

Current Affairs: 24.03.2021

UNHRC VOTE ON SRI LANKA

India abstained from a crucial vote on Sri Lanka's rights record at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

About:



The resolution on 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka' was, however, adopted after 22 states of the 47-member Council voted in its favour. Sri Lanka, which had earlier deemed the resolution "politically motivated", was quick to reject the UN move to collect and preserve evidence of war crimes in the country, committed by the armed forces and the LTTE. The Sri Lanka resolution was the first to be voted on using the extraordinary e-voting procedures established for the UNHRC 46th Session, which has been held virtually.

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UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (UNHRC)?

What is it? The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system.

Location: It meets at the UN Office at Geneva.

Establishment: It was founded in 2006. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) that had been strongly criticised for allowing countries with poor human rights records to be members.

Functions: It investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in UN member states.

Membership:

The Council is made of 47 Member States, which are elected by the UN General Assembly. The Council's Membership is based on equitable geographical distribution. Members of the Council serve for a period of three years and are not eligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms.

India has been elected to the UNHRC for a period of three years beginning January 1, 2019. India had previously been elected to the UNHRC for the 2011-2014 and 2014-2017 terms.

PERMANENT INDUS COMMISSION

After a gap of more than two and half years Indian and Pakistani delegations began the 116th Meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission.

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About:



The Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) is a bilateral commission consisting of officials from India and Pakistan. It was created to implement and manage the goals and objectives and outlines of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) which was signed in September 1960 with World Bank standing guarantee for any dispute resolution. The last meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission was held on August 29, 2018.

August

Recent meeting:

The meeting which coincided with the National Day of Pakistan is being viewed as part of the broader process of normalisation of bilateral ties between the two neighbours. The two-day meeting of the Commission is being led on the Indian side by Indus Water Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Saxena. The Pakistani delegation is led by Pakistan's Commissioner for Indus Waters Syed Mohammad Mehr Ali Shah.

National Day of Pakistan?

It commemorates the March 23, 1940 Lahore Resolution which paved the way for the creation of Pakistan.

SIXTH SCHEDULE

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) informed the Lok Sabha that “presently, there is no proposal to implement panchayat system in Sixth Schedule areas of Assam”.

About:

The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution protects tribal populations and provides autonomy to the communities through creation of autonomous development councils that can frame laws on land, public health, agriculture and others. As of now, 10 autonomous councils exist in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. The specified tribal areas are the North Cachar Hills, Karbi Anglong and the Bodoland Territorial Area in Assam, Khasi Hills, Jaintiya Hills and Garo Hills in Meghalaya, Tribal Areas in Tripura, and Chakma, Mara and Lai districts in Mizoram.

Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019?

On January 23, 2019, the Union Cabinet approved amendments to increase the financial and executive powers of the autonomous councils.

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The Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019, was subsequently introduced in the Rajya Sabha on February 6, 2019, that provides for elected village municipal councils. The Bill that is still active proposes that the State Election Commissions would hold elections to the autonomous councils, village and municipal councils. The Bill was introduced in the Upper House so that the legislation remains active even as the House was adjourned sine die before the 2019 general election.

#FreedomPineapple CAMPAIGN

Ties between China and Taiwan, which have historically been rocky over issues such as sovereignty, foreign relations and military build-up, are now being tested by pineapples.



About:

On March 1, China banned the import of pineapples from Taiwan, alleging there was a risk of “harmful creatures” that could threaten its own agriculture. Since then, an angry Taiwan has refuted China’s claims of pests being found in imported pineapples, and has gone on to insist that the move is

aimed at increasing political pressure on Taiwan, which China considers its own province. Following this, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen kicked off a “pineapple challenge” on social media to attract more Taiwanese consumers to buy the fruit and counter China’s move. Taiwan’s foreign minister also urged “like-minded friends around the globe to stand with #Taiwan & rally behind the #FreedomPineapple”.

The larger dispute between Taiwan and China

Under its “One China” policy, Beijing considers Taiwan a province of China, even though Taiwan is a democratic, self-ruled country.

Although the two participate separately in international events, China repeatedly insists that Taiwan should be called “Chinese Taipei”, in efforts to prevent international recognition of Taiwan as a country.

Towards the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, and before the post-war treaties were to be signed, members of the Kuomintang party (KMT) were driven out of the mainland by the Communists, who would later establish the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

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WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY

World Tuberculosis Day is being observed on 24th March, 2021 to raise public awareness about TB.



About:

- World Tuberculosis Day, which is observed every year on March 24. On this day in the year 1882, Dr. Robert Koch announced the discovery of the bacteria that causes TB. It paved the way for diagnosis and cure of this deadly disease.

The theme of World TB Day 2021 - 'The Clock is Ticking' –conveys the sense that the world is running out of time to act on the commitments to end TB made by global leaders.