Prelim Bits 09-12-2019

UPOV

- The International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) is an intergovernmental organization established by the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants.
- The convention was adopted in Paris in 1961 and it was revised in 1972, 1978 and 1991.
- It is headquartered in Geneva (Switzerland).
- It aims to provide and promote an effective system of plant variety protection, with the aim of encouraging the development of new varieties of plants, for the benefit of society.
- By this convention, member countries had to introduce restrictions on the free use and exchange of seeds by farmers unless the "breeders" were remunerated.
- In 2002, India joined this organisation.
- It led to the introduction of some form of Intellectual Property Rights over plant varieties.

UPOV Vs other Conventions

- UPOV is in contradiction with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in which India is also a member.
- CBD provided for "prior informed consent" of farmers before the use of genetic resources and "fair and equitable sharing of benefits" arising out of their use.
- International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) recognised farmers' rights as the rights to save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seeds.
- National governments had the responsibility to protect such farmers' rights.
- Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) provides for IPRs as an incentive for technological innovation.
- India is a signatory to CBD, ITPGRFA, TRIPS and UPOV.
- TRIPS, UPOV gives priority to breeders' rights while CBD and ITPGRFA emphasises on farmers' rights.
- Thus, there needs to be a delicate balance in Indian laws among these conventions.

Tyre Pyrolysis

- It refers to a technique of breaking down used tyres at temperatures between 250º C and 500º C, in the absence of oxygen.
- This process produces liquid oil and gases.
- It leaves fine carbon matter, pyro-gas, oil as residue, thereby inadequate management of these by-products poses health risks.
- However, this is considered a safer technique than burning tyres in open spaces.
- The National Green Tribunal in 2014 prohibited used tyres from being burnt in the open or being used as fuel in brick kilns, because of the toxic emissions.
- Subsequently, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board issued a set of guidelines in which pyrolysis was recommended as an acceptable mode.
- **Recent Developments –** The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has pulled tyre pyrolysis units in 19 States for employing technology that is polluting and harmful to the health of workers employed.
- It orders States to close all pyrolysis units that are not compliant and to strictly regulate import of used tyres.
- India is also a recipient of used tyres from Australia and the U.K., which are sent for recycling and disposal.

Platform for Science-Based Ocean Solutions

- It was launched in 25th Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC.
- The platform is an alliance between all stakeholders of civil society and the research community to include the Ocean in solutions relating to climate change.
- It seeks to promote the necessity of addressing ocean and climate issues synergistically in climate commitments and strategies.
- It will engage many actors in ocean-climate action, including the public and private sectors, civil society and academia.
- Chile, as its capacity as a president of COP25, has named COP 25 the **'Blue COP'** because for the first time the study, protection and sustainable management of oceans was centred in a major climate action conference.
- The COP will also feature several additional discussions on the importance of protecting the ocean.
- The Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP) has facilitated experts to identify gaps and action on climate change and ocean linkages.
- **'Because the Ocean'** Declaration was signed in 2015 UNFCCC COP held in Paris that focuses on objectives to advance action on climate change, oceans

and sustainable development.

Paika Rebellion Memorial

- President has recently laid the foundation stone for a memorial to mark completion of 200 years of Paika Rebellion.
- The proposed project will come up at the foothills of Barunei hills in Khurda district.
- The rebellion is a valiant uprising of Paikas in 1817 against the British Rule which is often termed as the First War of Independence.
- The Paiks were the traditional landed militia of Khurda, Odisha.
- Rulers of Khurda were traditionally the custodians of Jagannath Temple and ruled as the deputy of Lord Jagannath on earth.
- The British, having established their sway over Bengal Province occupied the Khurda's land in 1803 and took over the hereditary rent-free lands granted to Paikas.
- The Paikas rose in armed rebellion in 1817 under the leadership of Baxi Jagabandhu.
- The tribals of Ghumusar and other sections of the population actively took part in it.
- Many scholars, researchers and historians have opined that the Paika Rebellion was India's first organized armed rebellion against British Raj.

Click here to know more about the rebellion

Taj Trapezium Zone

- Taj Trapezium Zone was established in 1996 through an order of Supreme Court.
- It is so named since it is located around the Taj Mahal and is shaped like a trapezoid.
- It is a 10,400 sq km area to protect the Taj Mahal from pollution.
- It is spread across the districts of Agra, Firozabad, Mathura, Hathras and Etah in Uttar Pradesh and Bharatpur district of Rajasthan.
- It comprises over 40 protected monuments along with 3 world heritage sites such as the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri.
- SC in its order declared it as an eco-sensitive area and banned the use of coal/coke in industries located in the zone with a mandate of switching over to natural gas.
- Recently, SC lifted its earlier interim order imposing a complete ban on construction, industrial activities and cutting of trees in the TTZ.

Source: PIB, The Hindu, Times of India

