

UNDERSTAND UPSC

GS III

SYLLABUS: CONSERVATION, ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND DEGRADATION.

CLIMATE FINANCING

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "All eyes on Baku and the climate finance goal".

"Developed countries account for 57% of cumulative global emissions since 1850 despite hosting smaller populations than the developing world"—**IPCC 6th Assessment Report.**

Why are developing countries more vulnerable to climate change?

- **Small island developing states (SIDS)** like the Maldives and Tuvalu face existential threats from sea-level rise.
- **Coastal nations** like India, Bangladesh are highly susceptible to flooding and cyclones.
- **Mostly agriculture based nations** (contributing more than 25% of GDP), any extreme weather events affect crop yields leading to food insecurity.
- **Smaller GDPs and higher debt burdens** (above 50% of GDP) compromise the adoption of new renewable energy technologies — **UNEP reports.**
- **Loss of infrastructure** (USD 18 billion annually) in low-and-Middle income countries due to natural disasters — **World Bank report.**
- **Urbanisation challenges:** by 2050, 70% of the global population is expected to live in cities, with a significant increase in developing nations.
- **Vicious cycle** of extreme poverty, rising inequalities, weak health care systems and climate change on top, making developing countries more vulnerable.

Climate Financing:

- **UNFCCC defines climate finances** as "local, national, or transnational financing — drawn from public, private, and alternative sources — that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions addressing climate change."

India and Climate Financing:

- India has both short-term and long-term climate targets.
- **By 2030:**
 - India aims to **install 500 GW** of generating capacity from **non-fossil-fuel sources.**
 - It is estimated **India will require an additional ₹17 lakh crore** investment to achieve 450GW of renewable energy by 2030.
 - Five million metric tonnes per annum of **green hydrogen (GH2)** production capacity.
 - Here, **India will need ₹8 lakh crore.**
 - Penetration for various **Electric Vehicle (EV)** categories.
 - Consumers need to spend around **₹16 lakh crore** to achieve this vision.
- **By 2070:**
 - **₹850 lakh crore** in investments between 2020 and 2070 to achieve **net-zero emissions.**

Measures taken:

- **Copenhagen Accord 2009 (Green Climate Fund):** developed countries committed to provide **\$100 billion a year** in climate finance to developing countries by 2020.
- Now deadline extended to 2025, which created a sense of distrust with developed countries.
- **Developing countries insist on equitable climate finance,** emphasizing the responsibility of developed countries to provide support.

P.T.O

Issues with Developed countries:

- **Developed countries try to avoid common but differentiated responsibilities** by demanding expansion of finance contributions. Eg. They argue to include China and other developing nations in the climate finance mechanism.
- **Ambiguity in Climate Finance definition:** They claim bilateral aid, private investments, and loans should be considered part of their climate finance contributions.
- **Economic Challenges:** In 2022, the EU's energy crisis led many countries to prioritise domestic energy subsidies over international commitments.
- **Climate finance commitments:** under the Paris Agreement and the Copenhagen Accord (2009) are voluntary, not legally binding.
- **Lack of technology transfer and capacity building** efforts to developing countries.
- **Developing countries losing faith in multilateralism:** Eg. The \$100 billion annual climate finance pledge (2009), its deadline extended to 2025.

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GS I

SYLLABUS: POPULATION ISSUES.

POPULATION

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 9.

News: "Are pro-natalist policies the way to address the ageing population problem".

Issue:

- CM of Andhra Pradesh expressed **concern over his state's aging population** and urged people to have more children.
 - He mentioned that **you can only stand for local elections if you have more than two babies.** Earlier policies said one could only stand for local elections if one had less than two babies.
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, said that the **Census and delimitation process may encourage couples to give up thoughts of having a small family.**

What are pro-natalist policies:

- Under such policies, **governments try to encourage young couples to have kids by providing incentives** like:
 - Increase maternity leave or paternity leave.
 - Increase child support or reduce taxation.
 - Provide cash incentives for people to have children.
- Since 2015, **countries like Hungary, Poland, Greece, Finland, and Sweden,** where aging is a major issue, have adopted pro-natalist policies.
- **Success of Pro-natalist policies is limited due to:**
 - Rise of cost of living on welcoming child.
 - Need for adequate housing.
 - What is the cost of raising a child: like kindergarten and then school?
 - Big opportunity cost for women: who are largely responsible for the unpaid care of babies had to drop out of work, either permanently or for a short period.

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GS II

SYLLABUS: REGIONAL AGREEMENTS INVOLVING INDIA.

INDUS WATER TREATY

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "India, Pakistan and modifying the Indus Waters Treaty".

"IWT is a 'one bright spot' in a very depressing world picture"—**U.S. President D.D. Eisenhower.**"

About Indus Water Treaty:

- **Signed:** September 19, 1960 by India & Pakistan, brokered by World Bank.
- **Purpose:** to share waters of the Indus River system between India and Pakistan.
- **IWT becomes vital for Pakistan:** the water flowing into Pakistan helps to irrigate about 1,10,000 sq.kms and supports its agriculture belt in Punjab Sindh.

About Indus River system:

- Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej.
- **Treaty covers all the 6 rivers.**
- **Indus and Sutlej** origin in Tibet, rest in India.
- Except **Ravi**, all the rivers flow into Pakistan.

Provision of Treaty:

- **Water Allocation:**
 - **Eastern Rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej):**
 - **India** gets right of unrestricted use over these rivers, with Pakistan receiving a limited supply.
 - **Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab):**
 - **Pakistan** gets right of unrestricted use over these rivers.
 - India can use these waters for limited purposes like irrigation, storage, power generation under specified conditions.
- **Permanent Indus Commission(PIC):**
 - With **representation from both India and Pakistan**, it was established to implement the treaty, resolve disputes, share information.
- **Dispute Resolution Mechanism:**
 - Initially resolved through PIC. If unresolved, parties can refer to **International Court of Arbitration**.
 - Under convention, both sides are expected to **meet at-least once a year** to discuss bilateral problems.

Can India abrogate or withdraw from the treaty:

- India can exercise sovereign right of state under **Article.64 of Vienna Convention** to withdraw from any international treaty.

Concerns:

- **Baglihar Dam construction on Chenab (2007):**
 - Pakistan views these projects as violations of the treaty.
 - **India's stance:** that the project is compliant with treaty and falls within the permissible uses.
- **Kishenganaga (Jhelum) and Ratle (Chenab) projects issue (2016):**
 - Pakistan demanded both neutral expert process and the Permanent Court of Arbitration(PCA). Later it withdrew from neutral expert process. Followed this, India boycotted PCA hearings.
 - This worsened the tensions over water sharing issues under IWT.
- **After Uri attack (2016)** India decided to **suspend talks** under IWT.

Current status:

- India issued 4th notice to Pakistan since January 2023, India called for renegotiation of IWT 1960 but received no response from Pakistan.

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POLITY

PRE-CONTEXT

RIGHT TO PROPERTY

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "Can the state acquire all private property?".

Private Property:

- refers to land or assets that are owned by individuals or non government entities.
- **Constitution originally guaranteed right to property and compensation** for acquisition as Fundamental Right under **Art.19(1)(f) and 31** respectively.
- **Art. 31C:** was added through the 25th amendment in 1971. It provided an exception that **laws made to fulfil the principles under Art. 39(b) and (c) shall not be void on the ground that it violated Fundamental Rights** including right to property.
- **In 1978, the right to property was omitted** from Fundamental Rights and **made a constitutional right** under **Article 300A**.
 - **Any law to acquire private property by the govt.** should only be for a public purpose with adequate compensation meted out.

Before 2024 SC Judgement:

- **Border interpretation of Article 39(b):** allowing State to acquire and redistribute privately owned properties for public welfare.
- This was **based on socialist principles** and aimed at equitable distribution of resources.

After 2024 SC Judgement:

- **SC narrowed the interpretation of Art. 39(b):** it ruled not all privately owned properties can be classified as "material resources of community".
- **Only certain types of private property** based on their nature, significance, and impact on public welfare can fall under this provision Eg. forests, ponds, spectrum, mines and minerals.
- SC opined that **India has moved on from a socialistic model (greater govt. control) to a market-based liberalised economic model.**

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ENVIRONMENT

PRE-CONTEXT

STUBBLE BURNING

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 15.

News: "Air quality commission doubles fine on farmers for stubble burning."

"1.5 million deaths annually in India due to air pollution"—**WHO report 2019.**

"This [Delhi Air pollution] is a murder of the health of the people"— **Supreme Court 2023.**

Multiple reasons for winter Air pollution in Delhi:

- Slow wind speed, Temperature Inversion (traps pollutants).
- Bursting of firecrackers, Stubble burning.
- Emissions from vehicles, coal-based power plants, Brick kilns etc.
- Of all, **stubble burning** in Punjab and Haryana is **responsible for ~40% of the pollution** during October and November.

Why farmers burn stubble:

- Due to the **short time interval** between paddy harvest and wheat sowing, it leads to stubble burning.
- Punjab and Haryana are expected to generate **~30 million tons of paddy straw** in 2024.
- **CAQM recommends State govts.**, to establish a strong supply chain to enhance the use of paddy straw in industrial boilers and furnaces.

Measures to prevent stubble burning:

- **In-Situ measures:**
 - **Bio-Decomposer:**
 - A **microbial liquid spray** breaks down **paddy stubble**, making it easy to absorb by soil. **Eliminates the need for burning.**
 - Developed by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (**IARI**).
 - Goal is to curb air pollution in Delhi and promote sustainable farming practices.
 - **Decomposed stubble boosts soil fertility** where the spray is applied.
 - **Subsidised Agriculture equipment:** Happy Seeders, Mulchers etc. but several of these **machines are not available to farmers when required.**
 - **Awareness** and Training programmes.
- **Ex-situ measures:**
 - **Promotion of Industrial uses:** Biomass energy, **co-fired** in thermal power plants (it turns paddy straw into pellets that can be used as source of carbon).
 - But, there is **no established transport system in place** to transport straw from field to plant.

Commission on Air Quality Management in NCR (CAQM):

- A statutory body under the **NCR & Adjoining areas Act 2021.**
- This body frames Graded Response Action Plan (**GRAP**).

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP):

- GRAP is an **emergency response mechanism** based on Delhi's Air Quality Index level.
- Plan is framed as per Supreme Court's order of 2016.
- GRAP is being **implemented by the CAQM.**
- Under GRAP NCR air quality has been classified as **four different stages:** Poor (200-300), Very Poor, Severe Air, Severe+ (450+).

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GS IV

SYLLABUS: CORPORATE GOVERNANCE.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 10.

News: "Are CSR contributions to agriculture properly tracked?"

About Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):

- CSR is a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders."—**UNIDO.**
- **India became the first country to legally mandate CSR**, requiring certain companies to spend 2% of their average net profits over the past three years on CSR activities.
- According to the National CSR Portal, from 2014 to 2023, **₹1.8 lakh crore of CSR funds** were disbursed.

Need for CSR in India:

- **48 % of Indians are deprived of some or other opportunities,**
- **70% of population (2011 census) lives in rural areas** which lack infrastructure showing a need for corporate responsibility.
- **Paying back to community:** Corporation utilise the resources of society and it becomes matter of responsibility.
- **Triple bottom line Principle:** Corporations should work for the **3Ps People** (improving lives of local community), **Planet** (their actions shouldn't impact planet negatively) and **Profit** (they have full right to increase their profit).
- **Competitive advantage:** Creates favourable image of the company Eg. **TATA corporation has high value due to their responsibility** actions.
- CSR activities are of nature that attracts talent, have a low attrition rate, high productivity rate.
- **Addressing social concerns** Eg. Premji foundation on education.

Issues with CSR in India:

- **Rising number of corporate governance issues:** Eg. NSE scam, Colocation scam.
- **Lacking Geographical Equity:** Eg. Five states GJ, RJ, MH, AP, TN accounts for one quarter of all CSR spending, North-Eastern states are ignored.
- **Less seriousness towards CSR:** more priority to profit maximisation.
- Most spending is concentrated on a few sectors like education, health.
- **Rise in Shell NGOs:** Which take up money from companies but don't spend on targeted projects.
- **Companies claim transparency issues** with local implement agencies.
- **Outsourcing nature of companies:** it is hard to determine local area for their CSR operation.

Recommendations on corporate Philanthropy: by 2nd ARC

- **Mutual consultation between govt. and local community:** to avoid unnecessary overlap with other similar development programs.
- **Facilitator role of Govt:** to encourage businesses and industry to take up projects to improve the quality of life of local community.

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Thank you!