

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 250° C and 500° 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

