



30 Days Revision Module Day 6 - Dec 2020 Current Affairs (UPSC Prelims 2021)

1) Which one of the following statements regarding the Apex Committee for Implementation of Paris Agreement (AIPA) is **not correct**?

- a. It is responsible for reporting Nationally Determined Contributions to the UNFCCC
- b. It will be chaired by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- c. It will act as a national authority for the regulation of carbon markets in India under the Paris Agreement
- d. None of the above

Answer : b

Apex Committee for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement

- The Government of India has constituted the Apex Committee for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement (AIPA).

Composition of AIPA

- The Secretary, Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) will be the chairperson and the additional secretary, MoEFCC will be the vice chairperson of the committee.

Functions

It has been constituted with the purpose of ensuring:

1. a coordinated response on climate change matters that protects the country's interests
 2. India is on track towards meeting its climate change obligations under the Paris Agreement including its submitted NDCs.
- The AIPA has the responsibility of regularly communicating and reporting the NDCs to the UNFCCC.
 - It will also define the responsibilities of the government ministries that would be crucial in achieving the country's climate change mitigation and adaptation goals and submit a report every six months.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

- They are the accounts of the voluntary efforts to be made by countries that are a part of the Paris Agreement, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of anthropogenic climate change.
- The three quantitative goals in the Indian NDCs are:
 1. A 33-35 per cent reduction in the gross domestic product emissions intensity by 2030 from 2005 levels

2. A 40 per cent share of non-fossil fuel based electricity by 2030
 3. Creating a carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide through afforestation programmes
- Apart from these, there are five other non-quantitative goals in the Indian NDCs.
 - The NDCs are to be implemented in the post-2020 period.
 - India had submitted its NDCs in 2015.
 - Now, the AIPA, with its 17 members, has the responsibility of formulating policies and programmes for implementing them.

2) Phytoid Technology, sometimes seen in the news recently, is associated with which of the following?

- a. Biological Weathering
- b. Waste water treatment
- c. Air purification using plants
- d. Construction of Eco bridges in forest areas

Answer : b

- Union Government has launched the eco-friendly and efficient Phytoid Technology Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (NCL)-Pune, developed by CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur and CSIR-NCL.

Phytoid Technology

- It is a subsurface mixed flow constructed wetland system developed and internationally patented by CSIR-NEERI, Nagpur with successful demonstration in the field for more than 10 years of continuous operation as a stand-alone sewage treatment system.
- Phytoid is a self-sustainable technology for wastewater treatment that works on the principle of natural wetland.
- It uses certain specific plants which can absorb nutrients directly from wastewater but do not require soil.
- These plants act as nutrient sinker and remover.
- Using Phytoid Technology for the treatment of sewage, it is possible to recover and reuse the treated water for gardening purposes.
- CSIR-NCL is the first CSIR laboratory to use NEERI Phytoid water treatment technology.
- Compared to the conventional processes, this natural system based Phytoid Technology for sewage treatment is zero energy and zero operation & maintenance (O&M).

3) Consider the following pairs:

Lunar Missions - Countries

1. ARTEMIS - USA
2. Kaguya - European Union
3. Beresheet - UAE
4. LUNA - Russia

Which of the pair(s) given above is/are correctly matched?

- a. 1 and 3 only
- b. 1, 2 and 4 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3 only
- d. 1 and 4 only

Answer : d

Lunar Missions

- **Beresheet** was Israel's first lunar mission and the first attempt by a private company to land on the Moon.
- It is a collaborative effort of Israeli non-profit SpaceIL, Israel Aerospace Industries and the Israeli Space Agency.
- The Beresheet-2 mission is scheduled to be launched in 2024.
- Kaguya is a Japanese Space Agency (JAXA) lunar orbiter mission.
- The primary objective of the mission is a global survey of the Moon, obtaining data on elemental abundance, mineralogical composition.
- The mission was ended in year 2009.

4) San Isidro Movement, sometimes seen in the news recently, is demanding which of the following?

- Exit from Cuba
- Freedom of Expression
- Equal representation of women in legislature
- None of the above

Answer : b

San Isidro Movement

- In Cuba, a country under an authoritarian communist regime for more than six decades, a campaign by artists and activists demanding greater freedom of expression is fast grabbing the limelight.
- The Movement San Isidro, or the San Isidro Movement (MSI), started two years ago to protest state censorship of artistic works, and has now become a platform for Cuban dissidents both within and outside the Caribbean nation.
- The movement started in September 2018, when the Cuban government sought to enforce Decree 349, a law that would have given powers to the nation's Culture Ministry to restrict cultural activity it did not approve of.

5) Consider the following statements with respect to E20 Fuel

1. It is an automotive fuel with a blend of 20% of ethanol with gasoline.
2. It is capable of reducing vehicular emissions such as carbon dioxide, and hydrocarbons.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : c

E-20 Fuel

- E20 fuel, i.e. blend of 20% of ethanol with gasoline (petrol), as an automotive fuel and for the adoption of mass emission standards for this fuel.
- Ethanol is a biofuel and a common by-product of biomass left by agricultural feedstock such as corn, sugarcane, hemp, potato, etc.
- E20 is an automobile fuel which is capable of reducing vehicular emissions such as carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons, etc.
- It will help reduce the oil import bill, thereby saving foreign exchange and boosting energy security.
- It added the compatibility of vehicles with the percentage of ethanol in the blend would be defined by the vehicle manufacturer, which would have to be displayed on the vehicle with a

sticker.

6) Consider the following statements with respect to Monpa Handmade Paper

1. It is a 1000-year old heritage art native to Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.
2. The paper is used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns in monasteries.
3. The paper will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer : d

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) have commissioned a Monpa handmade paper making unit in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.
- It not only aims at reviving the art but also engaging the local youths with this art professionally and earn.

Monpa Handmade Paper

- The art of making Monpa handmade paper originated over 1000 years ago.
- The art is an integral part of local custom and culture in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The fine-textured handmade paper is also called as Mon Shugu in the local dialect.
- The paper has great historic and religious significance as it is the paper used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns in monasteries.
- The Monpa handmade paper will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng, which has medicinal values too. Hence availability of raw material will not be a problem.
- Back then, such was the scale of production that Monpas used to sell these papers to countries like Tibet, Bhutan, Thailand and Japan as no paper making industry existed in these countries at that time.
- However, the handmade paper industry gradually began declining and the indigenous handmade paper was taken over by inferior Chinese paper.

7) Consider the following statements about Pink Phenomenon

1. This phenomenon is caused by a submerged perennial aquatic plant forked fanwort called Cabomba plant.
2. Cabomba is an invasive species that belongs to Central and South America.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : c

Pink Phenomenon

- In Avalapandi, a village in Kerala, an aquatic plant forked fanwort has painted the water bodies pink, which led to the pink phenomenon.
- This plant comes from the family of Red Cabomba (Cabomba furcata).

- Cabomba is a submerged perennial aquatic plant that grows in stagnant to slow-flowing freshwater.
- It is an invasive species that belongs to Central and South America.
- It requires a huge amount of oxygen to grow and that could badly affect freshwater biodiversity.
- It has a high natural dispersal potential due to its ability to readily fragment and spread.

8) Consider the following statements about Himalayan Griffon Vulture

1. These are migratory bird species that originate from Himalayan Chain and Plateau of Tibet.
2. These species are usually found in the high-altitude regions.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are **not correct**?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : d

Himalayan Griffon Vulture

- It is a migratory bird species native to Himalayas, has been spotted in Point Calimere wildlife sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.
- It is usually found in the high-altitude regions.
- Their originate from Himalayan Chain and Plateau of Tibet.
- The IUCN status of the bird is near threatened.
- It is listed in Appendix II of the CITES.

9) In the context of Emission gap report of United Nations Environment Programme, arrange the following countries/groupings on the basis of Carbon-di-oxide emissions in descending order.

1. China
2. United States of America,
3. European Union and United Kingdom
4. India

Select the correct code

- a. 3-2-4-1
- b. 3-4-2-1
- c. 1-3-2-4
- d. 1-2-3-4

Answer : d

10) Consider the following statements about Currency Manipulation

1. The label 'currency manipulator' is given by the European Union to countries it feels are engaging in unfair currency practices.
2. Currency Manipulation is done by a country to artificially lower its currency's value to gain an unfair advantage over others.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : b

Currency Manipulator

- The term 'currency manipulator' is a label given by the **US government** to countries it feels are engaging in "unfair currency practices" by deliberately devaluing their currency against the dollar.
- The practice would mean that the country in question is artificially lowering the value of its currency to gain an unfair advantage over others.
- An economy meeting two of the three criteria in the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 is placed on the Monitoring List.
- The three criteria are:
 1. A significant bilateral trade surplus with the US — one that is at least \$20 billion over a 12-month period.
 2. A material current account surplus equivalent to at least 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) over a 12-month period.
 3. Persistent, one-sided intervention — when net purchases of foreign currency totalling at least 2 percent of the country's GDP over a 12 month period are conducted repeatedly, in at least six out of 12 months.

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