drishti

CURRENT AFFAIRS

ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

4th November- 9th November

1. Brown Blotched Bengal Tree Frog

Why in News?

A new frog species named *Polypedates bengalensis* has been found in a residential area of West Bengal.

- The frog is also known as the Brown Blotched Bengal Tree Frog.
- It was found in 24 Parganas District of West Bengal.
- It is named Brown Blotched Bengal Tree Frog from the series of six to nine dark brown blotches that extend laterally from behind the frog's eye to the vent.
- The frog's body colour is yellowish-brown to greenish-brown.

2. Fall in India's CO2 Emissions

Why in News?

According to an analysis published in 'Carbon Brief', Carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions in India are set to grow at their slowest in the year 2019.

- The CO_2 will rise by only 2% from last year.
- The 2% rate is a lower rate than any annual increase since 2001.

Reasons For Reduced Emissions

- As a result of economic slowdown in the country the oil demand growth slowed to 2.6% in the first eight months of 2019, compared with 4.6% in 2018, and 5% on average over the past 10 years.
- India banned the import of petcoke for use as a fuel in 2018.
- Demand for naphtha has also reduced due to slower growth in petrochemicals industry.
- Slowdown in the expansion of coal-fired electricity generation and due to rapid growth in renewable generation, the share of coal in meeting the electricity demand has decreased.
  - In the first six months of 2019, wind, solar and hydroelectricity met
    70% of the increase in electricity demand.

3. NCMC To Review Preparedness For Cyclone "MAHA"

Why in News?

A meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary washeld to review the preparations for the cyclone-Maha over Lakshadweep area.

Cyclone "MAHA"

- A depression that developed in the Comorin Sea (Tamil Nadu) has rapidly intensified into a cyclonic storm, named 'Maha'.
- It has been named 'Maha' by Oman.

- It is expected to move over Lakshadweep Islands before emerging into the east-central Arabian Sea.

Formation of Tropical Cyclones
- Tropical cyclones are violent storms that originate over oceans in tropical areas and move over to the coastal areas bringing about large scale destruction caused by violent winds, very heavy rainfall and storm surges.
- Tropical cyclones usually develop in summer season in the vicinity of Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) over warm ocean surface.
- Generally, tropical cyclones are formed due to low pressure of thermal origin.
- The favourable conditions for the formation and intensification of tropical cyclone storms are:
  - Large sea surface with temperature higher than 27 degrees.
  - Presence of the Coriolis force.
  - Small difference in the vertical wind speed.
  - A pre-existing weak-low-pressure area or low-level-cyclonic circulation.
  - Upper divergence above the sea level system.
- Cyclones are called: 'Hurricanes' in the North Atlantic and Eastern Pacific.
  - 'Typhoons' in South-East Asia and China.
  - 'Tropical Cyclones' in the South West Pacific and Indian Ocean Region.

4.   Cyclone Bulbul

Why in News
The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an orange alert in Indian states of West Bengal and Odisha over Cyclone Bulbul in the Bay of Bengal.
- The depression over the east-central and southeast Bay of Bengal and North Andaman Sea has turned into a severe cyclonic storm.
- The landfall of the cyclone is expected between Sagar Islands (West Bengal) and Khepupara (Bangladesh).
- The cyclone has been named by Pakistan

5.   Wastelands Atlas
Why in News?
The Union Minister for Rural Development released the Wastelands Atlas – 2019.
It is a mapping exercise, carried out by National Remote Sensing Centre using the Indian Remote Sensing Satellite data.

Wastelands Atlas-2019

- It provides district and state wise distribution of different categories of wastelands area.
- During the period 2008-09 to 2015-16, 1.45 Mha of wastelands are converted into non wastelands categories.
- There is a net conversion of 0.84 Mha (0.26%) of different wasteland categories in the country during 2008-09 to 2015-16.
- A reduction in wasteland area was observed in the categories of land with dense scrub, waterlogged and marshy land, sandy areas, degraded pastures, grazing land and gullied or ravinous land.
- The wastelands have undergone positive change in the states of Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh.
- Majority of wastelands have been changed into categories of 'cropland' (0.64 Mha), 'forest-dense/open' (0.28 Mha), 'forest plantation' (0.029 Mha), 'plantation' (0.057 Mha) and 'industrial area' (0.035 Mha).

Significance

- The per capita availability of agriculture land in India is 0.12 ha whereas World per capita agriculture land is 0.29 ha.
- Geospatial information on wastelands effectively helpful in rolling back the wastelands for productive use through various land development schemes.

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