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Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

20th November 2026



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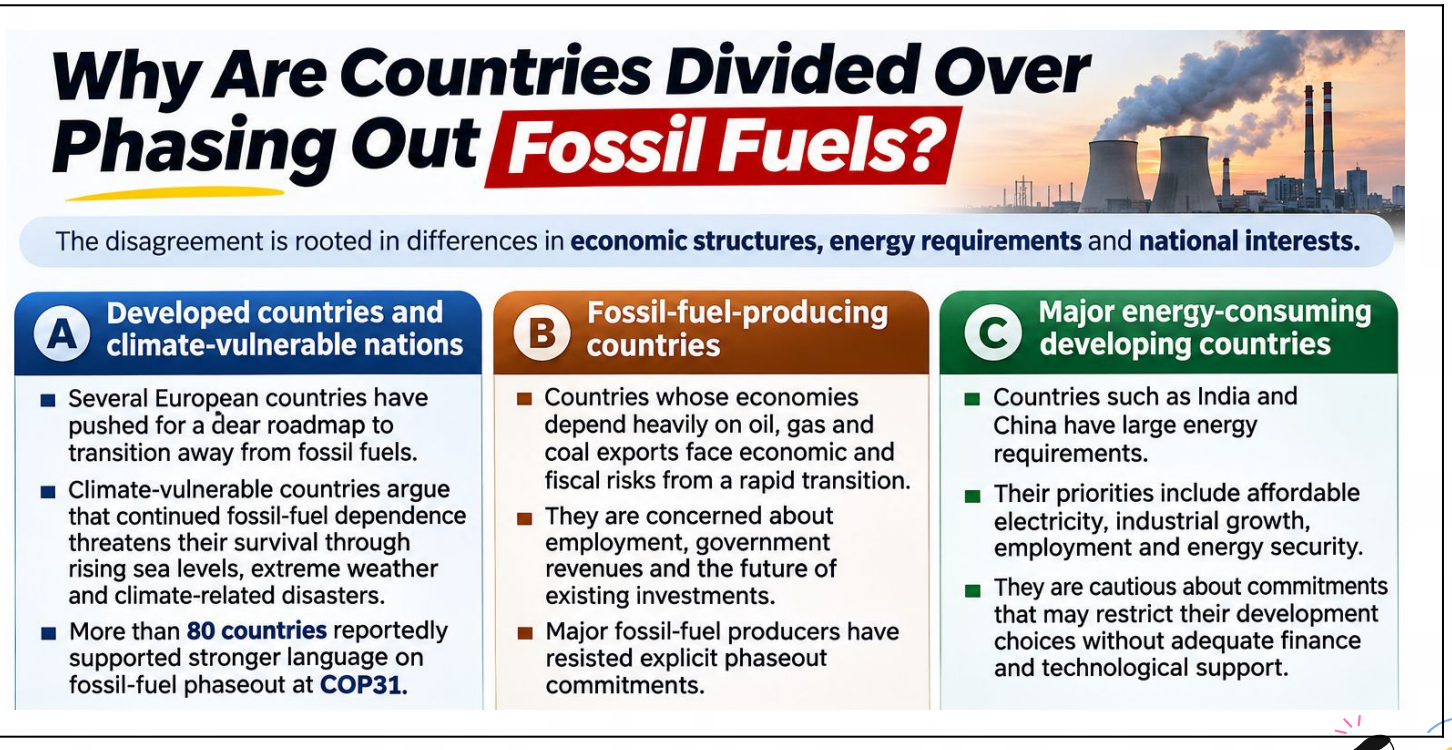
COP 31 & Future of Fossil Fuels

CONTEXT: At COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, negotiations over the future of fossil fuels have exposed sharp divisions between developed and developing countries.

Why Are Fossil Fuels at the Centre of Climate Negotiations?

- Fossil fuels include **coal, petroleum and natural gas**.
- Their combustion **releases CO2**, making them the largest source of global GHG emissions.
- Fossil fuels account for approximately three-quarters of global GHG emissions.
- They remain central to:
  - Electricity generation.
  - Transportation.
  - Industrial production.
  - Heating and cooking.
  - Fertiliser and chemical manufacturing.

- **The fundamental contradiction**
  - The world needs to reduce fossil-fuel consumption to limit global warming.
  - However, fossil fuels continue to meet a large share of global energy demand.
  - Many developing countries require affordable and reliable energy to support industrialisation, employment and poverty reduction.



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India's Position: Climate Commitments vs Energy Security

A. Energy security

- India requires reliable and affordable energy for industrialisation, urbanisation and poverty reduction.
- Coal continues to play an important role in India's electricity generation.
- A rapid transition without adequate alternatives could affect electricity affordability and reliability.

B. Historical responsibility

- Developed countries have contributed a disproportionately large share of GHG emissions.

C. Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC)

- Developed countries should provide finance and technology support to developing countries.

D. India's climate commitments

- Reduce emissions intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 levels.
- Achieve 50% cumulative installed electric power capacity from non-fossil-fuel-based energy resources by 2030.
- Achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.

The 1.5°C Target and the Problem of Climate Overshoot

- The Paris Agreement seeks to limit global warming to well below 2°C while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5° C.
- The COP31 revised draft acknowledged that global warming is projected to exceed 1.5°C, with an overshoot potentially reaching around 1.7–1.8°C.

- **What is climate overshoot?**
  - A situation in which global temperatures temporarily exceed a specified warming threshold, such as 1.5°C, before potentially returning below it through sustained emission reductions and carbon removal.
- **Why is overshoot dangerous?**
  - Greater risks of extreme heatwaves and droughts.
  - Increased stress on ecosystems and biodiversity.
  - Higher probability of crossing climate tipping points.
  - Greater risks to food security, water availability and human health.

COP 31 & Future of Fossil Fuels

Electrification: An Alternative Route to Reducing Fossil-Fuel Dependence

- The revised COP31 draft retained a proposal to increase electricity's share of global final energy consumption from approximately 23% to 35% by 2035.



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COP 31 & Future of Fossil Fuels

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What is electrification?

- Replacing direct fossil-fuel consumption in sectors such as transport, heating and industry with electricity.

Major examples

- **Transport:** Electric vehicles.
- **Cooking:** Electric induction cooking.
- **Industry:** Electrification of industrial heating and certain manufacturing processes.
- **Buildings:** Electric heat pumps.

Potential benefits

- Reduces direct fossil-fuel consumption.
- Can improve energy efficiency.
- Reduces urban air pollution.
- Can improve energy security by diversifying energy sources.

The limitation

- Electrification does not automatically mean decarbonisation.
    - If electricity is generated primarily from coal.
    - Therefore, electrification must be accompanied by renewable energy expansion, grid modernisation and energy storage.

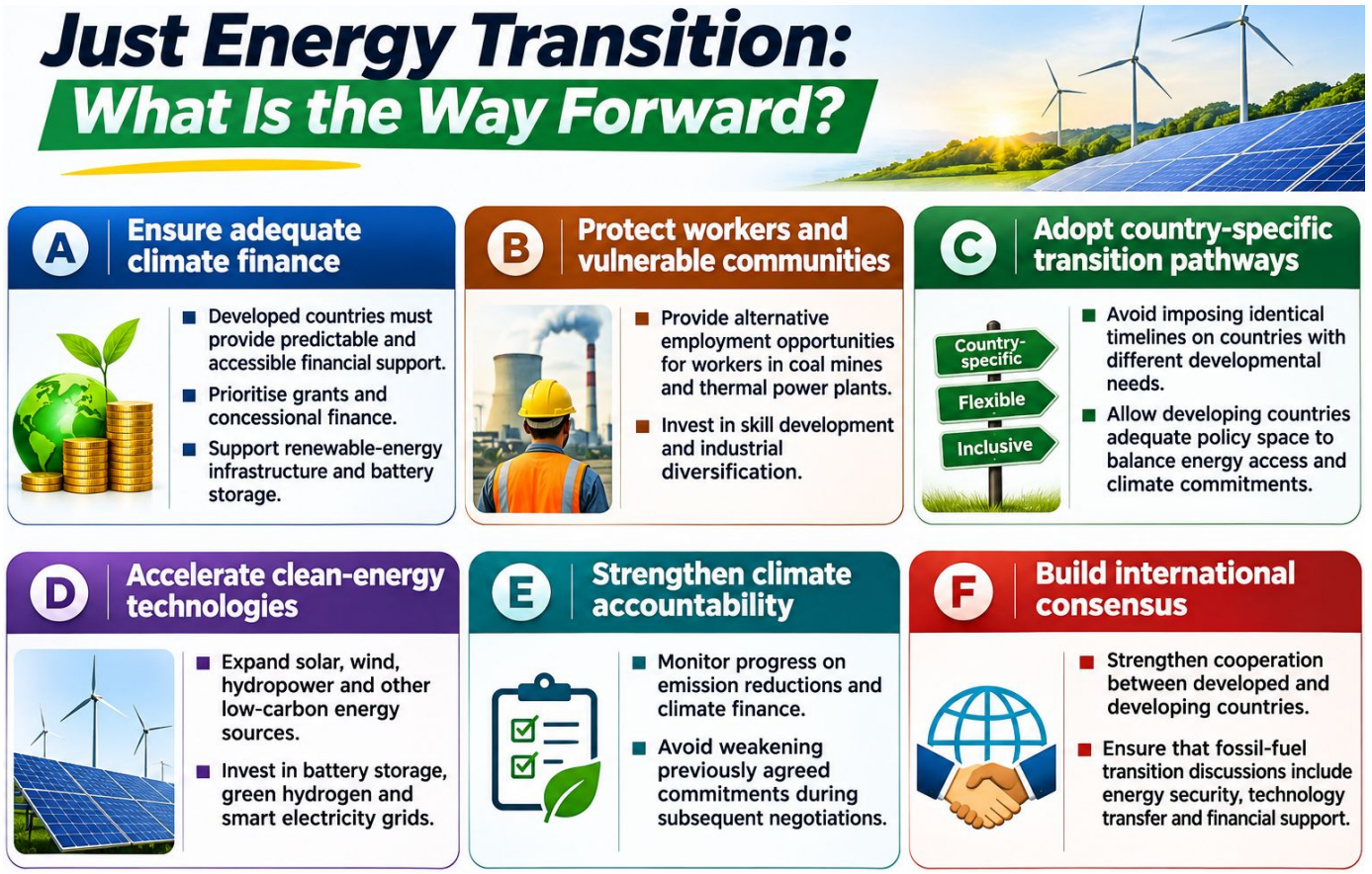


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COP 31 & Future of Fossil Fuels

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Mains Practice Question

"The global debate over phasing out fossil fuels reflects the tension between climate commitments, energy security and developmental priorities." Discuss with reference to COP31.

(15 marks, 250 words)

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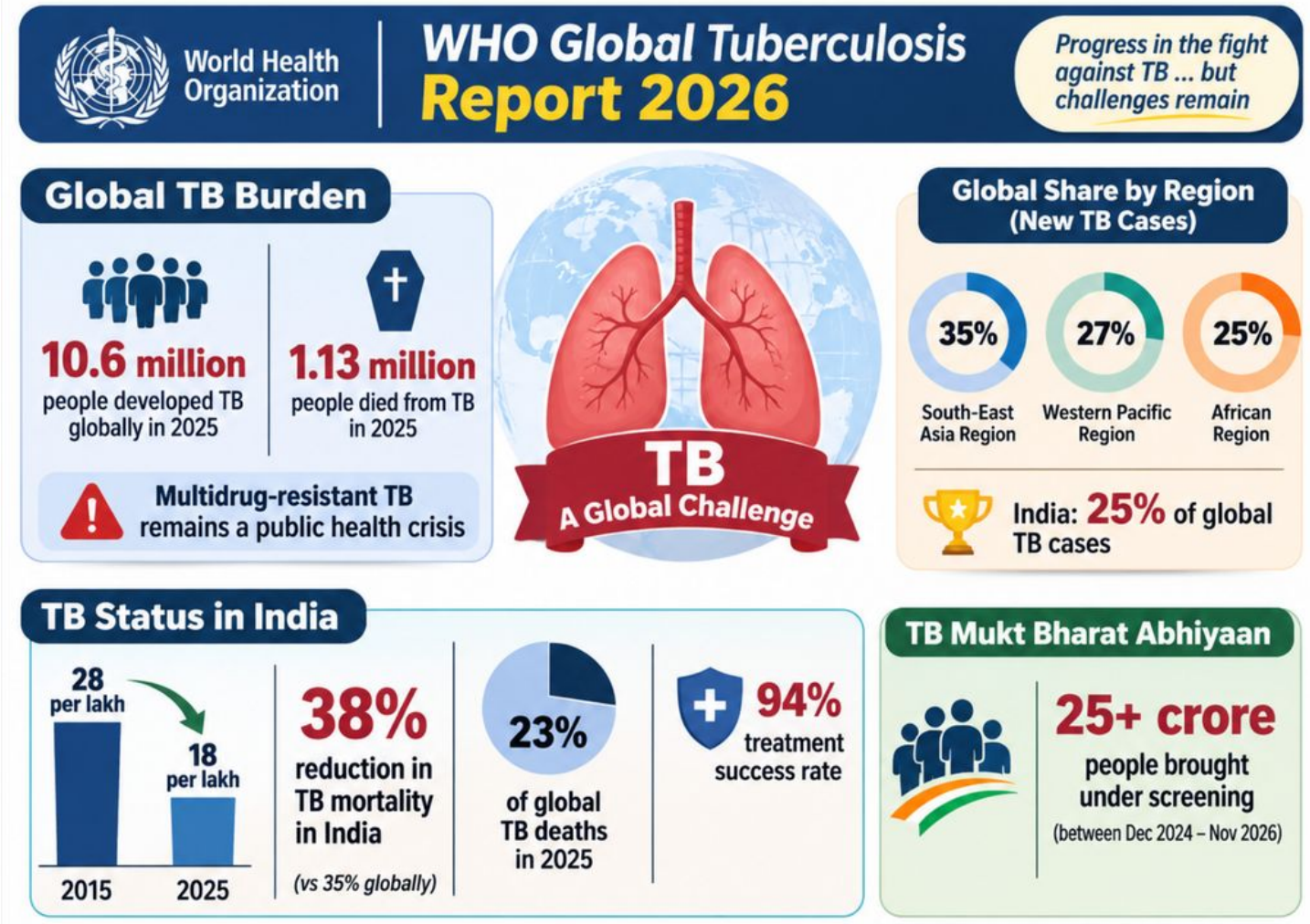
India's TB Target?

CONTEXT: According to the WHO Global Tuberculosis Report 2026, India continues to account for nearly a quarter of the global TB burden. India had set an ambitious target of eliminating TB by 2025, but has fallen short.

Understanding Tuberculosis and Its Burden

Tuberculosis (TB)

- An infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis, primarily affecting the lungs, although it can affect other organs.
- **Transmission:**
  - Spreads through the air when an infected person with pulmonary TB coughs, sneezes or spits.
- **Types:**
  - **Pulmonary TB:** Affects the lungs.
  - **Extrapulmonary TB:** Affects organs such as the brain, bones, kidneys and lymph nodes.
  - **Drug-resistant TB:** TB caused by bacteria resistant to one or more anti-TB medicines.
- **Common symptoms include:**
  - Chronic cough with blood-tinged sputum
  - Loss of weight
  - Loss of appetite
  - Fever and night sweats
  - Fatigue are common symptoms of tuberculosis, etc.



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India's 2025 TB Elimination Target: What Did India Promise?

- India launched the **National Strategic Plan for TB Elimination 2017–2025**, aiming to eliminate TB five years ahead of the global SDG deadline.

- Major targets under the National Strategic Plan

Indicator	2015	2025 target
TB incidence (per lakh)	217	43
TB mortality (per lakh)	32	3

- The global **WHO End TB Strategy** had a less ambitious 2025 milestone of a 50% reduction in incidence and 75% reduction in mortality, compared with 2015.

How much progress has India made?

- TB mortality declined by 38% between 2015 and 2025, reaching 18 deaths per lakh population.
- This exceeded the WHO's 2020 milestone of a 35% reduction, but remained short of India's 2025 target of 90%.
- The WHO's 2025 report estimated India's TB incidence at 187 cases per lakh in 2024, compared with 237 in its revised 2015 estimate.

Why Has India Missed Its TB Elimination Target?



TB is closely linked with **poverty, nutrition, living conditions** and **access to healthcare.**

A | Undernutrition and poverty



- Weakens immunity to TB
- Hard to afford nutritious food
- Lost wages and travel costs

B | Overcrowding and poor living conditions



- Crowded housing and poor ventilation spread TB
- Higher risk among migrant workers and slum dwellers

C | Delayed diagnosis



- Symptoms often not recognised early
- Lack of awareness and testing access
- Undiagnosed patients can infect others

D | Uneven healthcare access



- Difficult for rural, remote and vulnerable groups
- Private care can be costly and inconsistent
- Incomplete notification affects surveillance

E | Drug-resistant TB



- Due to inappropriate or interrupted treatment
- Requires specialised diagnosis
- Longer and more complex treatment

F | Social stigma



- Fear of discrimination discourages testing
- Patients may hide the disease or stop treatment
- Higher barriers for women and the poor

Example: A person receiving free TB medicines may still struggle to complete treatment if they cannot afford adequate nutrition or lose daily wages by visiting healthcare facilities.

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India's TB Target?

Major initiatives

- **National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP):** India's principal programme for TB prevention, diagnosis and treatment.
- **Ni-kshay Portal:** Digital platform for notification, monitoring and tracking of TB patients.
- **Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana:** Provides nutritional support through direct benefit transfers to eligible TB patients.
- **Pradhan Mantri TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan:** Encourages community participation through Ni-kshay Mitras who support TB patients with nutritional and other assistance.
- **TB Mukt Gram Panchayat Initiative:** Encourages local-level participation and recognition of villages making progress towards TB elimination.
- **Nikshay Shivir:** Intensifies screening and diagnostic services through special outreach camps.
- **Rapid molecular diagnostic tests:** CBNAAT and Truenat help detect TB and identify rifampicin resistance.
- **Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) Revaccination:** The BCG Vaccine is typically given to infants to protect them from TB.

Way Forward: What Should India Do?

A. Strengthen early diagnosis

- Expand rapid molecular testing facilities.
- Strengthen community-level detection and referral systems.

B. Address social determinants

- Integrate TB control with nutrition, housing and poverty-reduction programmes.
- Improve ventilation and living conditions in overcrowded settlements.

C. Improve treatment outcomes

- Ensure uninterrupted availability of anti-TB medicines and follow-up counselling.
- Expand access to shorter, all-oral drug-resistant TB regimens for eligible patients.

D. Strengthen private-sector engagement

- Improve coordination between public and private healthcare providers.

E. Strengthen surveillance

- Improve the Ni-kshay database and district-level disease surveillance.
- Use data analytics to identify high-burden areas.

F. Reduce stigma

- Promote community awareness and patient confidentiality.
- Encourage early testing.

G. Increase public-health investment

- Strengthen primary healthcare facilities.
- Ensure adequate funding for prevention, treatment and research.



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India's TB Target?

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Mains Practice Question

"Despite improvements in diagnosis and treatment, tuberculosis continues to pose a major public-health challenge in India." Examine the reasons for India's failure to achieve its 2025 TB elimination target.

(10 marks, 150 words)



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Mains Value Addition

Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number : 10**

Missing in Reform Charters

- **State capacity vs economic growth:** India's challenge is not merely economic growth but the ability of the State to effectively deliver public services.
- **Administrative understaffing:** Public employment has declined from **3.84% of population (1981) to just above 2%.**
- **Weak local governance:** Unlike China and the US, where nearly two-thirds of government employees work at the local level, India's local administrative capacity remains weak.
- **Judicial understaffing:** India has only **1.1 judges per lakh population**, affecting access to justice and timely delivery.
- **Contractualisation:** Increasing dependence on contractual workers cannot substitute for a permanent, skilled and accountable workforce.
- **Centralisation vs decentralisation:** Neglect of local governments weakens grassroots service delivery and participatory governance.
- **Fiscal conservatism:** States often prioritise lower expenditure on salaries and recruitment, even at the cost of administrative capacity.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen local govt:** Build administrative and technical capacity at Panchayat and municipal levels.
- **Fill critical vacancies:** Prioritise health, education, policing, judiciary and revenue administration.
- **Performance-based governance:** Improve accountability, training and outcome-based evaluation.



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Cyclone Akvan

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Geography

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 16**

- **Origin and Location**:
  - Developed over the **South Bay of Bengal** and intensified while moving towards the west-central Bay of Bengal.
  - It was the third cyclone to develop in the North Indian Ocean basin in 2026.
  - The probable landfall region may lie between Visakhapatnam and Nellore in Andhra Pradesh.
- **Cyclone Naming System:**
  - Cyclones over the North Indian Ocean are named under the WMO Panel on Tropical Cyclones.
  - The panel comprises 13 countries: India, Bangladesh, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UAE and Yemen.
- **Tropical Cyclones:**
  - Intense low-pressure systems that develop over warm tropical oceans and are characterised by strong winds, heavy rainfall and storm surges.
- **Conditions favourable for formation:**
  - Sea surface temperature generally above 26.5°C.
  - Sufficient Coriolis force.
  - High atmospheric moisture and instability.
  - Low vertical wind shear.
  - Pre-existing low-pressure disturbance.

Exam Traps

- Cyclones over the Bay of Bengal are named exclusively by India → WRONG
- The Arabian Sea is not covered under the North Indian Ocean cyclone-naming system → WRONG
- Cyclone names are selected according to the country expected to be affected → WRONG
- Akvan was proposed by Bangladesh → WRONG
- A weather system receives a cyclone name only after reaching severe cyclonic storm intensity → WRONG



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Cyclone Akvan

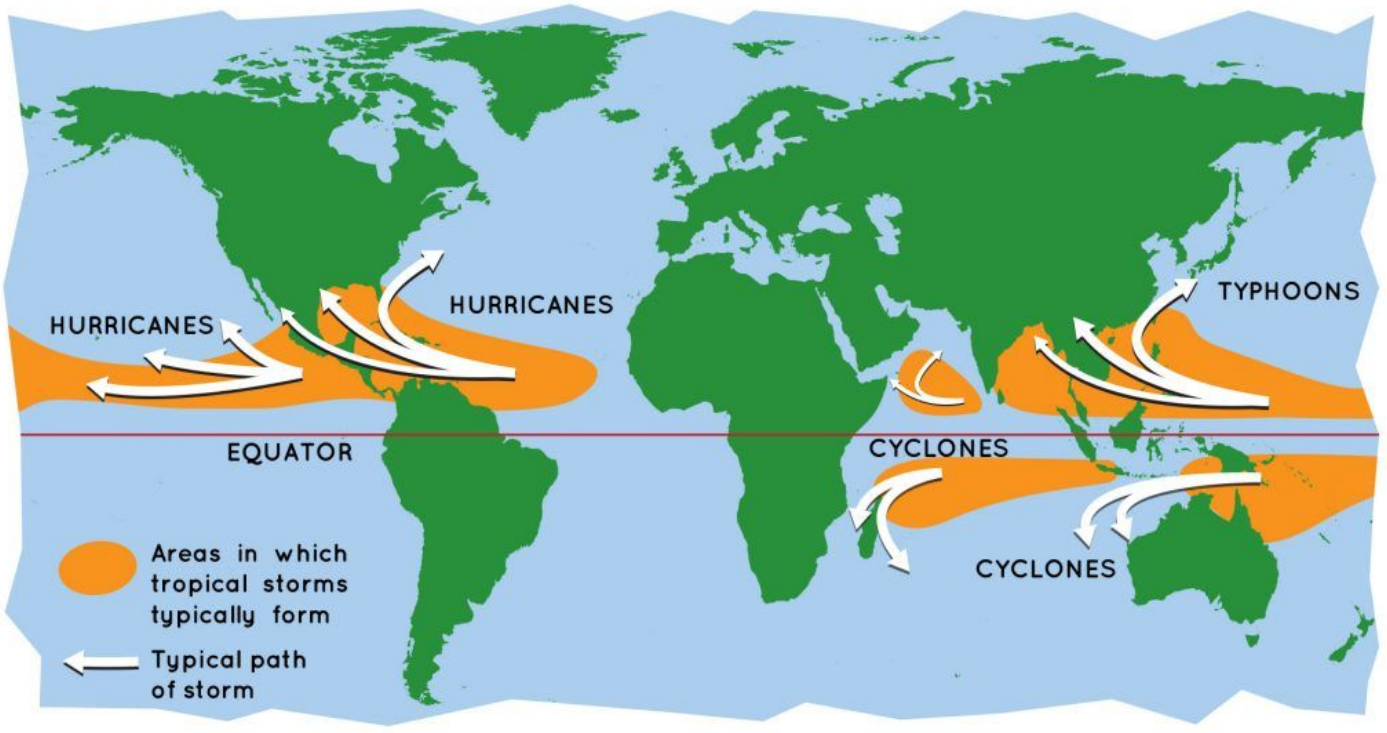
SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Geography

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 16**

IMD Classification of Cyclonic Disturbances

The following are the standard IMD wind-speed categories for the North Indian Ocean.

System	Maximum sustained wind speed
Depression	31–49 kmph
Deep Depression	50–61 kmph
Cyclonic Storm	62–88 kmph
Severe Cyclonic Storm	89–117 kmph
Very Severe Cyclonic Storm	118–166 kmph
Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm	167–221 kmph
Super Cyclonic Storm	222 kmph or more



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Green India Mission (GIM)

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Environment

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 14**

- **Background**:
  - Also known as the National Mission for a Green India.
  - One of the missions under the **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**.
  - Launched in February 2014.
  - Nodal Ministry: MoEFCC.
- **Objectives**:
  - Protect, restore and enhance India's forest and tree cover.
  - Improve ecosystem services such as biodiversity, hydrological services and carbon sequestration.
  - Enhance forest-based livelihood opportunities for communities dependent on forests.
  - Address both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

- **Original Mission Targets**:
  - Increase forest/tree cover by **5 million hectares (mha)**.
  - Improve the quality of forest/tree cover on another **5 mha** of forest and non-forest land.
  - Improve forest-based livelihoods of around **3 million households**.
  - Enhance annual CO_2 sequestration.
- **Climate Change Linkages:**
  - Contributes to **India's NDCs**.
  - Supports the target of creating an **additional carbon sink** of 2.5–3 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent by 2030.
  - Supports **India's Bonn Challenge** commitment to restore 26 ml. hectares of degraded and deforested land.



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Green India Mission (GIM)

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Environment

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 14**

Exam Traps

- Green India Mission is one of the missions under the National Action Plan on Biodiversity → WRONG
- The mission is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare → WRONG
- Its original target was to increase forest cover by 10 million hectares without improving existing forest quality → WRONG
- Local communities have no role in planning or implementation of the mission → WRONG



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Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Governance

Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number : 1**

- **Establishment**:
  - Statutory body under the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
  - Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.
- **Objective**:
  - To provide social security to employees.
  - Provides retirement savings, pension and insurance benefits.
- **Governing Body**:
  - Administered under the overall supervision of the **Central Board of Trustees (CBT)**.
  - CBT is a tripartite body comprising representatives of the Central Government, State Governments, employers and employees.
  - Union Minister of Labour and Employment is the Chairperson of the CBT.
- **EPF Contributions**:
  - Generally, employee and employer each contribute 12% of eligible wages.
  - The statutory wage ceiling for mandatory EPF membership is ₹25,000 per month.
- **Coverage**:
  - The EPF framework generally applies to specified establishments employing 20 or more employees.

Exam Traps

- EPFO functions under the Ministry of Finance → WRONG
- EPFO is a constitutional body established under the Constitution → WRONG
- Central Board of Trustees is a purely government-representative body → WRONG
- EPFO is responsible for regulating private insurance companies → WRONG



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Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Economy & Polity

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 14**

- Established: **4 December 1957**.
- **Administrative Control**:
  - **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**.
  - Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.
- **Headquarters**: **New Delhi**.
- **Nature**:
  - It is a **non-statutory** body.
  - India's apex anti-smuggling intelligence and enforcement agency.
- **Major Functions**:
  - Detection and prevention of smuggling.
  - Investigation of customs duty evasion.
  - Detection of commercial frauds in international trade.
  - Combating drug trafficking and wildlife smuggling.
- **Major Areas of Enforcement**:
  - Gold and precious metals.
  - Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
  - Arms and ammunition.
  - Wildlife products.
  - Counterfeit currency.
  - Antiques and environmentally sensitive goods.
- **Legal Framework**:
  - **Customs Act, 1962**.
  - **NDPS Act, 1985**.
  - **COFEPOSA Act, 1974**.
  - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
  - Other allied laws governing cross-border trade and smuggling.
- **Important Publication**:
  - **Smuggling in India Report**.
  - Documents smuggling trends, enforcement actions and emerging challenges.
- **Important Distinction**:
  - **DRI** → Anti-smuggling and customs intelligence.
  - **CBIC** → Indirect taxes and customs administration.
  - **ED** → Money laundering and foreign exchange violations.
  - **NIA** → Terrorism and national security-related offences.

Exam Traps

- DRI functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs → WRONG
- DRI is India's apex agency for money laundering investigations → WRONG
- DRI was established under the Customs Act, 1962 → WRONG
- DRI functions under the Central Board of Direct Taxes → WRONG



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Daily Quiz

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Paris Agreement and climate overshoot:

1. The Paris Agreement seeks to limit global warming to well below 2°C while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.
2. Climate overshoot refers to a situation where global temperatures temporarily exceed a specified warming threshold before potentially returning below it.
3. Climate overshoot reduces the possibility of crossing climate tipping points because temperatures are expected to decline subsequently.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

a) 1 and 2 only
b) 2 and 3 only
c) 1 and 3 only
d) All three

Answer: a

Q2. With reference to EPF contributions and coverage in India, consider the following statements:

1. Generally, both the employer and employee contribute 12% of eligible wages towards EPF.
2. The EPF framework generally applies to specified establishments employing 10 or more employees.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2
d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: a

Q3. With reference to tuberculosis (TB), consider the following statements:

1. Pulmonary tuberculosis can spread through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes or spits.
2. Extrapulmonary tuberculosis is restricted to organs outside the respiratory system and cannot affect lymph nodes.
3. Drug-resistant TB refers to tuberculosis caused by bacteria resistant to one or more anti-TB medicines.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) Only One
b) Only Two
c) All Three
d) None

Answer: b

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the Green India Mission:

1. It is implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
2. It contributes to India's climate commitments, including the creation of an additional carbon sink of 2.5–3 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent by 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are Not correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2
d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: d

Q5. With reference to the naming of tropical cyclones in the North Indian Ocean, consider the following statements:

1. Cyclones over both the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal are covered under the regional cyclone-naming system.
2. A cyclone is assigned a name only after attaining the intensity of a Severe Cyclonic Storm.
3. The WMO Panel on Tropical Cyclones comprises 13 member countries.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

a) 1 and 2 only
b) 2 and 3 only
c) 1 and 3 only
d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: c





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