

GS PAPER 2- POLITY- PARLIAMENT AND STATE LEGISLATURES – STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONING, CONDUCT OF BUSINESS, POWERS & PRIVILEGES AND ISSUES ARISING OUT OF THESE**Issues, current challenges, and proposed amendments in the Anti-Defection law in India**

The article discusses India's anti-defection law, created to prevent political instability from party-switching. It highlights the law's challenges, including delays in cases and the Speaker's role, and proposes timely amendments to strengthen democracy and stability.

What is the Anti-Defection law in India?

1. The anti-defection law, introduced in 1985, aims to prevent elected legislators from frequently switching political parties.
2. The Indian Parliament added this law through the 52nd Amendment, introducing the Tenth Schedule.
3. The law allows disqualification of members of Parliament or state legislatures if they leave their party or disobey the party whip during important votes.

How has the law changed over time?

1. Initially, the law allowed a split in a party if at least one-third of the members defected. This led to mass defections.
2. In 2003, the 91st Amendment revised this by requiring at least two-thirds of a party's members to defect to avoid disqualification, reducing small-scale defections.

What challenges does the law face?

1. The law has gaps, including delays in decision-making on defection cases. In some cases, Speakers took months or years to decide, which allowed defectors to remain in their positions. The Speaker's power, without a set timeline, has raised concerns.
2. Also, the lack of transparency in party whips has led to confusion about defection cases. Although judicial review is allowed, courts avoid interfering to respect legislative autonomy.

What amendments are proposed?

1. **Fixed Time Frame for Decisions:** Establish a four-week limit for Speakers to decide on defection cases to prevent delays and misuse of power. This would ensure timely resolutions and reduce political bias.
2. **Public Notice of Whips:** Require political parties to publish whips in newspapers or through electronic media, ensuring members are properly informed and reducing disputes over party stances.
3. **Committee Recommendations:** Committees like the Dinesh Goswami Committee (1990) and the Law Commission of India (1999, 2015) have proposed reforms, emphasizing the need to strengthen the law's transparency and fairness.
4. **Supreme Court Suggestion:** In *Keisham Meghachandra Singh v. Speaker Manipur Legislative Assembly (2020)*, the Supreme Court recommended an independent tribunal to handle defection cases, reducing the Speaker's potential bias.

Why is political will necessary?

1. For effective reform, leaders like Prime Minister Narendra Modi and opposition leader Rahul Gandhi must prioritize amendments to the law.
2. Strengthening this law would ensure more stability and integrity in Indian democracy, supporting initiatives like "One Nation, One Election."

GS PAPER3- ENVIRONMENT**Issue, Reasons, and Solutions for Crop Stubble Burning**

The article discusses the Supreme Court's criticism of the government for not addressing crop stubble burning, which contributes to pollution. It explains why farmers burn stubble and suggests paying them for manual harvesting to reduce pollution. This approach could improve air quality and support rural employment.

Why is stubble burning a problem?

1. Stubble burning is a significant pollution source in Delhi-NCR, contributing 5-30% of the area's pollution load during certain months.
2. It releases harmful greenhouse gases, impacting air quality and increasing health risks for residents.
3. Burning stubble destroys essential soil nutrients, such as nitrogen, phosphorus, sulfur, and potassium, which are crucial for soil health.
4. Soil nutrient loss from burning raises dependency on imported chemical fertilizers, adding to India's import bill.

5. For instance, earthworms and other beneficial organisms are killed during burning, further degrading soil quality.

Why do farmers burn crop stubble?

1. **Shortened Harvesting Window:** The Sub-soil Water Conservation Acts in Punjab and Haryana delay paddy sowing until mid-June to conserve groundwater. This shortens the time between paddy harvesting and the next wheat crop, pressuring farmers to clear fields quickly.
2. **High Labor Costs:** Due to the shorter window, labor demand peaks, making manual harvesting unaffordable for many farmers. This costs around Rs 4,000 per acre.
3. **Harvesting Issues:** Machines leave about two feet of stubble, which needs to be removed rapidly. Burning is the quickest and cheapest option.
4. **Financial Constraints:** Farmers cannot easily afford the Rs 4,000 required for manual or alternative stubble management.

What should be done?

1. **Encourage Manual Harvesting:** Governments could pay farmers Rs 4,000 per acre to cover manual harvesting costs. This could be funded partly by MGNREGA.
2. **Promote Crop Diversification:** Farmers could shift from water-intensive crops like paddy to other crops like coarse cereals and pulses. Legal guarantees for MSP (Minimum Support Price) on these alternative crops can help farmers transition.
3. **Support Migrant Labor:** Higher wages could attract laborers to Punjab and Haryana, helping manage the manual harvesting process.

GS PAPER3- ECONOMY-GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Desire for Upward Mobility Declining

The article discusses how people’s desire for social and economic advancement is fading in India. It highlights signs like reduced migration, lower consumer spending, and increased reliance on government aid, indicating a decline in aspirations and optimism about the future.

Why is the Desire for Upward Mobility Declining?

1. Historically, business was limited to certain communities in India, with most people not aspiring to move beyond their family’s traditional work.
2. But in recent decades, this changed, and many, including slum-dwellers, began hoping for better futures for their children, like becoming doctors or government officials. This shift has stalled recently, as optimism fades.

What Are the Signs of Lower Aspirations?

1. **Reduced Migration:** Migration to cities is a common indicator of people’s optimism for a better life. Indian Railways’ passenger numbers, often linked to migration, peaked at 8,439 million in 2018-19 but dropped to 6,730 million in 2023-24, showing a decrease in movement for work opportunities.
2. **Increased Dependence on Agriculture:** From 1993 to 2018, the workforce in agriculture decreased, with workers moving to other sectors. This trend reversed after the pandemic, with agriculture absorbing 46.1% of the labor force in 2023-24, a sign of people staying in traditional roles.
3. **Reduced Consumer Spending:** Two-wheeler sales, a sign of consumer confidence, peaked at 21.2 million in 2018-19 but only reached 18 million in 2023-24, indicating cautious spending.

What Causes People to Settle for Less?

1. **Influence of Free Services and Cash Transfers:** Schemes like Maharashtra’s Ladki Bahin Yojana provide small monthly payments, which have led some agricultural workers to reduce workdays, as they feel less pressure to earn more.
2. **Fewer Aspirations for Higher Living Standards:** With rising dependence on government schemes, many people feel satisfied with limited financial support and basic comforts, instead of pursuing higher earnings.

Is India Alone in This Trend?

1. India isn’t alone in experiencing declining aspirations.
2. In China, only 47% of people feel hopeful about their future, down from 73% in 2014.
3. The belief that “hard work pays off” in China dropped from over 60% (2004-2014) to 28.3% in 2023.
4. China’s economy has a \$12,600 per capita GDP, allowing some to adopt a “lying flat” attitude.
5. India’s per capita GDP is \$2,500, making similar attitudes more challenging for sustainable living.

GS PAPER3- ENVIRONMENT

India’s Opportunities and Challenges in Carbon Markets

The article discusses the push for India's transition to carbon markets ahead of the COP29 in Baku. It highlights the role of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement in enabling carbon credit trading and India's plans to meet emission standards.

What is the Focus of COP29 in Baku?

1. The upcoming 29th Conference of Parties (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, will focus on increasing climate finance and clarifying the rules for carbon markets as outlined in Article 6 of the Paris Climate Agreement.
2. Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, signed in 2015, defines how carbon markets can work globally. It allows countries to trade in carbon credits, which come from reducing or removing greenhouse gases.
3. This trade encourages nations to take more climate-friendly actions, like using renewable energy or conserving forests.

What are Carbon Markets?

1. Carbon markets allow countries or companies to trade carbon credits. These credits are generated by actions like switching to renewable energy or maintaining forests that absorb carbon dioxide. This system aims to motivate more countries and companies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Carbon markets have faced criticism for being unclear and ineffective. For years, there has been confusion about how to verify carbon credits.
3. However, COP29 is expected to provide guidelines on verifying credits, making it possible for countries to claim legal credits starting next year.

What are India's Opportunities and Challenges in Carbon Markets?

1. Opportunities for India in Carbon Markets:

2. India's commitment to generate 50% of electricity from non-fossil sources by 2030 positions it as a key player in carbon-reduction projects.
3. With its voluntary carbon markets, Indian companies, including those in forestry, are creating carbon-trapping initiatives, attracting multinational interest.
4. The iron and steel industries are expected to meet emission standards by 2025, setting the stage for India's formal carbon market launch.
5. COP29 may bring clear guidelines, enabling India to legally claim and trade verified carbon credits.

6. Challenges for India in Carbon Markets:

7. Verifying carbon credits is complex and lacks transparency, risking ineffective compliance.
8. Past experiences, like the energy-efficiency trading scheme, show limited pressure on companies to meet targets.
9. India needs transparent, globally-aligned policies to maintain credibility and attract investment.

PRELIM FACTS

1. ISRO-DBT Agreement to design and conduct experiments

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) have signed an agreement to design and conduct experiments that will be integrated into the upcoming Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS).

About the agreement

Parties Involved: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).

Purpose: To design and conduct biotechnology experiments to be integrated into India's planned indigenous space station, the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS).

About Proposed Biotechnology Experiments

1. Muscle Loss Studies: Investigating the effects of weightlessness on muscle degradation in space.

2. Algae Research:

- i) To explore algae as a nutrient source and preservation method for food.
- ii) To investigate algae's potential for biofuel production, including jet fuel.

3. Radiation Impact: Assessing the effects of space radiation on human health.

About BIOE3 Initiative and Bio-Manufacturing

1. BIOE3 Policy was launched by DBT to boost bio-manufacturing as part of India's bio-economy.

2. Bio-Economy Goals: Aiming for a \$300 billion bio-economy by 2030.

3. Focus Areas includes:

- i) Space bio-manufacturing for human health innovations.
- ii) Development of novel pharmaceuticals, biotherapeutics, and regenerative medicine.
- iii) Bio-based waste management solutions.

iv) Support for start-ups in biotechnology and bioeconomy.

2. Government Doubles Loan Limit Under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana

The loan limit under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) has been raised from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh. This aimed at bolstering entrepreneurship across India. This increase aligns with the Mudra Scheme's mission of "funding the unfunded," expanding opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs to access capital.

Budget Announcement Details

1. Union Budget Declaration: In the Union Budget 2024-25, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced this enhancement to support entrepreneurs who have previously availed and successfully repaid Mudra loans.

2. Eligibility for New Limit: Entrepreneurs who have already taken and repaid loans under the 'Tarun' category of the PMMY are eligible for the increased loan limit under a new category, termed "Tarun Plus."

3. New Category and Benefits: A new category called 'Tarun Plus' has been established for loans ranging from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh. This is exclusively available to entrepreneurs who have successfully repaid earlier Tarun loans.

4. Expanded Guarantee Coverage: The Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU) will extend guarantee coverage to PMMY loans up to the new limit of ₹20 lakh, further reducing the financial risk for lenders.

5. Promoting an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: This decision is part of the government's strategy to foster a dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem, helping emerging businesses to expand and contribute to the economy.

3. Key Findings on Biodiversity Decline in Protected Areas

A recent study by the Natural History Museum (NHM) in London has uncovered that biodiversity is declining faster within protected areas than outside them. The research highlights that designating land as "protected" does not guarantee positive outcomes for biodiversity preservation. Here's a breakdown of the findings and their implications:

Key findings of study

1. Objective of the study: Examine biodiversity trends in protected versus non-protected areas.

2. Measure Used for the study: Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII), which gauges the remaining natural biodiversity in a region.

3. Global Decline: The BII has dropped by 1.88 percentage points globally from 2000 to 2020.

4. Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs): Within critical ecosystems (wetlands, unique habitats), 22% are protected.

5. Protected vs. Non-Protected Decline: In CBAs, biodiversity declined by 2.1 percentage points in protected areas compared to 1.9 points in non-protected areas.

Why Protected Areas Are Failing

1. Narrow Focus of Protection: Many protected areas target specific species rather than entire ecosystems, leading to incomplete conservation efforts.

2. Pre-existing Degradation: Some areas were already degraded when they were designated as protected, which might contribute to the continued biodiversity loss.

3. Resource Exploitation: Oil, gas, and mining concessions overlap with protected lands, particularly in biodiversity-rich regions like the Conkouati-Douli National Park in the Republic of Congo, where 65% of the park is used for resource extraction.

4. Climate Change Impacts: The climate crisis, through increased droughts and wildfires, exacerbates biodiversity loss in protected areas. Notably, Australian national parks experienced significant wildfire destruction in 2019.

Recommendations for Policymakers

1. Strengthen Conservation Efforts: Policymakers must go beyond simply designating land as protected; conservation should aim for robust ecosystem preservation.

2. Focus on 30×30 Goal: Countries should remain committed to the "30×30" target from Biodiversity COP15 to conserve 30% of lands and oceans by 2030, with a stronger emphasis on ecosystem-level protection.

4. Relaunch of National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)

The Union Ministry of Culture is set to relaunch the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM).

About the relaunch of the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)

1. Goal: To intensify the preservation of ancient texts across India.

2. New Structure: Plans are underway to create an autonomous body dedicated to this mission.

3. Proposed New Body: It has proposed a new body called the National Manuscripts Authority.

4. **Autonomy:** It will operate as an autonomous entity under the Ministry of Culture.
5. **Current Status:** NMM currently functions within the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts.

Achievements of the National Mission for Manuscripts

1. **Metadata Creation:** Metadata for approximately 5.2 million manuscripts has been created.
2. **Digitization:** Over 300,000 manuscript titles have been digitized, though only one-third are currently accessible online.
3. **Conservation Efforts:** Preservation activities have covered roughly 900 million folios over the past 21 years.

Future Goals

1. **Digital Access:** Increase the upload rate of digitized manuscripts to make them more accessible.
2. **Enhanced Conservation:** Continue both preventive and curative conservation of manuscripts across the country.

5. Pandemic Fund Project on Animal Health Security in India

Recently, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying introduced the Pandemic Fund Project titled “Animal Health Security Strengthening in India for Pandemic Preparedness and Response” in New Delhi.

1. **About:** The Pandemic Fund, established under Indonesia’s G20 Presidency.
2. **Aim:** It aims to bolster India’s animal health systems for improved pandemic readiness. It aims to address zoonotic disease risks, thus protecting animal and human populations from potential pandemics.
3. **Objectives:** The Pandemic Fund Project is designed to support and enhance existing departmental initiatives through:
 - i) **Disease Surveillance:** Improved disease monitoring using genomic and environmental surveillance.
 - ii) **Laboratory Infrastructure:** Enhanced diagnostic facilities for early detection.
 - iii) **Cross-Border Collaboration:** Strengthened international cooperation for zoonotic disease management.

4. **Implementation Partners:** The project will be implemented with the collaboration of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the World Bank, focusing on an integrated approach to strengthen India’s animal health systems and pandemic defenses.

Newly Released Documents to Aid Animal Health Management

1. **Standard Veterinary Treatment Guidelines (SVTG):** A comprehensive guide outlining veterinary best practices aimed at improving livestock health, productivity, and support for the national Anti-microbial Resistance plan.
2. **Crisis Management Plan (CMP):** A framework designed to aid in effective management and containment of animal disease outbreaks.

6. IndiaAI and Meta Collaboration for Open Source AI Innovation and Skill Development in India

IndiaAI and Meta recently announced the establishment of the Center for Generative AI, named Srijan (सृजन), at IIT Jodhpur. Additionally, they launched the “YuvAi Initiative for Skilling and Capacity Building” in collaboration with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

About GenAI CoE

1. **Establishment of GenAI CoE – Center for Generative AI, Srijan, at IIT Jodhpur:** Meta, in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), will support the Center for Generative AI, Srijan, at IIT Jodhpur.
2. The center will focus on research, development, and fostering ethical AI technologies.
3. **Objectives:** It includes education, capacity building, and policy advisory, empowering students, researchers, and practitioners in AI development.

About YuvAi Initiative for Skilling and Capacity Building

1. **Aim:** The initiative was launched with AICTE. It aims to empower 100,000 students and young developers in AI skills.
2. **Focus:** It focuses on using open-source large language models (LLMs) for real-world applications, addressing fields like healthcare, agriculture, education, smart cities, and financial inclusion.
3. Over three years, participants will be equipped to develop generative AI applications through specialized courses and resources.

About GenAI Resource Hub and Learning Programs

1. Creation of a GenAI Resource Hub with curated courses, case studies, and open datasets for AI skill-building.
2. “LLM for Young Developers” course designed by Meta, along with Master Training Activation Workshops, introduces foundational AI concepts.

3. It includes “Unleash LLM Hackathons” where participants propose AI-driven solutions; top ideas receive mentorship, seed grants, and market support.

About AI Innovation Accelerator Program:

1. This supports 10 student-led AI startups working with open-source AI, offering incubation and market visibility.
2. It provides opportunities for startups to gain exposure and resources to scale innovative AI applications.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. The recently concluded BRICS Summit in Kazan highlighted the need for equitable global governance and peace through dialogue, but it appears strong on intent and weak on concrete commitments. Discuss.

The **16th BRICS Summit in Kazan**, hosted by Russia, highlighted the bloc’s commitment to strengthening multilateralism and equitable global governance under the theme, ‘**Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security**’. Through the Kazan Declaration, BRICS emphasised reforms in the **International Financial Architecture** and the use of local currencies in trade to reduce dependency on Western financial systems.

BRICS Summit in Kazan Emphasised the Importance of Equitable Global Governance and Peace Through Dialogue

- **Focus on Financial Independence:** The Kazan Declaration called for using **local currencies** in cross-border payments, reducing dependency on the U.S. dollar and increasing economic resilience within BRICS
- **Support for a Multipolar World:** BRICS reiterated its commitment to **reforming global institutions** like the IMF and UN, advocating for the inclusion of emerging economies in decision-making.

For instance: The Kazan Declaration’s push for **UNSC reform** aligns with India’s longstanding call for more inclusive global governance structures.

- **Commitment to Conflict Resolution:** BRICS emphasised **dialogue over conflict**, urging a peaceful resolution to international disputes, reinforcing the bloc’s commitment to diplomacy.
- **Economic Collaboration for Balanced Growth:** BRICS introduced initiatives like the **BRICS Grain Exchange** and cross-border Interbank Cooperation Mechanism, aiming to bolster self-sufficiency and equitable growth.
- **Promotion of Cultural Unity and Mutual Respect:** By hosting the summit in Kazan, a symbol of Russia’s multi-ethnic and multi-religious identity, BRICS highlighted the importance of **cultural diversity** and mutual respect among nations.

For example: Kazan’s **Kul Sharif Mosque** and the **Annunciation Cathedral** symbolise BRICS’ advocacy for peaceful coexistence and cooperation among diverse cultures.

Why the Recent Summit Reflects Strong Intentions but Lacks Concrete Commitments

- **Absence of a Common Trading Currency:** While discussed, the proposal for a **BRICS trading currency** has yet to materialise, with members facing challenges in reaching a consensus on implementation.

For instance: Brazil’s President suggested a **BRICS currency** in 2023, but economic disparities and feasibility concerns have delayed this initiative.

- **Limited Progress on Institutional Reforms:** BRICS’ call for **UN and IMF reform** remains aspirational, as entrenched global powers continue to resist changes in these institutions.
- **Geopolitical Divergences Among Members:** Tensions, particularly between **India and China**, affect the bloc’s cohesion, impacting the implementation of collective decisions.

For example: **Border disputes** between India and China and intercountry rivalry between **Iran-UAE** and **Egypt-Ethiopia** have limited collaborative potential, creating barriers to BRICS’ unified policy formulation.

- **Lack of Mechanisms for Accountability:** BRICS’ objectives, such as financial independence, lack concrete accountability mechanisms to track progress, making it difficult to ensure follow-through on declarations.
- **Dependency on Individual Member Initiatives:** BRICS projects often rely heavily on individual member leadership, slowing down the pace of regional initiatives when priorities differ.

Way Forward

- **Establishment of a BRICS Secretariat for Coordinated Action:** A dedicated secretariat could oversee **project implementation**, fostering greater accountability and tracking progress across BRICS initiatives.
- **Strengthening Local Currency Frameworks:** Implementing policies that support **local currency** use in intra-BRICS trade can strengthen financial independence and reduce reliance on Western monetary systems.
For example: India and Russia's **Rupee-Rouble trade mechanism** can serve as a model for enhancing currency cooperation across the bloc.
- **Prioritising Conflict Mediation Mechanisms:** BRICS could develop a structured framework to **mediate conflicts within** the bloc, fostering unity and reducing internal geopolitical tensions.
For example: Creating a **BRICS conflict resolution forum** can help address and mitigate tensions between member nations, enabling smoother cooperation.
- **Enhanced Engagement with Partner Countries:** BRICS should deepen ties with its new partner countries, enhancing regional influence and bolstering the group's support in global governance reform.
- **Investment in Joint Research and Development Initiatives:** Increased funding for R&D in health, agriculture, and technology can foster innovation and self-reliance among BRICS nations, reducing reliance on Western resources.
For example: The **BRICS Vaccine R&D Center** should prioritise joint investment in vaccine development, improving regional health security.

The 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan marked a pivotal moment in the bloc's journey toward equitable global governance and reduced dependency on Western financial frameworks. Although there are strong intentions, BRICS faces challenges in translating its vision into actionable commitments. To move forward, establishing accountability structures, promoting conflict resolution, and engaging partner countries are crucial steps. With sustained collaboration, BRICS has the potential to redefine global governance in favour of a multipolar and inclusive world order.

MCQ

1. With reference to the anti-defection law, consider the following statements:
 1. Disobedience of the party's whip during important votes can lead to disqualification.
 2. To avoid disqualification, at least two-thirds of the party members must agree to a merger.
 3. The Speaker or Chairperson is expected to decide on defection cases within six months of defection.

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
2. Consider the following statements:
 1. In carbon markets, if one country reduces its emissions by using renewable energy or conserving forests, it can sell credits to another country.
 2. India is targeting a complete shift to non-fossil fuel energy for electricity generation by 2030.

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

 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. With reference to the Biotechnology for Economy, Environment, and Employment (BIOE3) Policy, consider the following statements:
 1. It aims to support the agricultural sector by promoting monoculture farming.
 2. It aims for the advancement of circular bioeconomy models and 'Net Zero' carbon initiatives.
 3. It aligns with the Paris Agreement to achieve its environmental goals.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

 - a) Only one
 - b) Only two
 - c) All three
 - d) None
4. Consider the following statements:
 1. The Gaganyaan Mission is India's first human spaceflight initiative led by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
 2. The Bharatiya Antariksha Station (BAS) support scientific research and long-duration human spaceflight.

- Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2
5. Consider the following statements about the social structure and religion of the Kondh Tribe, recently seen in news:
1. The Kondh tribe follows a clan-based system with a strong community structure.
 2. The majority of Kondhs have converted to Buddhism, moving away from their animistic beliefs.
 3. Their religious practices are centered around forest deities, reflecting a deep connection to nature.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two**
 - All three
 - None
6. Consider the following statements about the 2024 Emission Gap Report:
1. The Emission Gap Report is published by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
 2. It assesses the difference between current and necessary emission levels to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement.
 3. The report focuses on the need for developed countries to update their NDCs before 2025.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- 2 and 3 only**
 - 1 and 2 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - None of the above
7. Consider the following statements about the Ethanol Blending Program (EBP):
1. The program aims to achieve a 20% ethanol blend in petrol by 2025, advancing the original target from 2030.
 2. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is the nodal ministry for this program.
 3. The EBP is expected to provide economic benefits to sugarcane farmers by creating demand for ethanol.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two**
 - All three
 - None
8. With reference to the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM), consider the following statements:
1. It is aimed at preserving and promoting India's rich manuscript heritage.
 2. Kriti Sampada, under the NMM, refers to a series of seminars on manuscript conservation.
- Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?
- 1 only**
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
9. Consider the following statements:
1. Demchok lies at the confluence of the Indus River and Charding Nullah.
 2. The Nathu La Pass is located near the Depsang Plains and serves as a key route historically connecting Ladakh with Central Asia.
- Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?
- 1 only**
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
10. International Linear Collider (ILC) aims to:
- Study gravitational waves
 - Explore dark energy interactions
 - Make precise measurements of the Higgs boson properties**
 - Discover new chemical elements