Lonar Crater

Why in News

Recently, the water in the Lonar lake in the Buldhana district of Maharashtra was found to be turning reddish over the past few days.

The local administration of the district has requested the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur, to find out the reason behind it.

Key Points

- The colour of water in Maharashtra's Lonar lake, also known as Lonar crater, has changed to red.
- It is said to be normal when the lake gets rainwater.
- **Probable Reasons:**
  - **Algal Bloom:**
    - An algal bloom or algae bloom is a rapid increase or accumulation in the population of algae in freshwater or marine water systems, and is often recognized by the discoloration in the water.
    - Change in colour is generally attributed to algal bloom in the lake around the time of monsoon.
  - **Change in Salinity:**
    - Due to the evaporation of water, the salinity in the water has increased. Hence, it is believed to be a factor behind the change in colour.
  - **Biological Change:**
    - The colour change seems to be a biological change in the Lonar crater as during the lockdown phase, there was no disturbance to the lake and naturally it has turned red.

Lonar Lake
Lonar Lake, also known as Lonar crater, is a notified National Geo-heritage Monument, saline, soda lake, located at Lonar in Buldhana district, Maharashtra.

- Geo-heritage refers to the geological features which are inherently or culturally significant offering insight to earth’s evolution or history to earth science or that can be utilized for education.
- **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** is the parent body which is making efforts towards identification and protection of geo-heritage sites.

- It is situated inside the Deccan Plateau—a massive plain of volcanic basalt rock created by eruptions.
- It is believed to have been created over 52,000 years ago when a meteorite hit the Earth.
- It is formed in basaltic rock with a diameter of 1.85 km and depth of 500 feet.

**Source:** IE