

## UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 11-06-2024

### Ocean Based Carbon Removal

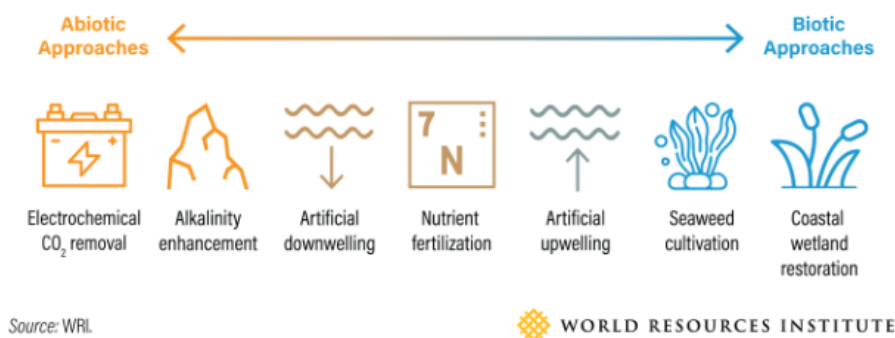
A new study throws light on the limitations of the current approaches of removing carbon dioxide from the ocean.

- **Carbon sequestration by Ocean** - It has already absorbed 30% of the CO<sub>2</sub> and 90% of excess heat caused by human activities.

In total, the ocean holds around 42 times more carbon than the atmosphere.

- **Approaches** - By enhancing or accelerating natural biological or chemical processes that sequester carbon in the ocean.

#### Carbon removal approaches in the ocean



- **Abiotic approaches** - They harness the physical or chemical properties of the ocean to remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the air.
  - Alkalinity enhancement, electrochemical CO<sub>2</sub> removal and artificial downwelling
- **Biotic approaches** - They leverage photosynthesizing organisms in seawater to take up CO<sub>2</sub> and store as biomass.
  - Seaweed cultivation, Ocean fertilization, artificial upwelling and coastal wetland restoration.

#### Abiotic Approaches in Marine CO<sub>2</sub> Removal

- **Alkalinity enhancement** - Adding certain minerals to seawater enable more atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> to dissolve into the ocean.
- **Electrochemical CO<sub>2</sub> removal** - It use electricity to mimic alkalinity enhancement, or directly extract CO<sub>2</sub> from seawater for storage on land.
- **Artificial downwelling** - It accelerates natural currents that carry carbon-rich surface water into the deep ocean in the Arctic and Antarctic.

#### Biotic Approaches in Marine CO<sub>2</sub> Removal

- **Seaweed cultivation** - They are cultivated and then *sunk to the deep ocean* storing a portion of the carbon-rich biomass.
- **Ocean Fertilization** - *Nutrients like iron can be added* to the ocean to spur phytoplankton growth.
- **Artificial upwelling** - It is same as ocean fertilization, but does so by moving deeper, *nutrient-rich water to the surface*.

- **Challenges** - The limited understanding of basic ocean processes is hindering progress in marine CO2 removal.
- Absorbing excess CO2 and heat is causing ocean warming, acidification, oxygen loss; changing currents and nutrient cycling; and imperilling plants and animals essential to marine ecosystems.
- They compromise the ocean's ability to provide food, support livelihoods and insulate us from the worst effects of climate change.

## References

1. [The New Indian Express | Concerns in Marine CO2 Removal](#)
2. [WRI| Ocean based CO2 Removal](#)

## Contributions of Birsa Munda

A tribute was recently paid to revolutionary tribal leader Birsa Munda on his 124<sup>th</sup> death anniversary.

- He belongs to **Munda tribe**, a tribe of nomadic-hunters-turned-farmers who lived in the Chotanagpur region of Jharkhand.
- He is also known as '**Dharti ka Abba and 'Bhagwaan Birsa'**, as he achieved a God-like status among his followers.
- **Social reformer** - He fought *against superstition, animal sacrifice* and alcoholism.
- **Unified the tribal community** - He started the *faith of "Birsait"* to challenge the British conversion activities through missionaries.
- It attracted the members of Munda and Oraon tribal communities and thereby unified the tribal community under a single umbrella.
- **Mobilized the masses** - He had put examples of their ancestors and their burning patriotism to motivate the mass people.
- **Fought for Tribal land rights** - His organisational skill, motivating the masses to regain freedom from the power grabbers like the Thikadars, Zamindars and money-lenders and restoration of full ownership rights as tillers of the soil.
- He demanded tribal farmers to boycott 'beth begari system' (forced labour).
- **Spearheaded tribal movement** - He led the movement called 'Ulgulan', organising the Adivasis against the land settlement system imposed by the British.

## The Ulgulan Movement or The Great Tumult

- **Background** - Munda tribes follows *Khuntkatti system*, a joint ownership of land by tribal lineage.
- They clear forests to make the land cultivable, and the entire clan, rather than an individual, owns the land.
- **Causes of revolt** - The *Permanent Settlement Act (1793)* introduced the zamindari system and created land-owning zamindars who were seen as *outsiders or dikus* by indigenous residents.
- It allowed the dikus to claim ownership rights of tribal lands which displaced the indigenous dwellers.
- **Aim of the revolt** - To resist British oppression, exploitation by landlords, and the imposition of alien laws and taxes on tribal people.
- **Impact** - Though it was eventually suppressed by the British, it inspired later movements for tribal rights and land reforms.
- The government *repealed of the begar system*, and led to the *Tenancy Act (1903)* which recognised the khuntkhatti system.
- The *Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (1908)* later banned the passage of tribal land to non-tribal folks.

### Sardari Ladai (1858-90)

- An agrarian discontent against the imposition of beggars (forced labor) and illegal enhancement of rent by the intermediaries.
- **Led by** - The “Sardars” of the Munda and Oraon tribes.
- **Approaches** - Peaceful means like petition, prayers and protest to demand justice from the colonial regime.
- **Significance** - It prepared the ground for Birsa Munda’s rebellion.

### References

1. [The New Indian Express | Contribution of Birsa Munda](#)
2. [Odisha.Gov| Birsa Munda - The Great Hero of the Tribals](#)

### Indian House Crows

*The Kenyan government has launched a campaign against Indian House Crows, aiming to eliminate one million of them by the end of 2024.*

- **Taxonomy** - It belongs to the family ‘Corvidae’.
  - **Scientific Name** - Corvus splendens
- **Nativity** - Indian subcontinent.
- **Distribution** - Colonized urban and suburban areas in many parts of *Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*.

*The house crow, also known by various names such as the Indian crow, grey-necked crow, Ceylon crow and Colombo crow originated from India and other parts of Asia but has since spread to many parts of the world, aided by shipping activities.*

- **Features** - They are medium-sized birds known for their adaptability and intelligence.
- They have a slightly glossy appearance.
- **Challenges in Kenya** - Their *exponential rise* due to their remarkable adaptability and association with human settlements.
- Being invasive they cause *problems for tourists, farmers*, and local avian species for decades.
- It led to significant *decrease in the population of small indigenous birds* on the Kenyan coast by destroying their nests and preying on their eggs and chicks.

## Reference

[Down to Earth| Impacts of Indian House crows in Kenya](#)

## COSIS

Recently, the ITLOS issued an advisory opinion on international climate change litigation requested by the COSIS.

[International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea \(ITLOS\)](#) is an independent judicial body established by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

- **COSIS** - Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law, an *international commission* that have an *international legal personality*.
- **Formed by** - The Island nations of Antigua & Barbuda and Tuvalu on the eve of COP26 at Glasgow **in 2021**.
- It entered into force upon signature by two or more states.
- **Aim** - To address the unique challenges faced by small island nations regarding climate change within the framework of international law.
- **Recognition** - It was *registered with the United Nations* (UN) in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the UN.
- **Members** - It is open to any member of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).
  - Antigua & Barbuda, Tuvalu, Palau, Niue, Vanuatu, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and St. Kitts & Nevis.
- **Mandate** - To promote and contribute rules and principles of international law *concerning climate change, protection and preservation of the marine environment* and their responsibility for injuries arising from internationally wrongful acts in respect of the breach of such obligations.
- **Activities** - It assists Small Island States in promoting its mandate.
- It shall be authorised to request *advisory opinions from the ITLOS* on any legal question within the scope of 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- It may appoint experts and advisors as necessary.
- **Recent advisory by ITLOS** - The *Parties to UNCLOS have specific obligations* to take all necessary measures to prevent, reduce and control marine pollution from anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

## References

1. [The Hindu| ITLOS gives advisory to COSIS](#)
2. [COSIS| Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law](#)

## Pathogens in Space

Researchers are studying multi-drug resistant pathogens on the International Space Station (ISS), which could have key applications for astronaut's health as well on Earth.

- **Organisation involved-** Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).
- **The Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL)** is a unique collaboration between NASA and Caltech.
- **Aim-** To study the behaviour, adaptation, and evolution of multi-drug resistant pathogens about **400-km above** the earth's surface at the International Space Station (ISS).
- **The International Space Station (ISS)** is a large space station assembled and maintained in low Earth orbit by a collaboration of five space agencies and their contractors: NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada).
- **Key features of the research** - Studying genomic adaptations of drug-resistant pathogens can improve targeted treatments.
- Insights into pathogen persistence in spaces like spacecraft and hospitals can help manage contamination.
- Integrating genomics, metagenomics, and metabolic modeling can study microbial dynamics in various extreme environments.
- **Comprehensive study-** To understand the genomic, functional, and metabolic enhancements observed in multidrug-resistant pathogens with a particular focus on *Enterobacter bugandensis*, a prevalent nosocomial pathogen found on surfaces within the ISS.
- **Enterobacter bugandensis** is a species of bacteria that belongs to the *Enterobacter* genus, which is commonly found in various environments including soil, water, and the gastrointestinal tracts of humans and animals.

## Reference

[Business Standard | Pathogens in Space](#)