



Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed.

- Mahatma Gandhi



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## A. GS 1 Related

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## B. GS 2 Related

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## C. GS 3 Related

**Category: ENVIRONMENT**

### 1. COP-15 summit adopts historic biodiversity deal

*Syllabus: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation*

*Prelims: UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and Kunming-Montreal Agreement*

*Mains: Critical evaluation of the Kunming-Montreal Agreement*

#### Context

The 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the [UN Convention on Biological Diversity \(UNCBD\)](#) being held in Montreal, Canada adopted the Kunming-Montreal Agreement.

#### Kunming-Montreal Agreement

- The Kunming-Montreal agreement contains 23 targets that countries across the world must achieve by 2030.
- The China-brokered deal aims to protect and reverse dangerous loss to global biodiversity as well as safeguard the lands, oceans and species from pollution, degradation and climate change.
- The deal is regarded by several experts as a landmark plan to restrict global warming to 1.5°C under the [Paris Agreement](#).

#### Key targets set by the Kunming-Montreal Agreement

## 'Peace pact with nature'

The Kunming-Montreal pact is hailed as a landmark to protect biodiversity. Here are a few points:

### '30 by 30'

The cornerstone of the agreement is the so-called 30 by 30 goal — a pledge to protect 30% of the world's land and seas by 2030

### Indigenous rights

Indigenous rights were addressed throughout the text, including in areas covered by the 30 by 30 pledge — safeguarding Indigenous peoples' right to remain stewards of land they use and ensuring they are not subject to mass evictions

### Finance

The text approves the objective for rich countries to provide "at least \$20 billion per year by 2025, and ... at least \$30 billion per year by 2030", approximately double and then triple the current international aid for biodiversity. Also it creates a "trust fund" within an existing financial mechanism called the Global Environment Facility, as a stepping stone to a new fund in the future



**Adopted:** China's Minister Huang Runqiu passes the deal in Montreal on Monday. REUTERS

Image Source: The Hindu

- **"30 by 30 goal":** This goal is said to be the most important target set by the agreement which aims to protect 30% of Earth's lands, oceans, coastal areas, and inland waters by 2030.
- **Finance:** Mobilize a minimum of \$200 billion/year in domestic and international biodiversity-related funding from all sources including public and private by 2030.
  - Increased financial flows from developed to developing and least developed countries to at least \$20 billion/year by 2025 and to at least \$30 billion/year by 2030.
- **Indigenous rights:** The deal in its statement has made reference to indigenous peoples and local communities multiple times and talks about respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge.
- **Conservation of critical ecosystems:** The agreement aims to reduce to near zero the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance and ecosystems of high ecological integrity.
- **Responsibilities to big companies:** The deal mandates large and multinational companies to monitor, assess and disclose the risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity due to their operations.
- **Harmful subsidies:** The agreement talks about phasing out or reforming the subsidies that affect biodiversity by at least \$500 billion/year by 2030 and ramping up positive incentives for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
- **Invasive species:** Prevent the introduction of [invasive alien species](#), and reduce by at least half the introduction of other potential invasive alien species.
- **Hazardous chemicals:** One of the key targets of the deal is to reduce excess nutrients and the risk posed by pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least 50%.

### Arguments in favour of the agreement

- The Union Environment Minister of India said that the agreement was largely positive with respect to India and said that the goals set by such agreements must be ambitious, as well as realistic and practical.
- The Environment Minister of Canada also said that the world has made tremendous progress by agreeing on a deal that aims to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, work towards restoration, and reduce the use of pesticides.
- A Minister representing France also called it a historical deal and it contains very precise and quantified objectives.
- The [United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\)](#) has also welcomed the agreement by saying that the agreement will help the world hope for real progress to halt and mitigate biodiversity loss.

### Arguments against the agreement

- Extending the finance package to help support conservation efforts globally was one of the most contentious issues as several developing countries wanted the creation of a new fund for biodiversity.
  - Congo opposed the deal when it was about to be passed as the deal failed to set up a special biodiversity fund that would provide developing countries with \$100 billion by 2030.
- Further, various wildlife conservation societies and other environmental experts feel that the timeline is not ambitious enough and have raised concerns that the agreement puts off the goals of preventing the extinction of species and preserving ecosystems until 2050.
- A few experts also believe that the agreement should have included stringent provisions on harmful subsidies that make food and fuel cheap in several countries.
- Critics also opine that the agreement has failed to advance beyond the targets that were set 10 years ago in terms of mitigating biodiversity loss in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and infrastructure.

***Nut graf:** With several reports such as the Living Planet Report (LPR) 2022 indicating that the wildlife populations across the world have experienced a devastating drop since the 1970s, the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Agreement is considered a historical and landmark effort to protect biodiversity.*

## 2. What are carbon markets and how do they operate?

*Syllabus: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation*

*Mains: Key details about the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022 and carbon markets*

## Context

Despite the opposition and demands for scrutiny by a parliamentary committee, the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022 was passed in Parliament.

## Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022

- The Bill seeks to amend the [Energy Conservation Act, 2001](#).
- The Bill aims to:
  - Increase the scope of the Energy Conservation Building Code.
  - Make changes to the penalty provisions.
  - Increase the number of members in the Governing Council of the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.
  - Empower the State Electricity Regulatory Commissions to make regulations for the smooth discharge of its functions.
- Further, the amendment bill empowers the government to set up carbon markets in India and specify a carbon credit trading scheme.
  - As per the Bill, the Union Government or any authorised agency will be empowered to issue carbon credit certificates that would be tradeable in nature.

## What are carbon markets?

- According to **Article 6 of the Paris Agreement** countries can make use of international carbon markets to fulfil their [Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDC\)](#) that help mitigate global warming under 2°C.
- Carbon markets are basically the key platforms that help put a price on carbon emissions by establishing trading systems where carbon credits can be traded i.e. bought and sold.
  - A carbon credit is nothing but a tradable permit that, according to UN standards, is equal to one tonne of carbon dioxide reduced or sequestered from the atmosphere. Carbon credits are created by various activities which reduce carbon dioxide from the air, such as afforestation.
- Carbon markets are mainly categorised into two types namely:
  - **Voluntary markets:** These markets are those in which emitters such as corporations, private individuals, and others buy carbon credits to offset the emission of one tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> or equivalent greenhouse gas.
    - In such markets, an emitter compensates for its unavoidable emissions by buying carbon credits from another entity that has engaged itself in projects that reduce emissions.

- **Compliance markets:** These markets on the other hand are established by policies at the national, regional, or international levels and are officially regulated.
- According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the interest in carbon markets is increasing across the world as about 83% of NDCs submitted by countries talk about their intent of utilising the international market mechanisms to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### Key challenges to carbon markets

- The UNDP has highlighted serious concerns pertaining to carbon markets which include:
  - Double counting of greenhouse gas reductions
  - Lack of quality of climate projects that generate credits
  - Lack of authenticity and transparency with respect to the climate projects
- Additionally, there have been concerns about “[Greenwashing](#)” wherein entities may buy credits, simply offsetting [carbon footprints](#) instead of reducing their overall emissions.

### Concerns regarding the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022

- The Opposition members have raised concerns that the Bill fails to provide clarity on the mechanism used for the trading of carbon credit certificates.
- Critics have also raised questions about the Power Ministry formulating such legislation instead of the Environment Ministry as done in other countries.
- Further, the Bill does not specify whether certificates under already existing schemes such as Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) and Energy Savings Certificates (ESCs) would also be tradeable with carbon credit certificates.

Read more about the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill in the following article:

[Sansad TV Perspective: The Energy Conservation \(Amendment\) Bill, 2022](#)

*Nut graf:* As the Parliament passed the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, the debate on the carbon markets has come into the limelight as experts believe that the lack of clarity on the regulation and implementation of the carbon credit system would act as key impediments to the objectives of the Bill.

D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

E. Editorials

Category: INDIAN ECONOMY

## 1. The cost to the country just for savings in CTC

*Syllabus: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development, and employment*

*Mains: Significance and Issues of contractual labours.*

*Prelims: Contract workers and associated trends.*

### Background Details:

- As per the [Periodic Labour Force Survey \(PLFS\) 2021](#), India has about 100 million casual workers and 50 million salaried workers without a written job contract. This amounts to about 150 million contract workers or around 30% of the total labour force in the country.
- The overall share of contract employment in industrial employment expanded from 24% in 2004 to 38% in 2017, as highlighted by the Annual Survey of Industries. These non-payroll contract workers are technicians, drivers, housekeeping staff in offices/commercial complexes, or simply unskilled labour in factories.
- As outsourcing increased, many manpower supplier firms sprouted in the country.
- Even the public sector enterprises outsourced many vacancies post-2001. The Public Enterprises Survey 2021 showed that the share of casual/contract workers in public sector units (PSUs) gradually increased from 17.1% in 2011-12, 19% in 2015-16 to nearly 37.2% in 2020-21.
- There were approximately 4,81,395 contractual workers in central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in 2021 whereas, in 2011, it was around 2,68,815. This indicates the conversion of many permanent jobs into contractual work.

### Significance of Contractual Jobs:

- The cost to the company (CTC) is relatively lower for contract employment when compared to permanent employment.
- The reduced CTC improves profits for India Inc. It also attracts foreign investment, thereby benefitting the economy.
- It should be noted that there are five human resource costs namely hiring costs, induction costs, career progression costs, severance, and superannuation costs. Hiring cost for the public sector is very high due to the scale of conducting the examination. This makes hiring through manpower suppliers both cost and time efficient.
- Furthermore, as contract labour requires minimal training, CTC is further reduced.
- Contract labours are not entitled to generous paid leave like permanent employees, thus making it more attractive for the management to hire them.

- Moreover, there is no commitment to promotion or post-retirement benefits for contractual workers.
- The flexibility of firing contractual workers is considered to be positively impacting labour productivity.

**For more information on the labour sector in India, read here: [Labour Sector in India](#)**

### **Disadvantages of Contractual Labour:**

- The contractors pay less than minimum wages to labour. This implies that a majority of the 150 million contractual workers are underpaid.
- Several platforms and tech companies have devised innovative measures like designating employees as business partners (in the case of online cab booking and food delivery companies) and segmenting core activity as tech business (in the case of most of the service aggregators) to get around the legal provisions of labour acts.
- The overall economy tends to lose on account of reduced consumption and saving due to low wages.
- Due to low investment in the skilling and upskilling of contractual workers, the overall productivity of the economy is impacted.
- Furthermore, cost cuts in hiring and training result in a deterioration of service quality, which causes second-order losses, and sometimes accidents. Poor quality of the product and services impacts the export competitiveness of the economy.
- As underpaid workers cannot afford quality health care for themselves and their families, the country's overall human capital declines.
  - It was observed in a study by The Lancet that an annual increase in outsourced spending of 1% in the National Health Service in England is associated with a rise in treatable mortality of 0.38%.
- The exploitative nature of contract employment has a detrimental distributional impact which suppresses the wages of permanent employees also.

**For more information on Gig and Platform workers, read here: [Gig and Platform Workers](#)**

### **Conclusion:**

Substituting permanent jobs with contract employment impacts the country's economy as millions of workers are underpaid and vulnerable to health hazards.

- The public sector should instead focus on reforming its appraisal mechanism to reward the efficiency of permanent workers.
- And the private sector should realize that outsourcing's cost to the country is much more than the cost to the company in the long run.



Also read: [Labour Reforms - Labour Codes Explained](#)

*Nut Graf: Outsourcing vacancies in employment appears to be beneficial for both the public and private sectors, but it impacts the quality of service, productivity of labour, and overall economy of the country in the long run. Thus, the appraisal and hiring mechanism should be reformed in both the public and private sectors.*

**Category: SOCIAL JUSTICE**

## 1. Criminalising consensual relationships

*Syllabus: Issues related to children.*

*Mains: POCSO Act and its misuse.*

*Prelims: POCSO Act.*

**Details:**

- India has the largest share of the adolescent population in the world.
- The [National Family Health Surveys](#) showed that a significant proportion of Indian teenagers are sexually active.

**POCSO and its Misuse:**

- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act aims to protect children below 18 years from sexual abuse.
- However, it is argued that it has been misused by parents of adolescent girls to curtail sexual expression and “safeguard family honour.”
- It is also said that [POCSO](#) has the unintended effect that includes criminal prosecution and the deprivation of liberty of young people in consensual relationships. The criminal investigation, trial, and simultaneous inquiry adversely impact the adolescents’ development, education, employment, self-esteem, social reputation, and family life.
- Adolescent boys are by default considered children in conflict with the law and can even be tried as adults. Furthermore, the long-term consequences of a conviction for statutory rape are incarceration and inclusion in the sex offenders registry.
- However, adolescent girls are treated as “victims” and are rendered voiceless.
- As per an analysis by Enfold Proactive Health Trust, ‘romantic cases’ (where the relationship was consensual, according to the girls, their family members, or the court) constituted around

24.3% of the total cases registered and disposed of under the POCSO Act from 2016 to 2020 by special courts in Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal.

- A blanket criminalization of consensual sexual acts is in gross oversight of sexual development, bodily integrity, and autonomy. It further violates adolescents' [right to life](#), privacy, and dignity.
- The penal provisions also hamper their right to barrier-free access to sexual and reproductive health services and information recognized under the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram.
- The fear of the partner being reported to the police deters girls from availing of medical services and forces them towards unsafe abortions.
- The inclusion of consensual and non-exploitative acts detracts from the objective of the POCSO Act and diverts time and resources from the investigation and trial of actual cases of sexual violence and exploitation.
  - It was found the average time between the lodging of the FIR and the disposal of such romantic cases was 1.4 years in Assam and 2.3 years each in Maharashtra and West Bengal.
  - There were also high acquittal rates in such romantic cases (93.8%).
  - In 81.5% of the cases, the girl refused to say anything incriminating against the accused.
  - Moreover, in 46.5% of the cases, the victims were married to the accused. The acquittal rate in these cases was 98.1% as courts did not wish to disturb the marital life of the couple.
- Approximately 92.6% of cases under the POCSO Act were pending disposal in 2021, as highlighted by Crime in India. Consensual cases are thus overburdening the criminal justice system.
- Several High Courts have recognized that adolescent relationships are normal and criminalization of such acts affects both parties. For example, Madras High Court in *Vijayalakshmi v. State Rep.* (2021).
- The [United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#) in General Comment No. 20 urged states to balance the protection of children from sexual exploitation and abuse with respect for their evolving autonomy.
- In 2019, it further asked states to remove status offences, which criminalize adolescents who engage in consensual sexual acts with one another.

### Way Ahead:

- Comprehensive sex education should be provided to bridge knowledge gaps and build positive skills and attitudes to enable adolescents to make informed decisions and realize the importance of their health and dignity.
- Appropriate knowledge and skills should also be imparted to vulnerable groups like children with disabilities or those out of school.
- An amendment to the POCSO Act and the [Indian Penal Code](#) that decriminalizes consensual acts involving adolescents above 16 years should also be considered. However, it should also be ensured that those in the age bracket of 16-18 are protected against non-consensual acts.

- Furthermore, a provision recognizing the criminalization of acts that involve consent under fear of death or hurt, intoxication, or if the accused is in a position of authority should be incorporated.
- Till the time such amendments are made law enforcement agencies, child welfare committees and juvenile justice boards may exercise their discretion in the best interest of children.

**Also read:** [The POCSO \(Amendment\) Act, 2019](#)

***Nut Graf:** The criminalization provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act are often misused against consensual sexual acts among adolescents. This is not only against their fundamental rights but also impacts their overall development. The law can be amended to accommodate such instances and ensure an individual's bodily integrity and autonomy.*

**Category: GOVERNANCE**

### **1. Bihar's prohibition policy is not working**

***Syllabus:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.*

***Mains:** Law against the consumption of alcohol in Bihar and various issues and concerns associated with it.*

**Context:** Hooch tragedy in Bihar.

**Details:**

- The latest hooch (illicit liquor) tragedy in Bihar has resulted in over 38 deaths with several people losing their vision and becoming critically ill.
- The Bihar Prohibition and Excise (Amendment) Act was implemented in 2016. However, it is accused that despite the Act, liquor is easily available in the State and can even be delivered at home at a premium cost.
- Furthermore, the poor are forced to rely on country-made liquor, which has often proved fatal for them. For instance, almost 200 people have died in several incidents across the state since 2016.
- In the span of 6 years (2016-2022), nearly 4 lakh cases in violation of the act have been registered by the State Police and Excise Department, and around 4.5 lakh people have been arrested. However, only 1,300 people (less than 1%) have been convicted. The rest were let off because of the “lack of corroborative evidence”.

**CASE STUDY:**

In August 2016, 19 people died after consuming illicit liquor in the Khajurbanni locality of the Gopalganj district. The lower court of Gopalganj convicted all the 13 people accused in the case. But in July 2022, the Patna High Court acquitted all of them citing that “they could not pass the parameters of fair trial envisaged in the laws of the land”. The State government has challenged the judgment in the Supreme Court.

**Consequences of the Prohibition:**

- According to Government records, over 2 crore litres of liquor, including nearly 80,000 litres of country-made liquor, have been seized in about 74,000 raids conducted by enforcement agencies since April 2016 in Bihar.
- Alarmed by the amount of seizure, the law was amended thrice to dilute several provisions like community fines, etc.
- Huge amounts of illegal liquor are brought in through neighbouring States of Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and West Bengal and seized by enforcement agencies. This has resulted in the overcrowding of prisons with traders and consumers of alcohol.
- In December 2021, the then [Chief Justice of India](#), Justice N.V. Ramana, raised concern about the “lack of foresight” of the law which has led to the “clogging of courts in the State”.
- The Patna High Court in October 2022 also highlighted that prohibition has led to a new drug culture in the State.
- Several parties in the State Assembly have admitted (privately) that the law has failed due to poor implementation.

**Government’s Stand:**

- The state government is determined to continue with the prohibition policy. Critics point to the following reasons for this continuation:
  - A caste-neutral vote bank of women as they suffer the most due to the drinking habit of the male members of their families.
  - To hold on to an issue that could help in political ambitions at the national level politics.
  - The rollback of the policy is also viewed as a sign of weakness and failure.

**Also read:** [UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis. July 30th, 2022](#)

***Nut Graf:** It should be noted that the most impacted section due to the liquor prohibition policy of Bihar is the poor strata of the society. The extent of seizure of illicit liquor, the rising deaths due to consumption of hooch, and poor conviction rates point to the fact that the policy requires a review.*

**Category:** ENVIRONMENT

## 1. A planet in crisis

*Syllabus: International agreement for Biodiversity conservation.*

*Mains: Convention on Biodiversity COP 15.*

*Prelims: Convention on Biodiversity COP 15.*

**Context:** CBD COP 15 is being held in Montreal, Canada.

### Details:

- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) traces its origin to the Rio summit of 1992.
- It is argued that the CBD does not grab the media attention like [UNFCCC COP27](#) as no world leader and head of state made any significant commitments.
- This is also because the CBD largely continues to be framed as an ‘environmentalist’ concern, unlike the COP which was used by the forces of capitalism to put forth the idea of renewable energy sources that has the potential to benefit some entrepreneurs.
- Furthermore, cyclones and melting [glaciers](#) make the climate crisis visible. However, biodiversity loss continues to be largely invisible.
- Member countries have agreed to prepare concrete road maps by the year 2024 and the richer countries have committed \$30 billion an annum by 2030.

### Status of Biodiversity:

- According to a study by the [United Nations](#), it is estimated that nearly 34,000 plant and 5,200 animal species, including one in eight of the world’s bird species, face the risk of extinction.
- Similarly, over 30% of breeds of main farm animal species are at high risk of extinction.
- Around 45% of the planet’s original forests are already cleared.

### India’s Stand:

- It is suggested by several critics that India is not willing to reduce the use of pesticides, despite its impact on biodiversity, land, and sea.
- This seems to be anachronistic to many especially when India is considered to be a champion of conservation and living in harmony with nature.
- India has argued that different countries have different levels of responsibility towards biodiversity conservation (which requires richer nations to be more generous funders of global conservation efforts).

Also read: [UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis. Dec 19th, 2022](#)

*Nut Graf: The Convention on Biodiversity COP15 has not received much attention and importance. Even the commitments and contributions are not up to the mark. The significance of biodiversity should be adequately publicized and efforts should be made to conserve it.*

## F. Prelims Facts

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## G. Tidbits

### 1. 80% decline in insurgency-related violence in northeast: Minister

- The Information and Broadcasting Minister said that the consistent efforts by the Union government have led to a significant reduction of violence in Jammu and Kashmir and insurgency-related violence in the northeastern States of India.
- The collective effect of measures such as the strengthening of the [Unlawful Activities Prevention Act \(UAPA\)](#) and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) have weakened the ecosystem of terrorism, said the Minister.
- The Minister further added that the [Armed Forces Special Powers Act \(AFSPA\)](#) too has been revoked from large parts of the northeast, including the whole of Tripura and Meghalaya.
- According to the Minister, an era of peace has begun in the northeastern region as insurgency-related violence has witnessed a sharp decline and civilian deaths have dropped by about 89%.

### 2. Ban imposed by coastal States on purse seine fishing not justified, Centre tells SC

- The Union government has told the Supreme Court that a ban imposed by certain coastal States and Union Territories such as Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Odisha, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands on purse seine fishing is not justified.
- Purse seine fishing is a mode of fishing that involves the use of a wide net to draw in not only the targeted fish but also endangered species such as turtles.
- The Fisheries Department of the Union government has recommended the lifting of the ban on purse seine fishing based on a report submitted by an expert committee which has noted that this mode of fishing has not caused any serious resource depletion according to the available evidence.

- The committee also recommended that the purse seiners can be allowed to fish in territorial waters and the Indian [Exclusive Economic Zone \(EEZ\)](#) which can be subjected to certain conditions.

### 3. Finland pitches for Indian nurses, tech workers amid labour crunch

- Amidst a massive skilled labour shortage, Finland's government is planning to double the number of work immigrants entering the country and triple international student placements by 2030.
- The Minister of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland has signed a “joint declaration of intent on migration and mobility” with the Minister of State for External Affairs of India during her visit to India.
  - The joint declaration is expected to facilitate the mobility of students, academics, researchers, business people and professionals and to address the issues of irregular migration.
  - India has also signed similar agreements with Germany and the U.K. in the recent past.
- The Finnish Minister said that Finland hopes to attract workers in the technology and information and communications technology (ICT) sectors and also nurses from India.
- The interest in Indian skilled manpower has come at a time when Europe is witnessing a massive labour crunch as businesses recover from COVID-19 losses and the border lockdowns enforcements.
- Finland is a country with a population of around 5.5 million but has only about 2.5 million in the workforce, and is further experiencing an increasing rate of retirement.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

**Q1. India is a signatory to how many of these international treaties and conventions that aim to combat the menace of Drug Abuse: (Level - Difficult)**

1. United Nations (UN) Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
2. United Nations (UN) Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971)
3. United Nations (UN) Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)
4. United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) (2000)

**Options:**

- a. One only
- b. Two only

- c. Three only
- d. All four

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- India is a signatory to:
  - UN Single Convention on Narcotics Drugs 1961
  - Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971
  - Convention on Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988
  - United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), 2000

**Q2. SRIJAN Portal was launched to: (Level - Medium)**

- a. Partner with the private sector in indigenisation efforts of Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).
- b. Map the skills of workers vis-a-vis requirements of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and other industries across India.
- c. Providing a platform for tribal artisans and gatherers to put up their masterpieces and produce for sale.
- d. Provide a single window for submitting the application, processing, and issuing of export authorisation by the Department of Defence Production.

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- SRIJAN is the Ministry of Defence's portal which acts as a one-stop-shop online portal that provides access to the vendors to take up items that can be taken up for indigenization.
- SRIJAN Portal was launched to partner with the private sector in the indigenisation efforts of Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).

**Q3. Which of the following statements best describes the term 'greenwashing' often seen in the news? (Level - Medium)**

- a. Utilizing environmentally friendly, recycled-materials-based packaging for goods.
- b. Reserving a part of the profits into carbon-offset projects or renewable energy.
- c. Making unfounded claims that lead consumers into believing that a company's products are more environmentally friendly.
- d. Implementing sustainable business methods that are environment friendly.



**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- Greenwashing is an act by a country or a company projecting its efforts or its products as climate-friendly without any verifiable and justifiable data to support its claim.
- Greenwashing refers to making unfounded claims that lead consumers into believing that a company's products are more environmentally friendly.

**Q4. How many of the given statements is/are incorrect? (Level - Difficult)**

1. Alcohol is a subject in the State list under the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
2. Article 47 directs the states to make efforts to bring about the prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs which are injurious to health.
3. Article 47 was added to the Indian Constitution through the 42nd Constitutional Amendment, 1976.

**Options:**

- a. One statement only
- b. Two statements only
- c. All three statements
- d. None of the above

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct**, As per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, alcohol is a State Subject.
  - The State Legislatures have the right and responsibility to draft laws regarding alcohol, including the production, possession, transport, purchase and sale of intoxicating liquors.
- **Statement 2 is correct**, Article 47 which is part of the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) directs the states to make efforts to bring about the prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs which are injurious to health except for medicinal purposes.
- **Statement 3 is not correct**, The 42nd Amendment Act, 1976 added four new Directive Principles to the list namely:
  - **Article 39:** To secure opportunities for the healthy development of children
  - **Article 39A:** To promote equal justice and to provide free legal aid to the poor
  - **Article 43A:** To take steps to secure the participation of workers in the management of industries

- **Article 48A:** To protect and improve the environment and to safeguard forests and wildlife

**Q5. Which one of the following is the best description of 'INS Astradharini', that was in the news recently? (Level - Difficult)**

- a. Amphibious warfare ship
- b. Nuclear-powered submarine
- c. Torpedo launch and recovery vessel
- d. Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- INS Astradharini is India's first totally indigenously designed and built torpedo launch and recovery vessel.
- The 50-metre twin-hulled Astradharini warship is also the first to be built in a private yard with armament fixtures.
- The design of the Astradharini was a collaborative effort of the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Shoft Shipyard and IIT Kharagpur.

### I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Explain how the Kunming-Montreal biodiversity agreement provides a good foundation for global action on biodiversity, complementing the Paris Agreement for Climate. (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS III - Environment and Ecology)
2. The blanket criminalisation of consensual sexual acts among or with adolescents is in gross oversight of their sexual development and bodily integrity and autonomy. Do you agree? Substantiate. (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS II - Polity and Governance)