

COP-27: PAYBACK TIME FOR RICH NATIONS

Context

- The article put emphasis that the window of opportunity to restrict global warming to 1.5 degrees seems to be closing rapidly and analyses the prospects and feasibility to limit carbon emissions to 45% by 2030 and touch net zero by 2050 to avert the risk of catastrophe.

About COP 27 Summit 2022

- **Depiction:** The United Nations Climate Change Conference 2022, COP27 was held recently in Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt.
 - COP27 marks 30 years since the adoption of the UNFCCC (entered into force in 1994)
- **Aim:** It builds on the outcomes of COP26 to deliver action on an array of issues critical to tackling the climate emergency.
- **Agenda:** COP27 seeks renewed solidarity between countries, to deliver on the landmark **Paris Agreement** adopted in 2015, for people and the planet.
 - It included the issue of 'loss & damage' in its formal main agenda for the first time ever.
- **Significance:** Developing countries, including India, will push rich countries to agree to a new global climate finance target, also known as the **new collective quantified goal on climate finance (NCQG)** to bear the costs of addressing and adapting to climate change.

Global warming overview

- **Caution:** The IPCC at the ongoing COP 27 has made it clear that climate catastrophe is unfolding. Global warming has already touched 1.1 degrees Celsius and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severe.
- **Limited outcomes of support:** The current commitments and policies of different nations will lead to a temperature rise of 2.8 degrees by the end of this century.
- **Gripping worry:** The energy crisis in Europe, with gas prices having risen manifold, has made the economic case for faster movement towards renewables more compelling.

- **Major emitters making decisive difference:** The G-20 countries account for over 70 per cent of global carbon emissions.
 - Actions of these nations would determine the fate of humankind and their rapid decarbonisation would make the major shift.
- **Prime emitters:** US have 14.6 metric tonnes carbon emissions per capita. **China** is next at 8.4 tonnes per capita while Europe is at 6.8 tonnes per capita.
 - China, which is the world's biggest emitter for over 15 years now, has contributed about 11 per cent to total emissions since 1850.
 - Russia, Canada, Japan, and Australia included, the combined contribution greenhouse gas emissions go past 65 per cent, or almost two-thirds of all emissions.
 - India, currently the third largest emitter, accounts for only 3 per cent of historical emissions
- **India's exemplary commitments:** India at COP26 announced that by 2030, the country would create 500GW of fossil fuel-free generation capacity and meet half of our energy needs from renewables.
- **Limited promises:** In 2009, developed countries agreed to provide US\$ 100 billion every year from 2020 to help developing nations fight climate change. However, they are struggling to fulfill this promise.
 - The **Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM)** for Loss and Damages, set up in 2013, was the first formal acknowledgment of the need to compensate developing countries struck by climate disasters.

CONTENT IN NATIONAL INTEREST: WHAT NEW TV BROADCAST GUIDELINES

SAY

In News:

- The Centre has approved new guidelines under which it has become obligatory for channels to telecast content of national interest and public importance.

News Summary

- Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved the ‘Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite Television Channels in India, 2022’.
- The new guidelines have been amended after a gap of 11 years.
- Also, a number of steps have been taken for ease of doing business, as there are more than 890 channels operating in the country now.

Key highlights of the new guidelines

- **Obligation for TV channels**

- All TV channels in India, including private channels, are required to broadcast at least 30 minutes of content daily on themes of national importance and of social relevance.
- The Ministry will soon issue a specific advisory on the date it comes into effect, and on the time slots for the telecast of this content.

- **8 Themes of national importance and of social relevance**

- education and spread of literacy;
- agriculture and rural development;
- health and family welfare;
- science and technology;
- welfare of women;
- welfare of the weaker sections of the society;
- protection of environment and of cultural heritage; and
- national integration.

- **Exemptions given**

- The condition applies to all channels, except where it may not be feasible, such as in the case of sports channels, wildlife channels, foreign channels etc.

- **On Uplinking and downlinking**

- Uplinking and downlinking shall be subject to clearance and approval by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and wherever considered necessary, of other authorities.
- The policy mandates that channels uplinking in frequency bands other than C-band must encrypt their signals.

- Broadcast companies will be allowed to uplink foreign channels from Indian teleports.
- **Other aspects**
- The new guidelines allow a news agency to get permission for five years instead of the current one year.
- The penalty clauses have been rationalised, and separate sets of penalties have been proposed for different types of contraventions as against the uniform penalty that is applicable currently.
- **Compliance mechanism**
- The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will monitor the channels for the broadcast of this content.
- In case non-compliance is observed in the Ministry's view, an explanation will be sought.
- If a channel continues to be non-compliant, more steps can be taken based on specific advisories that will be issued from time to time, and on a case-to-case basis.

Rationale behind the new guidelines

- The government has argued that since airwaves/ frequencies are public property they need to be used in the best interest of the society.
- However, analysts criticize this move by saying the, while airwaves may be public property, broadcasters had paid hefty fees for their use.
- Any binding guidelines that adversely impact their commercial interests may not, therefore, be fair.

WALONG MELA

Indian Army recently organised Walong Mela in continuation of Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Battle of Walong.



About:

- It aims to commemorate the unsurpassable bravery & sacrifice of the Indian Army while defending the Indian Territory against the Chinese aggression of 1962.

- The aim of the Mela was to familiarise the public with the Indian Army & to encourage a sense of belongingness & togetherness.

Battle of Walong:

- Walong is one of India's easternmost villages in Arunachal Pradesh.
- In the 1962 India-China War, the Indian Army defended against China in all sectors except one — Arunachal Pradesh's Walong.
- The Battle of Walong was the only counterattack India could manage in the war.
- Indian Army held back the Chinese troops for 27 days, which forced the Chinese to deploy its reserve division from Tawang to Walong.

VEERANGANA SEWA KENDRA

Indian Army has recently launched a single window facility - Veerangana Sewa Kendra (VSK) for welfare and grievances redressal of Veer Naris.



About:

- The system caters to registering grievances with tracking, monitoring, and regular feedback to the applicant.
- Veernaris / Next of Kin will have multiple means for approaching the VSK through telephone, SMS, WhatsApp, Post, e-mail and walk-ins to seek assistance.
- Stakeholders can monitor the status of grievances through Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software.
- The facility has been launched as Veer naris are employed as VSK staff to maintain inherent connection and empathy with the beneficiaries.
- The VSK is one of its kind initiatives by the Indian Army towards extending genuine care and support to its widows and veer naris and NoKs.

- Veerangana Sewa Kendra (VSK) will be available as a service to the Indian Army Veterans Portal indianarmyveterans.gov.in.
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MILLET

The Central government has recently formulated an action plan to promote exports of millet. The government has planned to facilitate participation of exporters, farmers, and traders in 16 international trade expos and Buyer Seller Meet for exports and promotion of Indian millets across the globe.



About:

- According to the action plan, Indian missions abroad would be roped in branding and publicity of Indian millets.
- This include, identification of potential buyers such as departmental stores, supermarkets, and hypermarkets for organizing business-to-business meetings and direct tie-ups.
- As part of the promotion of Indian millets, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority has planned to showcase millets and its value-added product on various global platforms.

International Year of Millets:

- The United Nations has declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
- India is one of the leading producers of millet in the world with an estimated share of around 41 percent in global production.
- The country recorded 27 percent growth in millet production in 2021-22 which stood at 15.92 million metric tonnes.
- The country's top five millet-producing states are **Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh.**
- It is estimated that the millets market is set to grow to 12 billion US dollars by 2025 from the current 9 billion dollars.

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION'S (UGC) NEW REGULATIONS ON PHD (DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY) DEGREES

The University Grants Commission (UGC) announced new regulations on PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) degrees recently called "University Grants Commission (Minimum Standards and Procedures for Award of PhD Degree) Regulations, 2022". These rules will replace the rules notified in 2016.



About:

- Under the new rules, UGC has made a series of significant modifications to the eligibility requirements, admissions process, and evaluation methodologies governing doctoral programmes in colleges and universities.

Highlights:

- Students who have completed a **four-year undergraduate** course will be eligible for direct admission to a doctorate programme.
- Candidate should have a minimum of 75 per cent marks in “aggregate or its equivalent grade on a point scale wherever the grading system is followed”.
- In case the candidate does not have 75 per cent marks in a four-year undergraduate program, she has to pursue a one-year master’s programme and score at least 55 per cent.
- The new Rules discontinue the **Phil programme** altogether. However, that will have no bearing on those holding or pursuing M.Phil degrees currently.
- Universities and colleges will be free to admit students through the **NET (National Eligibility Test)/JRF (Junior Research Fellowship) qualification route** as well as entrance exams at the level of the institutions.
- If an individual institution can holds its own entrance tests to admit students, then the candidates need not write the NET or similar exams. The “**entrance test shall consist of 50 per cent research methodology and 50 per cent subject specific**”.

- Where the selection is done by entrance tests conducted by individual universities, a weightage of **70 per cent will be given to performance in the written test, and 30 per cent to the interview.**
- UGC has introduced a new requirement for PhD scholars, irrespective of discipline, to train in teaching / education/ pedagogy/ writing related to their chosen subject during their doctoral period. **They may also be assigned four to six hours per week of teaching/ research assistantship for conducting tutorial or laboratory work and evaluations.**
- It is **no longer required to publish research articles in peer-reviewed publications or present in conferences.**
- Working professionals can now enrol in part-time PhD programmes. The institute will require a **“No Objection Certificate (NOC)”** from the appropriate authority in the organisation where the candidate is employed. The NOC should clearly mention that she is permitted to pursue studies on a part-time basis.

LUXURY TRAINS IN INDIA

Deccan Odyssey, a luxury train launched to promote Maharashtra tourism, may start ferrying tourists again next year.



About:

- India has four luxury trains — Palace on Wheels, Deccan Odyssey, Golden Chariot and Maharaja Express.

Palace on Wheels (Rajasthan):

- The train’s royal origins give it its name ‘Palace on Wheels’.
- Its carriages once seated the rulers of princely states of Rajputana, Gujarat, the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Viceroy of British India.
- These luxurious coaches lay abandoned post-Independence till 1981-82, when the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation and Indian Railways launched a special heritage train for tourists visiting Rajasthan.

- A Broad Guage version of the Palace On Wheels was introduced in 1996.

Deccan Odyssey (Maharashtra):

- This luxury train was introduced by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC).
- The first proposal to launch a deluxe train tour in Maharashtra was made in 2001 and, accordingly, the MTDC and Indian Railways signed an MoU in the same year to turn this proposal into a reality.
- In 2003, the ‘Blue Limousine On Wheels’, as it is named, was ready. On January 19, 2004, the inaugural journey of the train set off from CST Mumbai.

Golden Chariot (Karnataka):

- An MoU signed between the Karnataka State Tourism and Development Corporation (KSTDC) and Indian Railways in 2002 resulted in the Golden Chariot, south India’s first luxury train.
- The luxury train was named after the famous stone chariot in Hampi.
- In 2008, the then President Pratibha Patil gave a ceremonial presidential flag-off to the Golden Chariot at Yeshwanthpur Railway Station.
- On March 10, 2008, Golden Chariot chugged on its maiden voyage from Bengaluru to Goa, making its way through the picturesque destinations of Karnataka.

Maharajas Express:

- The Maharajas Express made its maiden voyage called ‘Gems of India’ on October 17, 2012.
- The train draws inspiration from the private saloons of the erstwhile Maharajas’ of India.
- The three-night-four-day journey, touring the ‘Golden Triangle’ covering Delhi, Agra and Jaipur, first began at New Delhi’s Safdarjung Railway Station.