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THE HINDU Page 14

IMEC
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

‘West Asia conflict will not affect IMEC’

However, crisis has revived fears on fuel prices, food security and supply chain disruptions, the FM said, after G20 FMs meet in Marrakech

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

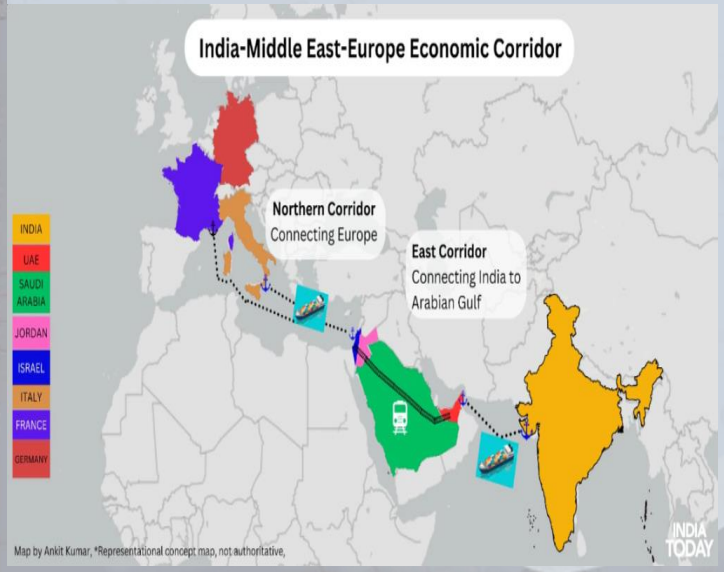
The conflict in Israel and Palestine will not dampen plans for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman signalled on Friday, noting that the strife didn't figure significantly in parleys held with G20 FMs in Marrakech, Morocco.

However, violence has brought concerns about fuel and food security to the fore again, Ms. Sitharaman said in a briefing after the last meeting under India's presidency of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) held in Marrakech on October 12 and 13.

While "higher for longer" interest rates can impact investment flows in emerging markets, Ms. Sitharaman said these economies are the growth engines of the world and so investment flows should not be influenced by high interest rates alone.



G20 parleys: FM Nirmala Sitharaman with ECB President Christine Lagarde and RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday. ANI



Context: Recently, the **conflict in Israel and Palestine hasn't significantly** affected discussions about the **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** among G20 finance ministers in Marrakech, Morocco, **according to the Finance Minister of India**.

India – Middle East – Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

- **About:** The IMEC is being envisioned as a network of **transport corridors**, including railway lines and sea lanes, that is expected to aid economic growth through integration between **Asia, the Arabian Gulf, and Europe**.
- **Aim**: The arrangement will include a railway route that, upon completion, will provide a reliable and cost-effective cross-border ship-to-rail transit network to supplement existing maritime and road transport routes.
  - This will enable goods and services to transit to, from, and between India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Europe.
- **Part of:** The project is a **part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII).**
- **Countries involved:** India, USA, Saudi Arabia, UAE, European Union, Italy, France and Germany.

INDIAN EXPRESS Page 1

UAPA 1967

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Governance)

HC dismisses NewsClick founder's plea against UAPA

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 13

THE DELHI High Court Friday dismissed pleas by NewsClick founder and Editor-in-Chief Prabir Purkayastha and its Human Resource head Amit Chakravarty challenging their arrest and the subsequent police remand order in a case lodged against them under the anti-terror law, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act or UAPA.

The High Court rejected their contention they should have been provided the grounds of arrest when apprehended by police and said the UAPA does not mandate furnishing written grounds and only speaks of the accused being "informed" about the reasons for arrest. The court said it would be "advisable" that the police henceforth provide the grounds of arrest in writing to an accused after redacting "sensitive material".

After considering the contents of the police's remand application, a single judge bench of Justice Tushar Rao Gedela said,

Context: Recently, the **Delhi High Court dismissed pleas** challenging the arrest and police remand of NewsClick founder Prabir Purkayastha and HR head **Amit Chakravarty under the UAPA.**

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA)

- **Passed**: in 1967.
- **Aims**: To effective prevention of unlawful activities and associations in India.
- The Act grants complete **authority to the central government**.
- If the Centre perceives an **activity as illegal,** it can proclaim it as such through an Official Gazette.
- **Applicability**: Under the act, both Indian and foreign nationals can be charged.
- **Punishment**: The act has the death penalty and life imprisonment as the highest punishments.
- **Duration of punishment**: Under section 43D, police are empowered to detain the accused in police custody for 30 days and in judicial custody for a period of 180 days without the charge sheet.
- **UAPA Apply**: Both Indian and foreign nationals can be charged.
- **Meaning of Unlawful Activity**: It pertains to any action by an individual or group with the intent to undermine India's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

PIB

Oct 12

INTENSIFIED MISSION INDRADHANUSH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Social Issue - Health)

Intensified Mission Indradhanush 5.0 (IMI 5.0) campaign with special focus on improvement of Measles and Rubella vaccination coverage, will conclude all three rounds on 14 October 2023

Context: Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI 5.0), a campaign of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will conclude all 3 rounds on 14th October 2023.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI 5.0)

- **Launch**: 2023.
- **Ministry**: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Objective**: to enhance immunization coverage for all vaccines provided under the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) as per the National Immunization Schedule (NIS).
- **Aim:** To eradicate measles and rubella by ensuring that every child aged under 5 years has received both doses of the Measles and Rubella Containing Vaccine (MRCV).
- **Coverage**: It focuses on reaching zero-dose children aged between 0-5 years and pregnant women.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush

- **Launched:** On October 8, 2017
- **Aim**: To reach each and every child up to two years of age and all those pregnant women who have been left uncovered under the routine immunisation programme/UIP.
- **Coverage**: Low performing areas in the selected districts (high priority districts) and urban areas. Special attention will be given to unserved/low coverage pockets in sub-centre and urban slums with migratory populations.

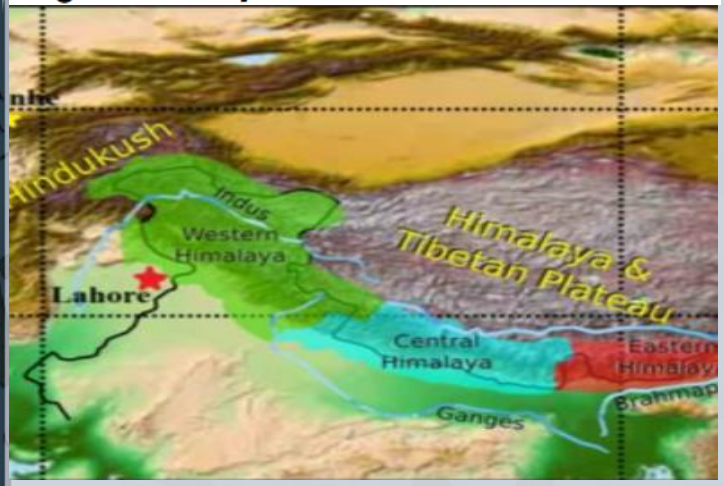
HINDUSTAN TIMES

Oct 13

AEROSOLS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Record spike in aerosol in Hindu Kush region: Study



Hindu Kush-Himalaya-Tibetan Plateau region

- **Geographic Expanse:** It covers over 4.3 million square kilometers, spanning multiple countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan.
- **Third Pole:** This region is often referred to as 'The Third Pole' due to its remarkable snow and ice storage, which surpasses any other non-polar region globally.
- **Global Significance:** Home to the world's highest mountains, **it boasts all 14 peaks** towering over 8,000 meters, serves as the **origin of 10 major rivers**, and functions as a vital global ecological buffer.

Context: The **Hindu Kush-Himalaya-Tibetan Plateau** region has been witnessing an alarming increase in aerosol levels, a new analysis by the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Physical Research Laboratory has shown.

- **Impacts:** It could be driving increased temperatures, altering rainfall patterns, accelerating glacier retreat and initiating changes in the hydrological cycle in the region

Aerosols

- **About**: Aerosols are minuscule solid or liquid particles suspended in the air or as a gas.
- **Types of Aerosols**: Aerosols can be either natural, like fog or volcanic gas emissions, or artificial, such as smoke from burning fossil fuels.
- **Primary and Secondary Aerosols:** Aerosol particles can either be directly emitted into the atmosphere (primary aerosols) or formed in the atmosphere from precursor gases (secondary aerosols).
- **Composition**: Aerosol particles, though tiny, are diverse and consist of various inorganic and organic substances.
- **Size Range:** True aerosol particles vary in diameter, ranging from a few millimicrometers to about 1 micrometer (10-4 cm). Particles smaller than 0.1 micrometer are sometimes referred to as Aitken nuclei.
- **Visible Forms**: Visible manifestations of atmospheric aerosols include smoke, smog, haze, and dust.

Aerosols and Climate

- **Precipitation Catalysts**: Dust and aerosol particles serve as nuclei for condensation and freezing, affecting the precipitation process.
- **Radiation Interaction**: Aerosols can reflect or absorb incoming solar radiation, altering the brightness and reflectivity of clouds.
- **Atmospheric Heating**: While absorption and reflection may reduce ground-level sunlight, enhanced atmospheric heating counteracts this effect, warming the Earth's surface.

CRYPTOCURRENCY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

G20 finance leaders adopt roadmap on crypto assets

Communique points to need for transformative changes at MDBs to tackle global challenges

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NEW DELHI

The finance ministers and central bank governors of G20 nations have adopted a roadmap to regulate crypto assets, as proposed by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), at their meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco.

Additionally, they have committed to advancing important proposals from the New Delhi Leaders Declaration, according to the communique issued on Friday.

The FSB and IMF proposals focus on regulations rather than an outright ban to prevent crypto assets from destabilising the world economy.

The communique also highlighted the need for transformative changes in the operating models and financing capacities of multilateral development banks (MDBs) to tackle global challenges, as was recommended in a two-part report by an independent expert group led by economists N.K. Singh and Lawrence Summers.

The report by the Singh-Summers expert group suggested an increase in MDBs' annual spending by $3 trillion by 2030, including $1.8 trillion for additional climate action, and $1.2 trillion to realise other sustainable develop-



Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and RBI governor Shaktikanta Das during the session of the fourth and final G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting in Marrakesh.

while maintaining its commitment to stand by the Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), an initiative endorsed by the G20 last November to support low-income countries with unsustainable debt.

However, the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors' joint communique did

ing two pillar solutions on taxation for the digital economy, and mobilising climate finance, said finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while addressing a press conference after the conclusion of the fourth FMCBG meeting.

"G20 members reiterated the need for well calibrated monetary, fiscal and financial, and structural policies to promote growth, reduce inequal-

presidency.

Meanwhile, according to the com munique, the detailed and action-ori ented roadmap is essential to achiev common goals like macro-economic and financial stability and to ensur effective, flexible and coordi nated implementation o the comprehensive policy framework for crypto assets.

"We commit our

$3 tn
increase in MDBs'

$1.8 tn
for additional

Context: Finance ministers and central bank governors from **G20 nations recently** adopted a roadmap for regulating **crypto assets in Marrakesh**, Morocco.

Cryptocurrency

- **About:** Cryptocurrency refers to a digital or virtual currency that employs cryptography for security measures.
- **Decentralization:** One of the defining features of cryptocurrencies is their decentralized nature, which means they are not under the control of any government or institution.
- **Examples**: Prominent examples of cryptocurrencies include Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Litecoin.
- **How Does Cryptocurrency Work:** It operates through a decentralized digital ledger called the blockchain, where transactions are publicly recorded and verified by a network of computers worldwide.
  - This system relies on **cryptographic techniques to secure transactions** and prevent manipulation, enabling peer-to-peer, trustless, and borderless digital transactions.

Three key-elements of crypto-currency:

- It is a digital representation of value,
- It can be transferred electronically and
- It is recorded in a digital ledger **(Blockchain Technology)** that is widely accessible.

PIB Oct 12

INDIAN COAST GUARD
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Security)

ICG conducts 21st National Maritime Search and Rescue Board (NMSAR) meeting in Kolkata

Context: The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) conducted the **21st National Maritime Search and Rescue Board (NMSAR)** meeting recently.

Indian Coast Guard (ICG)

- **Establishment**: 1978.
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry Of Defence.
- **Headquarters**: New Delhi, Delhi
  - It was established in August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 as an independent armed force of India.
  - It is the **fourth largest Coast Guard** in the world.
- **Five Coast Guard Regions**: North-West, West, East, North-East and Andaman & Nicobar, with the respective Regional Headquarters located at Gandhinagar, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Port Blair.

National Maritime Search and Rescue Board (NMSAR)

- The NMSAR Board was formed in 2002.
- The Board **meeting is being held annually to discuss policy issues,** formulate guidelines/ procedures and consider recommendations for reviewing the National Search and Rescue plan.
- Speaking on the occasion, the **Chairman emphasised on synergy amongst the stakeholders** to ensure safer sea for all seafarers.

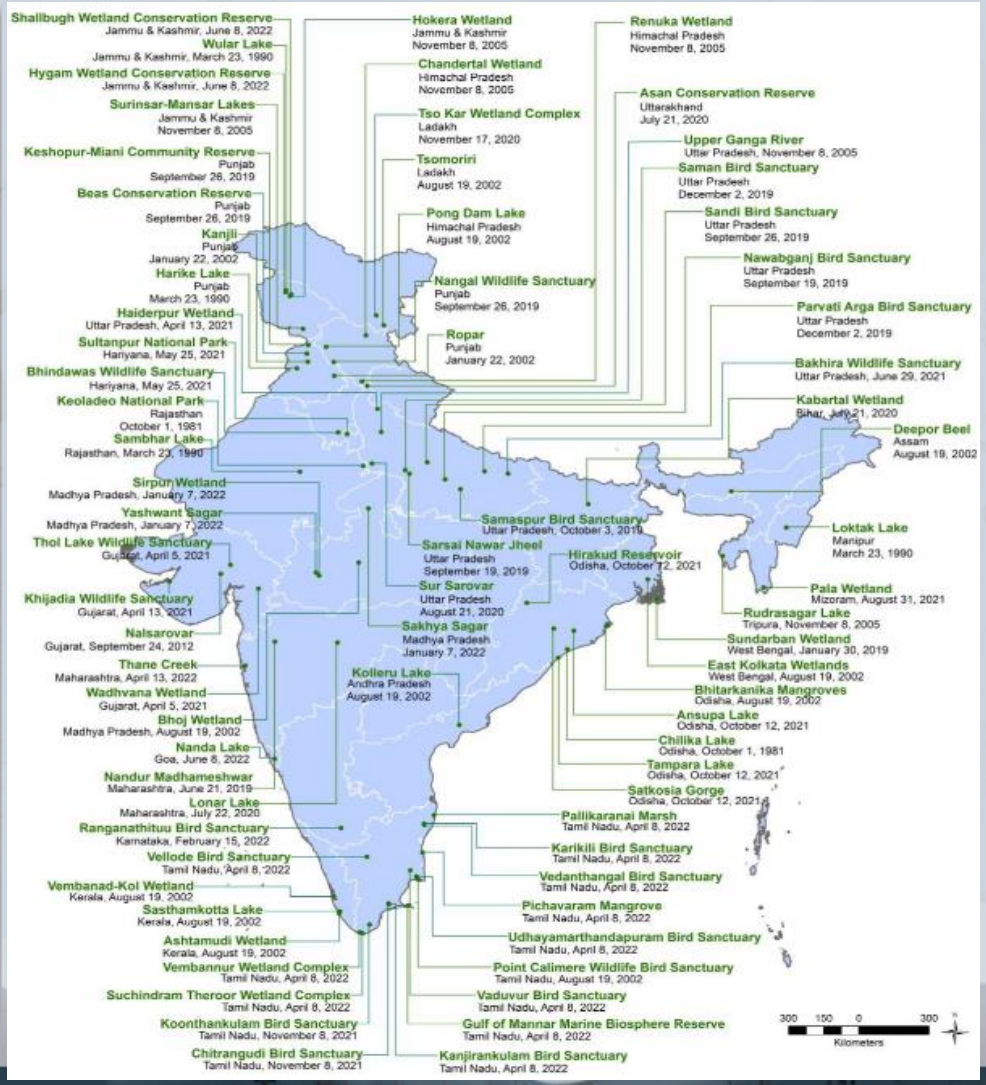
DTE

Oct 13

KAWAR LAKE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Only Ramsar site in Bihar neglected and on verge of drying up



Context: Kawar Lake in Begusarai, received recognition as a **Ramsar site**, while the state's sole wetland of international importance, under the Ramsar Convention, **remains neglected and is at the verge of drying up**.

- Kusheshwarsthan in **Darbhanga district, Barela in Vaishali district**, Goga Bil in Katihar district and Nagiand Nakti dams in Jamui district were **identified for inclusion as Ramsar sites**.

Ramsar Site

- A Ramsar site is a **wetland of global significance** according to the Ramsar Convention, also referred to as the 'Convention on Wetlands.'
- This convention is an **intergovernmental environmental treaty** founded by UNESCO in 1971.
- It **derives its name from Ramsar,** a city in Iran, where the treaty was originally signed in 1971.
- There are **75 Ramsar sites in India.**
- Sundarbans in West Bengal is the **largest Ramsar site in India**.

Kawar Lake

- **Located**: Begusarai, bihar
- **Ramsar Site Declaration**: August 2020
- It is also **known as Kabartal Wetland**. It is Asia's largest freshwater oxbow lake.
- The Wetland is an **important stopover along the Central Asian** Flyway, with 58 migratory waterbirds using it to rest and refuel.

HINDUSTAN TIMES Oct 13

EGYPTIAN VULTURE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Environment)

Endangered Egyptian Vulture rescued



Vultures in India

- India is home to **9 species of vultures.**
- Of these nine species, **4 are listed as Critically Endangered** species of Vultures and **one as endangered species** in IUCN red list of endangered species.
- **Ramadevarabetta Vulture Sanctuary** (India's only vulture sanctuary, in Karnataka).

Context: Recently, an **Egyptian Vulture was rescued from Indapur** which had suffered injuries and dehydration and was admitted to the RESQ Wildlife Transit Treatment Centre (TTC) at Bavdha.

Egyptian Vulture

- **About**: The Egyptian Vulture (Neophron Percnopterus) is a native bird of Europe, Central Asia, and Africa. In winter, it migrates to Asian countries, including India.
- **Residential Sub-Species**: India hosts the residential sub-species of Egyptian vulture, Neophron Percnopterus Ginginianus, which remains in the country year-round.
- **Habitat and Behavior**: These vultures prefer open, arid areas near human settlements, providing an abundance of food.
- They are **monogamous and migrate together as a pair,** constructing and maintaining large nests during the breeding season.
- **Threats:** Poisoning from diclofenac, loss of natural habitats, food dearth and contamination, hunting and electrocution by power lines.
- **IUCN Status**: Endangered

LIFE SCIENCE

Oct 13

PONTUS TECTONIC PLATE

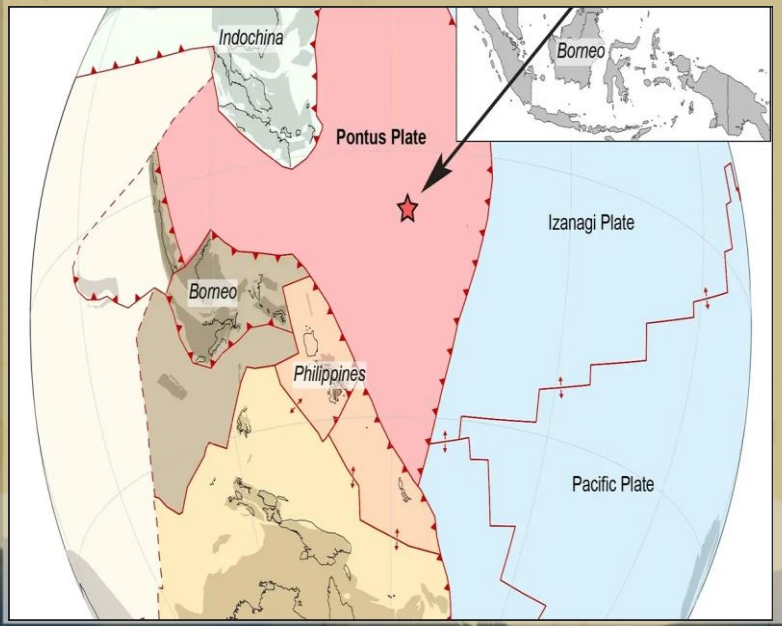
(Syllabus: GS Paper 1– Geography)

Scientists discover ghost of ancient mega-plate that disappeared 20 million years ago

Context: A long-lost tectonic plate dubbed **'Pontus' was recently discovered** by chance by scientists studying ancient rocks in Borneo.

Tectonic Plate

- A tectonic plate, **also known as a lithospheric plate**, is a substantial, irregularly shaped slab of solid rock, typically composed of both continental and oceanic lithosphere.
- **Diverse Sizes**: These plates can vary significantly in size, ranging from a few hundred to thousands of kilometers across, with the Pacific and Antarctic Plates among the largest.



Pontus Tectonic Plate

- **About:** The Pontus Tectonic Plate, a long-lost tectonic plate, was recently found in the western Pacific Ocean.
- **Vast Size**: This massive plate was once approximately 15 million square miles in size, accounting for about one-quarter of the Pacific Ocean.
- **Ancient Origins**: It has an extensive history, dating back as far as 160 million years and more recently to around 20 million years ago.
- **Subduction and Loss**: Over millions of years, the Pontus Plate was gradually subducted and pulled beneath a neighboring plate by the force of gravity.

Discovery Process

- **Gravity-Driven Subduction**: The denser nature of the subducting plate compared to the surrounding mantle results in it being pulled down into the Earth's mantle.
- **Residual Traces**: When a plate subducts, it leaves behind rock fragments concealed within mountain belts.
- **Scraped Upper Layers**: During subduction, upper sections of the subducting plate can be scraped off.

DTE Oct 11

GLOBAL GIRLHOOD REPORT 2023
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Social Issue)

Globally, 9 million girls face extreme risks of climate disaster and child marriage every year: Report

Context: According to a recently **released report by Save the Children**, nearly **nine million girls worldwide** are at higher risk of child marriage due to climate disasters.

- The number of girls growing up in the top **10 hotspots is expected to increase by 2.3 million** from 29.9 million to 32.2 million by 2030, the report estimated. By 2050, the number of girls in these hotspots will be 39.9 million, an increase of one-third.
- Approximately two-thirds of child marriages are concentrated in regions bearing higher-than-average climate risks, **revealed Global Girlhood Report 2023.**

Highlights of Reports

- The climate crisis affects girls across multiple facets, including **food security, poverty, migration, safety, education**, and health.
- Child marriage is often used as a coping mechanism to mitigate economic vulnerability and food insecurity resulting from climate-related disasters, leading to **approximately 9 million girls globally facing an increased risk** of forced child marriage annually.
- Two-thirds of child marriages are expected to occur in regions with above-average climate risks.
- **Nearly 60% of girls worldwide are projected** to encounter at least one extreme climate event by 2030.
- Climate change plans lack **adequate provisions to address these issues**; the Paris Agreement recognizes the importance of promoting gender equality but does not specifically address girls' concerns.
- The **Gender Action Plan at COP25** only mentions girls in the context of their participation in science and technology for climate solutions.

Recommendations

- Gender equality and protection from gender-based violence in climate action plans, investing in anticipatory measures to meet girls' needs, and supporting girls as decision-makers and proponents of feminist movements.

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