

**23 APRIL 2019**

**Earth Day: saving the planet may cost \$100 billion per year**

**Earth Day:**

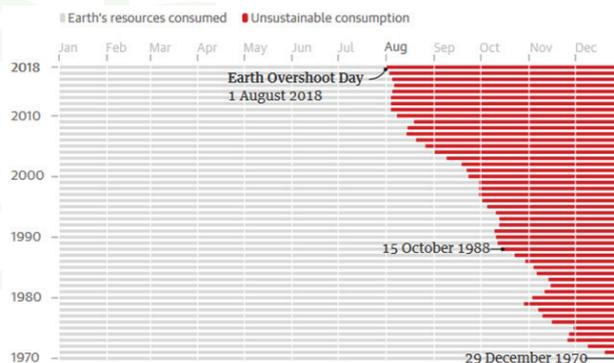
Earth Day is celebrated on April 22, when people worldwide bring awareness to protecting our environment. USA is credited with creating the first Earth Day. On April 22, 1970, it is said that almost 20 million Americans took to the streets to raise awareness and protest practices that harm the environment. The Paris Climate Agreement was signed in New York on April 22, 2016. The agreement aims to have countries work together on reducing greenhouse gases. In 2017, President Donald Trump withdrew from the deal.

**In news:**

Scientists have proposed a policy called “A Global Deal for Nature” (GDN), to prevent another mass extinction event on the planet. According to them, saving the diversity and abundance of life on the earth may cost \$100 billion a year. GDN is a time-bound, science-based plan to save the diversity and abundance of life on Earth. There have been five mass extinctions in the history of the earth. Society must urgently come to grips this coming decade to stop the very first human-made biodiversity catastrophe.

**Earth Overshoot Day:**

Humanity is devouring our planet’s resources in increasingly destructive volumes. The overshoot began in the 1970s, when rising populations and increasing average demands pushed consumption beyond a sustainable level. As a result, the Earth Overshoot Day – which marks the point at which consumption exceeds the capacity of nature to regenerate has moved forward two days to 1 August, the earliest date ever recorded. To maintain our current appetite for resources, we would need the equivalent of 1.7 Earths, according to Global Footprint Network, an international research organisation that makes an annual assessment of how far humankind is falling into ecological debt.



**U.S. ends waiver for India on Iran oil**

**In News:**

The U.S. will not renew exemptions from its sanctions for importing oil from Iran. The exemptions were granted last November for an 180-day period for India and seven other countries.

**Pressure campaign**

1. USA has dramatically accelerated its ongoing pressure campaign in a calibrated way that meets its national security objectives while maintaining well supplied global oil markets
2. Purpose: Maximum pressure until the Iranian leaders return to the negotiating table.

**Most impacted:**

India, China and U.S. allies Japan, South Korea and Turkey will be the most impacted by the non-renewal of waivers. The other three currently exempted countries — Italy, Greece and Taiwan — have already reduced their imports to zero.



**Note**



## What next for India?

1. India, the second biggest buyer of Iranian oil, has lined up alternate sources to make up for the likely shortfall in supplies after the US decided not to give waiver from its sanctions for buying oil from the Persian Gulf nation.

### Background:

1. US President Donald Trump last year withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers and revived a range of sanctions against the Persian Gulf nation. It, however, granted a six-month waiver from sanctions to eight countries - China, India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, Italy and Greece, but with a condition that they would reduce their purchases of Iranian oil.
2. India, which is the second biggest purchaser of Iranian oil after China, had agreed to restrict its monthly purchase to 1.25 million tonne or 15 million tonne in a year (300,000 barrels per day), down from 22.6 million tonne (452,000 barrels per day) bought in 2017-18 financial year.
3. Iranian oil is a lucrative buy for refiners as the Persian Gulf nation provides 60 days of credit for purchases, terms not available from suppliers of substitute crudes -- Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Nigeria and the US.
4. The six-month waiver granted by the US to 8 countries was to expire on May 2. US sanctions on Iran's oil buyers snap will block the US financial system for importers. India, the world's third-biggest oil consumer, meets more than 80 per cent of its oil needs through imports. Iran in 2017-18 was its third-largest supplier after Iraq and Saudi Arabia and meets about 10 per cent of total needs.
5. Iran was India's second biggest supplier of crude oil after Saudi Arabia till 2010-11 but Western sanctions over its suspected nuclear programme relegated it to the seventh spot in the subsequent years. In 2013-14 and 2014-15, India bought 11 million tonne and 10.95 million tonne, respectively from it.

## Easter Sunday blasts: Sri Lanka names local Islamist group National Thowheed Jamaath

### In News:

Sri Lankan authorities on Monday named a little-known local Islamist radical group, the National Thowheed Jamaath, as responsible for the ghastly Easter Sunday serial blasts that claimed nearly 300 lives and injured over 500 across the island nation.

### In Brief:

1. President Maithripala Sirisena has decided to enforce a state of emergency
2. The tragedy is suspected to be a plan of an international network.
3. Sri Lanka names Local Islamist group National Thowheed Jamaath

## Project 15B

### Why in news?

- Recently the third guided missile destroyer, INS Imphal has been launched by the Indian Navy at Mazgaon Docks as part of its Project 15B.

### About Project 15B:

- It is Indian navy's project to construct indigenous and state of the art guided missile destroyer ships.

- It involves the production of four guided missile destroyer ships.



### Note



- INS Vishakhapatnam was the first Project 15B ship and was launched in April 2015, while the second ship, INS Mormugao, was launched in September 2016.
- The P15B destroyers incorporate new design concepts for improved survivability, sea keeping, stealth and ship maneuverability.
- These ships will be equipped to carry and operate two multi-role helicopters.

**Prelim bits**

**Aegean sea**

Countries having coastlines with Aegean Sea – Greece and Turkey.

Maritime route for India to reach Russia: Arabian Sea – Gulf of Aden – Strait of Babel Mandeb – Red sea – Gulf of Suez – Suez canal – Mediterranean sea – Aegean sea– Strait of Dardanelles – Sea of Marmara – Bosphorus Strait (Istanbul) – Black sea

**Mount Agung**

- Mount Agung is an active volcano in Bali, Indonesia.
- It started erupting in 2017 and it is continuously erupting in 2019.



**Note**

