

13-06-2022

Environmental Performance Index

Why in Newspapers?

Recently, the latest edition (2022) of the 'Environmental Performance Index (EPI)' was released.

Quick Issue?

- This report has been prepared by researchers from the following institutions:-
 - Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy at Yale University.
 - Centre for International Earth Science Information Network Earth Institute, Columbia University.

Historical Background?

- The 'Environmental Performance Index' (EPI), provides a data-based summary of 'sustainability' conditions around the world.
- The index was developed from the pilot Environmental Performance Index, first published in 2002, and was created to meet environmental goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.
- This 'index' ranks 180 countries on 40 performance indicators including climate change, environmental public health, biodiversity etc.
- This index is a method of assessing the environmental performance of countries' policies, and provides a scorecard of the participating countries, which gives information about countries leading and backward in environmental performance.
- It also provides practical guidance for countries wishing to move towards a sustainable future.
- India has been ranked lowest in the list of 180 countries in the report.

Other Key Facts?

Reasons for India's rejection of this report

- According to the Indian government, the report uses several indicators based on baseless assumptions.
- Its methodology does not consider per capita emissions and different socio-economic conditions across countries.
- The weighting of indicators in which India was performing well has been reduced.
- Little importance has been given to the principle of equity as indicators such as per capita GHG emissions and GHG emission intensity trend.
- The principle of 'Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities: CBDR-RC' is also hardly reflected in the structure of this index.
- Forests and wetlands, which act as important carbon sinks, are not included by the Environmental Performance Index 2022 (EPI 2022) while computing the projected GHG emissions trajectory to 2050.

Organization Of Islamic Cooperation

Why in Newspapers?

Recently Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) criticized the comments made by two Indians on Prophet Muhammad.

Quick Issue?

- The Ministry of External Affairs rejected the comments of the OIC, saying that the views expressed by citizens do not reflect the views of the Government of India.
- Earlier, India had criticized the OIC for its communal thinking in the midst of the Karnataka hijab controversy.

Historical Background?

- The Organization of Islamic Cooperation represents the collectivism of the Muslim world around the world.
- It was formed in September 1969 during the historic summit in Rabat, Morocco, with the goal of protecting Islamic values following the 1969 arson of a 28-year-old Australian at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- **Member:** The number of its member countries is 57.
 - To establish solidarity among the OIC member states.
 - Support the restoration of the full sovereignty and territorial integrity of any occupied Member State.
 - Preserve Islam, defend it and oppose its condemnation.

Other Key Facts?

India's relations with OIC:

- As a country with the second largest Muslim community in the world, India was invited to the Founding Conference in Rabat in 1969, but was humiliatedly thrown out at the behest of Pakistan.
 - India stayed away from this organization till now due to several reasons:
 - India did not want to join an organization that was formed on the basis of religion.
 - At the same time, there was a risk that improving bilateral relations with individual member states would put it under pressure from a group, especially on issues such as Kashmir.
 - In the 45th session of the Foreign Ministers' Summit in 2018, host Bangladesh suggested that India, where more than 10% of the world's Muslims live, should be given observer status, but the proposal was opposed by Pakistan.
 - India is confident of relying on any statement from the grouping, having built close ties with powerful members such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.
 - India has consistently underlined that J&K is "an integral part of India and an internal matter of India" and that the OIC has no authority over the issue.
 - In the year 2019, India made its first appearance as the "Guest of Honour" at the OIC Foreign Ministers' Meeting.
 - This first invitation was seen as a diplomatic victory for India, especially at a time when tensions with Pakistan escalated after the Pulwama attack.



- Work to prevent growing discontent in Muslim societies and to ensure that member states remain united in the United Nations General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and other international forums.
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah (Saudi Arabia).
- The organization plans to permanently move its headquarters to East Jerusalem after the disputed city of Jerusalem is 'liberated'.
- In addition, it holds Israel responsible for 'war crimes' and violations of international law.
- The organization follows a charter which sets out its objectives, principles and operating mechanism.
- First adopted in 1972, the Charter has been amended several times to suit the evolving circumstances of developing countries.
- It implied that all members be guided and inspired by Islamic teachings and values, while committing themselves to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.
- **Membership:** Members of the Muslim-majority United Nations can join this organization.
 - Membership in the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC is confirmed with full consent.
 - Similar provisions apply for obtaining supervisor status.
- **Decision Processing:** All decision-making in the organization requires the presence of two-thirds of the member states and a defined quorum with full consent.
 - If consensus is not reached, the decision is made by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.
 - The Council of Foreign Ministers is the main decision-making body and meets annually to decide how to implement the general policies of the OIC.
 - They make decisions and resolutions on matters of general interest, review their progress, consider and approve programs and their budgets, consider specific issues affecting Member States, and form a new organ. or recommend setting up of a committee.
- **Islamic summit:** It is constituted by the kings and the heads of the country who have the highest authority related to the organization.
 - Every three years, the organization holds discussions, takes policy decisions, provides guidance on issues related to the organization and considers important issues related to member countries.

Likely Question Asked In Preliminary Exam

Que. With reference to the United Nations General Assembly, consider the following statements: (2022)

1. The UN General Assembly can grant observer status to non-member states.
2. Intergovernmental organizations may try to obtain observer status in the UN General Assembly.
3. Permanent Observers to the UN General Assembly may maintain the mission at the UN Headquarters.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

