

UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 05-11-2023

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (DV Act)

The Supreme Court recently agreed to examine whether a transgender woman can claim maintenance under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (DV Act).

About Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 (DV Act):

The DV Act was enacted by Parliament on September 13, 2005, and extends to the whole of India.

It is basically meant to provide protection to a wife or female live-in partner from violence at the hands of the husband, a male live-in-partner, or his relatives.

Domestic violence under the Act includes actual abuse or the threat of abuse, whether physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, or economic.

Harassment by way of dowry demands is also covered under the definition of domestic violence.



Reflection on
Domestic
Violence Act
2005 and Role
of Judiciary
for Balancing
the Rights of
Women



Who is covered under the Act?

The Act covers all women who may be mother, sister, wife, widow, or partners living in a shared household.

The relationship may be in the nature of marriage or adoption.

In addition, relationships with family members living together as a joint family are also included.

Who can file a complaint?

Any woman who alleges to have been subjected to any act of domestic violence by the offender or any person may file a complaint on her behalf.

A child is also entitled to relief under the DV Act. The mother of such a child can make an application on behalf of her minor child (whether male or female).

In cases where the mother makes an application to the court for herself, the children can also be added as co-applicants.

However, no female relative of the husband or the male partner can file a complaint against the wife or the female partner.

Against whom can a complaint be filed?

Any adult male member who has been in a domestic relationship with the woman.

Protection Officers:

Under the DV Act, Protection Officers have been appointed by the Government to help the aggrieved woman in filing the case.

They are to be attached to the Magistrates of the courts for the area notified for each protection officer.

The Protection Officer facilitates the women to approach the court by providing legal aid and get appropriate relief from the courts

Further, they execute the orders of the Court wherever necessary with the help of the police.

Options are also available to the aggrieved person to file the petition before the Judicial Magistrate Court, or with the service provider, or at a nearby police station.

Service Providers:

Under the DV Act, Service Providers are members of notified Non Governmental Organizations.

They coordinate with all the stakeholders to get justice and relief for the victims of domestic violence.

They help the aggrieved women in filing the Domestic Incident Report, provide accommodation in the short-stay homes along with their children, counsel them, and help the aggrieved get medical treatment if necessary.

They also impart them with vocational training to help them secure employment and sustainable income.

Dead Sea

Iran-backed 'Islamic Resistance in Iraq' recently claimed an attack against an Israeli target on the Dead Sea Coastline.

The Dead Sea, also called the Salt Sea, is a salt lake bordering Jordan to the east and Israel to the west.





However, the western shore's southern half belongs to Israel, while the shore's northern half is in the West Bank, an area claimed by both Israel and Palestine.

It lies to the east of the Mediterranean Sea And south of the Sea of Galilee.

It lies in the Jordan Rift Valley and is fed mainly by the Jordan River, which enters the lake from the north.

It does not have an outlet, and so it loses its water mainly through evaporation.

Its surface and shores are 427 metres below sea level, Earth's lowest elevation on land.

It is 306 m deep, the deepest hypersaline lake in the world.

With 2% salinity (in 2011), it is also one of the world's saltiest bodies of water, though Lake Vanda in Antarctica (35%), Lake Assal (Djibouti) (34.8%), Lagoon Garabogazköl in the Caspian Sea (up to 35%), and some hypersaline ponds and lakes of the McMurdo Dry Valleys in Antarctica (such as Don Juan Pond (44%)) have reported higher salinities.

It is almost ten times saltier than ordinary

This salinity makes for a harsh environment in which animals cannot flourish, hence its name.

It is 50 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide at its widest point.

The Dead Sea seawater has a density of 1.240 kg/L, which makes swimming in its waters similar to floating.

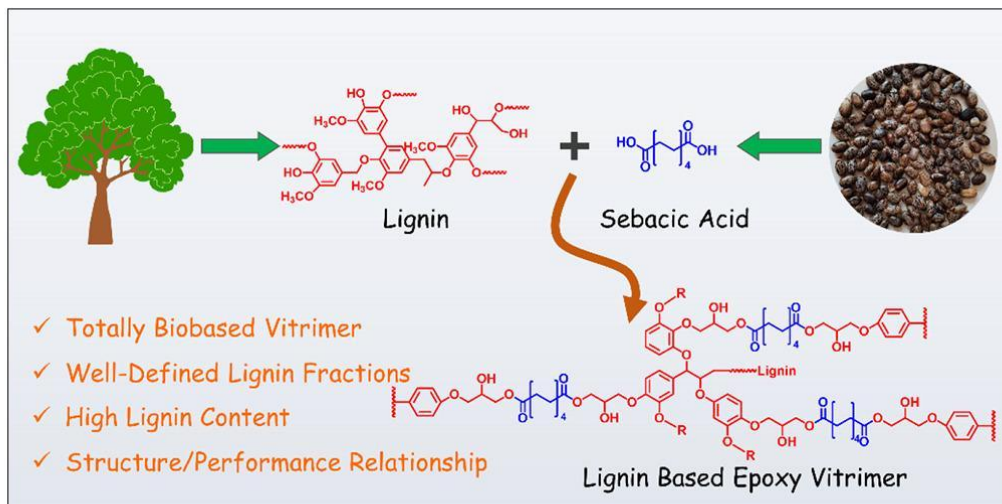
Vitrimer

Researchers at the University of Tokyo have successfully created “sustainable plastic,” which is based on an epoxy resin vitrimer.

These represent a relatively recent category of plastics known for their impressive strength at low temperatures.

They also possess the unique ability to be reshaped numerous times when exposed to higher temperatures.

It is also partially biodegradable.



Nonetheless, they do have a notable drawback - extreme brittleness, as they cannot be stretched far before breaking.

To address this issue, researchers introduced a molecule called polyrotaxane into the plastic synthesis process, resulting in a novel plastic variant they've dubbed VPR, an abbreviation for "vitrimer incorporated with polyrotaxane."

VPR is over five times as resistant to breaking as a typical epoxy resin vitrimer.

At a high temperature of around 150 degrees Celsius, VPR starts to recombine, allowing the material to take on different forms.

It also repairs itself 15 times as fast, can recover its original memorised shape twice as fast, and can be chemically recycled 10 times as fast as the typical vitrimer.

It even biodegrades safely in a marine environment, which is new for this material.

7th Edition of Ganga Utsav Celebrated With Festive Fervor

The 7th edition of Ganga Utsav was organized today by the National Mission for Clean Ganga in New Delhi.

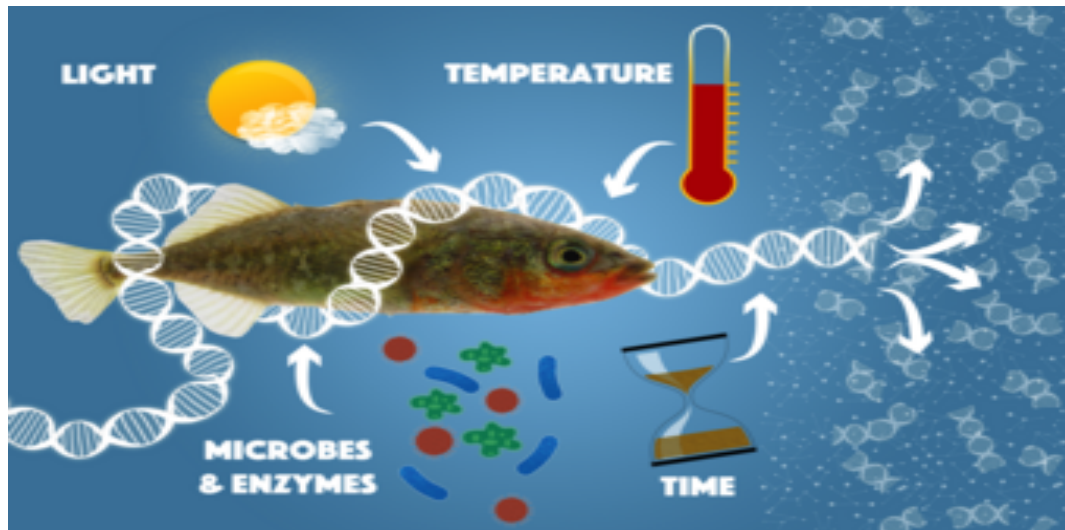
Addressing the gathering, Ms. Debashree Mukherjee expressed that the Ganga is not merely a river but a profound emotion that resonates with all of us. She expressed her satisfaction in witnessing the remarkable progress in the Ganga Rejuvenation efforts, especially in collaboration with the new generation. She drew attention to the beautiful connection between Ghalib and the Yamuna, emphasizing the deeply rooted cultural significance of our rivers. She stressed that the preservation of rivers is a shared responsibility of everyone.



She reiterated that the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi always emphasizes that 'Water is Everyone's Business' and has underscored the pivotal role of water in the sustainable development of our nation. In this context, she highlighted the pressing need to address the issue of solid waste contaminating our water bodies. Each one of us, she insisted, must step forward and contribute to safeguarding our rivers. She underscored the urgency of tackling the flow of sewage into water bodies and advocated for enhanced solid waste management, particularly emphasizing plastic waste control.

Environmental DNA (eDNA)

Researchers from the Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad have developed a new eDNA sequencing method to assess biodiversity.



About Environmental DNA:

eDNA is DNA shed by all organisms into their surroundings through natural processes during their lifetime or after death.

Source: It originates from cellular material shed by organisms (via the skin, excrement, etc.) into aquatic or terrestrial environments that can be sampled and monitored using new molecular methods.

Key points about the new method

The new non-invasive method can assess the total biodiversity of any ecosystem by sequencing the DNA fragments found in environmental samples such as water, soil, or air.

This method can detect all kinds of organisms, including viruses, bacteria, archaea, and eukaryotes such as fungi, plants, insects, birds, fish and other animals.

This method requires just a few litres of water sample without any direct capture or counting of species.

The researchers filter out eDNA from environmental samples, read their sequences, and thus identify the source of the eDNA.

Significance

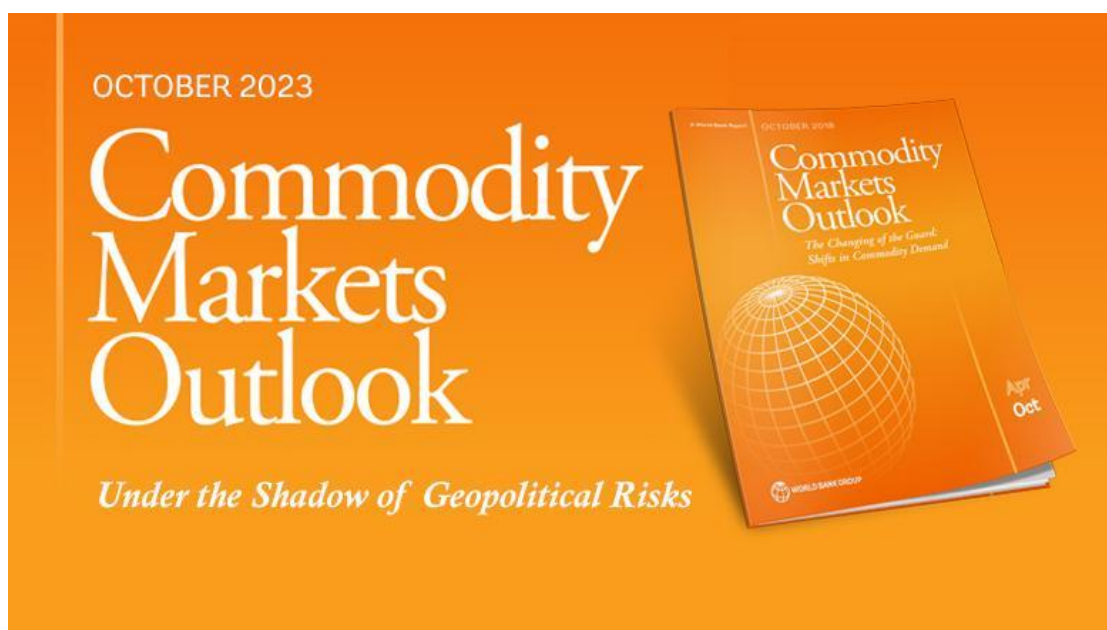
Such methodology is important for the early detection of invasive species as well as the detection of rare and cryptic species.

eDNA can also reveal the presence of human remains

The new method is cheaper, faster, and highly scalable to large freshwater and marine ecosystems, which can help in monitoring and conserving the rich biodiversity of our country.

COMMODITY MARKETS OUTLOOK

The escalating conflict in the Middle East presents the risk of a simultaneous energy shock affecting oil and commodity markets, potentially leading to increased prices and food insecurity.





The World Bank's latest Commodity Markets Outlook warns that an escalation of the conflict in the Middle East, combined with disruptions from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, could push global commodity markets into uncharted waters despite the global economy being more resilient than in the 1970s.

Highlights of the World Bank's Commodity Markets Outlook

The report provides a comprehensive analysis of the potential near-term implications of the ongoing conflict on global commodity markets.

Limited Impact So Far

The conflict has had limited effects on commodity markets, with only modest increases in oil prices and minimal changes in prices of agricultural commodities and metals.

Baseline Forecast

Under the baseline forecast, assuming the conflict doesn't escalate, oil prices are expected to average \$90 a barrel in the current quarter and decline to an average of \$81 a barrel next year.

Overall commodity prices are projected to fall by 4.1% next year due to rising supplies of agricultural commodities.

Potential Escalation Scenarios

Small Disruption: If there's a small disruption in global oil supply (comparable to the Libyan civil war in 2011), oil prices could increase by 3% to 13% initially, reaching a range of \$93 to \$102 a barrel.

Medium Disruption: A medium disruption (similar to the Iraq war in 2003) could lead to a 21% to 35% increase in oil prices, reaching between \$109 and \$121 a barrel.

Large Disruption: In a large disruption scenario (similar to the Arab oil embargo in 1973), oil prices could spike by 56% to 75%, reaching between \$140 and \$157 a barrel.

Dual Energy Shock



If the conflict escalates, the global economy will face a dual energy shock, both from the war in Ukraine and the Middle East. This could lead to higher oil prices, subsequently increasing food prices and intensifying food insecurity globally.

Improved Global Resilience

The report notes that the global economy has become more resilient to oil price shocks since the 1970s. Countries have reduced their dependence on oil, diversified their oil exporters, and expanded energy resources, including renewables.

Some nations have also established strategic petroleum reserves and coordinated supply arrangements to mitigate the impact of oil shortages on prices.

Warning Signs from Gold

Gold prices have risen about 8% since the conflict began, indicating investor concerns and a potential erosion of confidence due to geopolitical uncertainties.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers need to remain vigilant and be prepared to manage potential increases in headline inflation.

Developing countries should avoid trade restrictions like export bans on food and fertilizer, which can exacerbate price volatility and food insecurity.

Governments should refrain from introducing price controls and subsidies in response to higher food and oil prices.

Improving social safety nets, diversifying food sources, and enhancing efficiency in food production and trade are recommended strategies to mitigate the impact of rising commodity prices.

Countries can enhance their energy security by accelerating the transition to renewable energy sources, which would help mitigate the effects of oil price shocks in the longer term.



Joint Military ‘Exercise KAZIND-2023’

The Indian Army and Indian Air Force contingent comprising 120 personnel departed for Kazakhstan today to take part in the 7th edition of Joint Military ‘Exercise KAZIND-2023’.

The Exercise will be conducted at Otar, Kazakhstan from 30th October to 11th November 2023.

Exercise KAZIND

The joint exercise between India and Kazakhstan, initially known as 'Exercise PRABAL DOSTYK,' was first held in 2016.

After its second edition, the exercise was elevated to a company-level exercise and renamed 'Exercise KAZIND.'

Exercise Kazind-23 Edition

The seventh edition of the joint military drill will kick off on October 30 focusing on counter-terrorism operations.

The soldiers of both nations will jointly participate in drills based on the Counter Terrorism operations in a sub-conventional environment under a United Nations mandate.

The contingents will jointly practice various tactical drills, including search and destroy operations, raids, small-team insertion and extraction operations, and others.

In addition to this, operations to counter unmanned aerial systems have also been included in the training schedule of the soldiers.

The military drill will culminate with the warriors gaining new personal and professional experience.

This year, the exercise has been further upgraded to a bi-service exercise by including the Air Force component.



Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC)

The fourth edition of the Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC) was hosted by the Indian Navy from 29 – 31 Oct 23 under the aegis of the Naval War College, Goa.

Focus

Creating common ground to tackle maritime threats in the Indian Ocean Region.

Participant Countries

Twelve countries from the region will participate in the three-day conclave.

At the conclave, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar will join his counterparts from Bangladesh, Comoros, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Thailand.

Theme

The theme for this conclave is converting common maritime priorities into “collaborative mitigating frameworks” for the Indian Ocean Region.

Conclave inclusions

The deliberations will also focus on the formulation of a common multilateral maritime strategy and protocols for nations to collectively mitigate maritime threats and challenges.

The naval chiefs and the representatives of the participating nations will discuss the prospects of joint training programs.

As part of the conclave, visiting dignitaries will get a glimpse of Indian naval warships as well as the capabilities of the Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel.

Closing Remarks

The Goa Maritime Conclave continues to strive to find regional solutions to the security challenges in the Indian Ocean Region and fulfil its quest of becoming an outcome-oriented forum.



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