

1. UN Peace Keeping Force

Topic: International Relations



In News: U.N. Undersecretary General has said that the number of fatalities among United Nations Peacekeeping Forces (UNPKF) in direct attacks is growing.

More on the Topic:

- **Deteriorating political and security environments:** At many geo political front where UN Peace keeping force is engaged the political and security environment is in hostile condition.
- **Terrorist or criminal groups threat:** Peacekeeping environments now feature armed groups, terrorists, organised crime, street gangs, criminal and political exploitation, and other threats. Terrorism favours chaotic environment in areas like Africa. The efforts to establish peace and stability is vehemently threatened by terrorist or criminal groups.
- **Lack of Sufficient Resources:** Missions have sometimes lacked the personnel and equipment to meet these threats.
- **No exit strategy:** Overstretched deployment without a clear objective also increases fatalities.
- **Decision Making Issues:** Troop and police contributing countries not fully involved at all stages mission planning.

About UN Peace Keeping Force?

- The United Nations Peacekeeping Forces are **employed by the World Organization to maintain or re-establish peace in an area of armed conflict**
- The UN may **engage in conflicts between states as well as in struggles within states.**
- **The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in May 1948.** The UN Security Council authorized the deployment of a small number of UN military observers to the Middle East.



- Since its genesis, more than 1 million men and women have served under the UN flag in more than 70 UN peacekeeping operations.
- Also, more than 1,00,000 military, police and civilian personnel from 125 countries are currently serving in 14 peacekeeping operations.

India and UN Peacekeeping:

- India stands solidly committed to assist the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security with a proud history of UN peacekeeping dating back to its inception in the 1950s.
- India today is the **largest contributor of troops to UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs)**.
- More than 200,000 Indian troops have served in 49 of the 71 UNPKOs deployed so far
- India is the second largest troop contributor [TCC] with 7,676 personnel deployed in 10 out of 16 active UN Peacekeeping Missions.
- In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN peacekeeping mission.

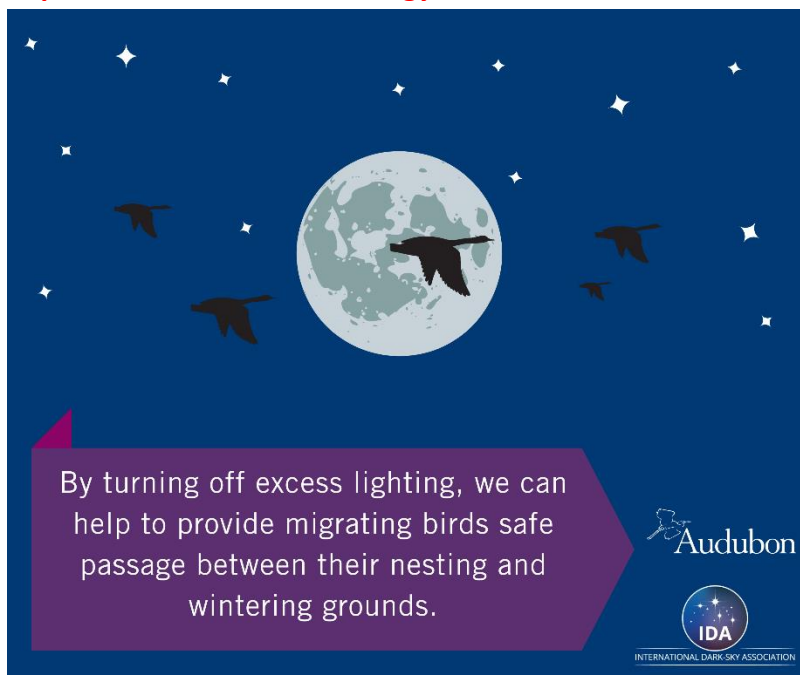
Way Ahead:

- Earlier, India has proposed a 10-point formula to address challenges faced by the mission, Some of the important suggestions:
- Missions should be given **“clear and realistic mandates” that are matched with adequate resources**. Missions should be “deployed prudently, with full recognition of their limitations.
- Coordination with host governments will help address misinformation and disinformation against peacekeepers and enhance their safety.
- **More focus on technological improvements** that are continuous and are available on the ground.
- **Attention and investment in consistent training and capacity building** of peacekeepers in the realm of technology.
- Those targeting UN peacekeepers should be made more accountable.

Source: India Today

2.Light Pollution and Migratory Birds

Topic: Environment and Ecology



In News: Light pollution was recognized as “artificial light is an emerging issue for interfering with a migratory species’ ability to undertake long distance migrations integral to its life cycle”.

More on the Topic:

- Every year, light pollution contributes to the death of millions of birds. It alters the natural patterns of light and dark in ecosystems.
- It can change birds' migration patterns, foraging behaviours, and vocal communication. Attracted by artificial light at night, particularly when there is low cloud, fog, rain or when flying at lower altitudes, migrating birds become disorientated and may end up circling in illuminated areas.
- Depleted energy reserves put them at risk of exhaustion, predation, and fatal collision with buildings.

About Light Pollution:

- Light pollution is **the presence of unwanted, inappropriate, or excessive artificial lighting.**
- In a descriptive sense, the term light pollution refers to the effects of any poorly implemented lighting, during the day or night.
- Light pollution can be understood not only as a phenomenon resulting from a specific source or kind of pollution, **but also as a contributor to the wider, collective impact of various sources of pollution.**
- Light pollution is blamed for compromising health, disrupting ecosystems, and spoiling aesthetic environments.

Solutions and recommendations to mitigate light pollution:

- Moderation of lights, especially during migration months
- Use of light shields or cut-off lights
- Use of warm lighting in place of cold lights
- Use of motion sensors to turn on only lights only when motion etc.

Source: DTE

3.Modhera

Topic: Culture



In News: Prime Minister has declared the Modhera village in Gujarat as India's first 24x7 solar-powered village.

More on the Topic:

- This initiative came about from a programme led by both the centre and state, called the "Solarisation of Modhera Sun Temple and Town."
- As part of the project, they developed a ground-mounted solar power plant in addition to installing 1,300 rooftop solar systems on top of residential and government buildings.
- The solar systems are integrated with a 15Mwh battery energy storage system. This makes up a 6MW grid.
- Solar energy is thus available to Modhera round the clock.
- The village residents will be able to save 60 to 100 per cent on their electricity bills with the solar push.

Modhera Sun Temple:

- The Sun Temple is dedicated to the solar deity Surya located at Modhera village of Mehsana district, Gujarat, India.
- It is situated on the bank of the river Pushpavati and falls near the Tropic of Cancer.
- It was built after 1026-27 CE during the reign of **Bhima I of the Solanki dynasty.**
- The temple complex has **three components: Gudhamandapa, the shrine hall; Sabhamandapa, the assembly hall and Kunda, the reservoir.**

- The other 3 main sun temples are: Konark Sun Temple (Odisha), Martand Sun Temple (Jammu and Kashmir) and Dakshinaarka Sun Temple (Gaya)

Source: Hindu

4. International Finance Corp. (IFC)

Topic: Economy



In News: Responding to rising food insecurity, the International Finance Corp. (IFC) has launched a new, \$6 billion financing facility to strengthen private sector's ability to respond to the crisis and help support food production.

More on the Topic:

- A core part of the financing, which will be provided through the new Global Food Security Platform (the Platform), will support **sustainable production and delivery of food stocks to countries affected by food instability.**
- Support will be aimed at **facilitating trade of food commodities, delivery of inputs to farmers, supporting efficient production in major origins**, including Ukraine, and **effective distribution of food products in destination countries.**

Why the Food Insecurity has increased:

- The war in Ukraine and an uneven global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic have added to rising levels of hunger and malnourishment.
- This condition is already have been worsened by climate change and increasingly severe weather events that are damaging harvests and reducing yields.

About International Finance Corp:

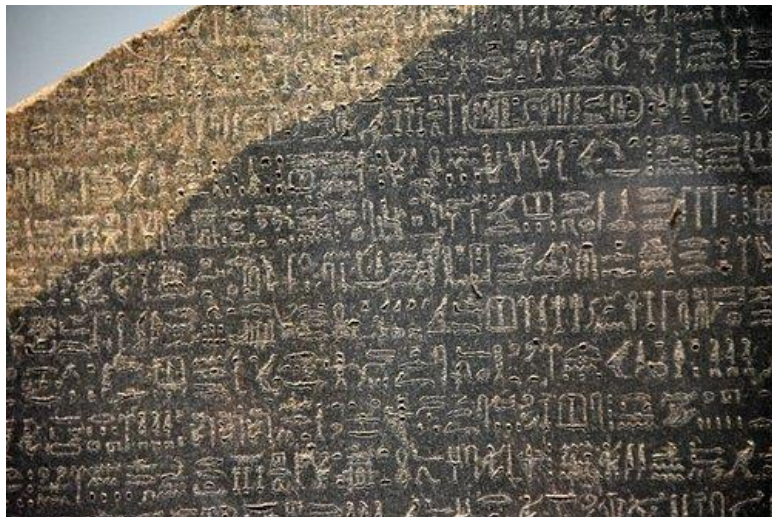
- IFC is World Bank's private sector investment arm.
- It offers **investment, advisory, and asset-management services** to encourage private-sector development in less developed countries.

- The IFC is a member of the World Bank Group and is headquartered in Washington, D.C. in the United States.

Source: Hindu

5. Rosetta Stone

Topic: Art and Culture



In News: UK is being asked to return the Rosetta Stone, a large stone slab that has fascinated the world since its discovery around two centuries ago.

More on the Topic:

- The Rosetta Stone is a large stone slab with inscriptions on it and is believed to be a piece of a bigger rock.
- **It has inscriptions in three scripts, all of which convey a decree or public message.**
- This is similar to how in Ancient India, King Ashoka ordered stambhas or edicts that had messages of Buddha's teachings and news about victory in a war inscribed.
- These were then placed throughout the kingdom for the public to see.
- The Rosetta Stone stands out for being the discovery that helped develop the specific field of ancient Egypt studies, Egyptology.
- **Before it was found, there was no knowledge of what Egyptian hieroglyphs meant and how they were translated.**
- But as the stone conveyed the same information in three languages, including Ancient Greek that was understood by scholars, information on hieroglyphics was finally within the grasp of modern historians.

Source: Hindu

6. Kerch Strait

Topic: Geography



In News: The road-and-rail bridge linking Russia and the Crimean peninsula named Kerch Strait was damaged in a powerful blast recently.

More on the Topic:

- The 19-km (12-mile) Crimea Bridge over **the Kerch Strait is the only direct link between the transport network of Russia and the Crimean peninsula**, which Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014.
- The bridge is **crucial for the supply of fuel, food and other products to Crimea**, where the port of Sevastopol is the historic home base of Russia's Black Sea Fleet.
- It also became a major supply route for Russian forces after Moscow invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, sending forces from Crimea to seize most of southern Ukraine's Kherson region and some of the adjoining Zaporizhzhia province.

Source: IE

7. Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968

Topic: Polity and Governance



In News: The Election Commission of India (ECI) froze the 'bow and arrow' election symbol of the Shiv Sena until the competing claims for recognition by the two rival factions is decided.

More on the Topic:

- Para 15 of the Symbols Order, 1968 **empowers EC to decide on the claim of rival factions in case of split.**
- EC decides on the issue after taking into account **all the available facts and circumstances of the case and hearing their representatives.**
- The decision of the Commission **shall be binding on all such rival sections or groups.**
- This applies to disputes in recognised national and state parties.
- For splits in registered but unrecognised parties, the ECI usually advises the warring factions to resolve their differences internally or to approach the court.

Source: Hindu
