towards him, the **Māori provided valuable information about the surrounding landmass**, including the existence of a large landmass to the east. However, it would take **nearly 400 years for scientists to agree on the existence of Zealandia**.
- In 2017, geologists finally confirmed the existence of Zealandia.

- The name and concept for Zealandia was proposed by **Bruce Luyendyk in 1995.**

#### Present Status:

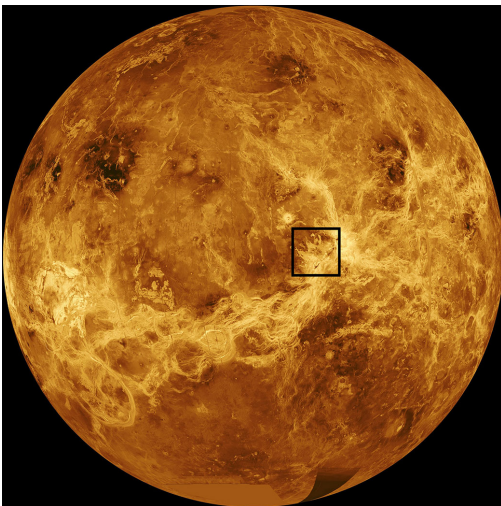
- Zealandia is now recognized as **the world's eighth continent**, but its unique characteristics make it stand out from the other continents on the planet.
- Every other continent is home to multiple countries, **Zealandia has only three territories.**
- Despite its underwater location, Zealandia is an important discovery that sheds light on the earth's geological history and the forces that shaped the planet as we know it today.
- Zealandia is divided into two regions by scientists, **North Zealandia (or Western Province) and South Zealandia (or Eastern Province).**
- These two features are separated by the **Alpine Fault and Kermadec Trench and by the wedge-shaped Hikurangi Plateau**, and they are moving separately to each other.

Source: Indian Express

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## 5. Venus

Topic: Science and Technology



**In News:** A new analysis of archival radar images taken around three decades ago has found direct geological evidence of recent volcanic activity on the surface of Venus for the first time.

#### More on the Topic:

- As volcanoes act like windows to provide information about a planet's interior, the new findings take scientists a step further to understand the geological conditions of not just Venus but also other exoplanets.
- Apart from this, the findings give us a glimpse of what more is to come regarding Venus as in the next decade, three new Venus missions would be launched, including the **European EnVision orbiter and NASA's DAVINCI and VERITAS missions.**





### About Venus:

- Venus is the second planet from the Sun.
- It is sometimes called **Earth's "sister" or "twin" planet** as it is almost as large and has a **similar composition**.
- As an interior planet to Earth, Venus appears in Earth's sky never far from the Sun, either as morning star or evening star.

Source: Business Standard

## 6. Poshan Pakhwada

Topic: Government Schemes



**In News:** The Ministry of Women and Child Development will celebrate the fifth Poshan Pakhwada from 20th March to 3rd April 2023 with various activities nationwide.

### More on the Topic:

- Poshan Abhiyaan, launched by Prime Minister in March 2018, has been instrumental in ensuring people's participation and bringing the discourse on nutrition to the forefront.
- Poshan Abhiyan was **launched with the aim to improve nutritional outcomes in a holistic manner**.
- Behavioral change at individual and community level is an important component to achieve the desired goals of a Kuposhan-mukt Bharat.
- Every year, Poshan Pakhwada is celebrated in the month of March for 15 days.



- Similarly, the month of September is celebrated as Rashtriya Poshan Maah, across the country.
- The Poshan Maah and Pakhwada celebrated so far have witnessed wide participation and enthusiasm from all States/UTs, frontline functionaries, converging Ministries as well as public at large.
- The theme of this year's Poshan Pakhwada 2023 is "**Nutrition for All: Together Towards a Healthy India**".

Source: Business Standard

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## 7. C-Veda Project

Topic: Government Schemes

# C-Veda

**In News:** Consortium on Vulnerability to Externalizing Disorders and Addictions' (C-Veda) project is trying to find out how the brain develops as we grow.

**More on the Topic:**

- The project aims to follow up those tested over decades, evaluate the effect of biological and environmental risk on cognitive development, and also compare these effects across people in industrialising (India) and industrialised (U.K.) societies.
- The C-Veda project expects to map the brains of those participating in the study and thereby evaluate and compare neurological development.
- The generation of brain-development charts across ages, just like how there are charts for physical growth, it could be a valuable tool in schools and mental health assessments.

Source: Business Standard

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