

**1. With reference to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), consider the following statements**

1. It is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN)
2. It has jurisdiction to try individuals accused of war crimes or crimes against humanity

**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

**1.) Ans: A**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the **principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN)**. It was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began work in April 1946.
- The seat of the Court is at the **Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands)**. Of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is the only one not located in New York (United States of America).
- The Court's role is to **settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States and to give advisory opinions** on legal questions referred to it by authorized United Nations organs and specialized agencies.
- The Court is **composed of 15 judges**, who are **elected for terms of office of nine years** by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council. Its official languages are English and French.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The International Court of Justice acts as a **world court**. The Court's jurisdiction is twofold: it decides, in accordance with international law, disputes of a legal nature that are submitted to it by States (jurisdiction in contentious cases); and it **gives advisory**

**opinions on legal questions at the request of the organs of the United Nations**, specialized agencies or one related organization authorized to make such a request (advisory jurisdiction)

- The International Court of Justice has **no jurisdiction to try individuals accused of war crimes or crimes** against humanity.

### **The International Criminal Court (ICC)**

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) **investigates and tries individuals charged with the gravest crimes of concern to the international community**: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.
  - The Court is **participating in a global fight to end impunity**, and through international criminal justice, the Court aims to hold those responsible accountable for their crimes and to help prevent these crimes from happening again.
- ❖ As Somalia grapples with the staggering challenge from the COVID-19 pandemic, chances are that the June 8 public hearings at the **International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Somalia's maritime dispute with Kenya will be deferred yet again.**

### **Maritime dispute**

- **Somalia and neighbouring Kenya have locked horns for over a decade** on the delimitation of the **maritime boundary** in the Indian Ocean.
- At issue is a roughly 1,00,000 sq km area, which, as per seismic surveys, **contains huge deposits of oil and gas.**
- Under a **2009 Memorandum of Understanding**, each granted the other no objection to presenting separate submissions to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) concerning the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles.
- The parties also **committed to finding a settlement in accordance with international law on the basis of the CLCS's recommendations**

<https://www.icj-cij.org/en/court>

<https://www.icc-cpi.int/about>

<https://www.icj-cij.org/en/frequently-asked-questions>

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/no-answers-yet-for-somalia/article31665537.ece>

**2. The dashboard called 'CoAST India' was recently in the news. It was associated with which of the following?**

- a) Coastal community development
- b) Disaster mitigation
- c) Monitoring the movements of migrants
- d) Preventing terrorist infiltration along the coastline

2.) Ans: C

#### **Explanation**

- Recently, **India Observatory** has come up with a Geographic Information System (GIS)-enabled dashboard called **Collaboration/Covid Action Support Group (CoAST India)** to **monitor the movements of migrants**. The dashboard has been made in **collaboration with Foundation for Ecological Security (FES)**
- The dashboard includes an **India map reflecting the movement of migrants** in real time on their long journeys, often on foot, along with facilities and relief organisations on their routes.
- It draws **information from 55 organisations on the ground**, mostly in villages, and aims to make such data available so that it would **enable governments and small local civil society groups** to be of assistance to migrants.

#### **India Observatory**

- India Observatory was set up in December 2019, focused on **ecological issues about forests, water bodies, conservation**, etc. that needed a bird's eye view or a satellite's vision. However, after Covid-19 broke out, it has **decided to focus on the movements of people**.
- It is India's first socio, economic and ecological open-source integrated **Geospatial data platform**
- The observatory is designed to supplement **local level decision making** by village communities, Panchayats, NGOs and government officials

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/coronavirus-india-lockdown-now-online-a-map-tracking-migrants-real-time-6427104/>

**3. Which of the following countries in Africa open out to Red sea?**

1. Eritrea
2. Nigeria
3. Ethiopia
4. Sudan

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

- a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 4 only
- d) 1, 3 and 4 only

3.) Ans: C

**Explanation**

- Ethiopia is a landlocked country**
- Nigeria is located on the western coast of Africa. It does not open out to red sea

❖ Recently, a dispute related to **Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam** was in news

**The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam**

- The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is a **gravity dam on the Blue Nile River** in Ethiopia that has been under **construction since 2011**.
- It is in the **Benishangul-Gumuz Region of Ethiopia**, about 15 km east of the border with Sudan. At 6.45 gigawatts, the dam will be the **largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa** when completed, as well as the seventh largest in the world.
- Egypt has **objected to the construction of this dam** and Sudan has found itself caught in the midst of this conflict. Due to the **importance of the Nile as a necessary water source** in the region, observers are concerned that **this dispute may evolve into a full-fledged conflict between the two nations**



**4. Consider the following statements regarding the Bharat Stage (BS) emission standards in India**

1. BS regulations are based on the American emission standards to regulate emission of air pollutants from motor vehicles
2. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is the implementing authority for BS standards in India

**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

**4.) Ans: B**

**Explanation**

**Bharat Stage norms**

- The Bharat Stage are standards **instituted by the government to regulate emission of air pollutants from motor vehicles**. The norms were introduced in 2000.
- With appropriate fuel and technology, they **limit the release of air pollutants such as nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, particulate matter (PM)** and sulphur oxides from vehicles using internal combustion engines.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** As the stage goes up, the **control on emissions become stricter**. The BS regulations are based on the **European emission standards**
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Environment Ministry is **responsible for deciding the fuel standard in the country**. The **Central Pollution Control Board implements these standards**.
- In 2002, the government accepted the report submitted by the **Mashelkar committee**, which proposed a road map for the **rollout of Euro-based emission norms in India**. It also recommended a phased implementation of future norms, with regulations being implemented in major cities first and extended to the rest of the country after a few years.

- Based on the recommendations of the committee, the **National Auto Fuel policy** was announced officially in 2003. The road map for the implementation of the BS norms was laid out until 2010.
- Since October 2010, **Bharat Stage (BS) III norms were enforced across the country**. BS-IV emission norms were put in place in 13 major cities from April 2010, and the entire country from April 2017
- The existing emission norms or **Bharat Stage (BS)-IV were to be replaced by new BS-VI regulations from April 1, 2020**. However, the Supreme Court on March 27 relaxed the March 31 deadline and allowed the sale of the unsold stock of BS-IV vehicles for 10 days **after the expiry of the lockdown period**, except in Delhi and the NCR.

#### **Differences between two stages (BS IV and BS VI)**

- The extent of **sulphur** is the major difference between Bharat Stage IV and Bharat Stage VI norms. BS-IV fuels contain **50 parts per million (ppm)** sulphur and the BS-VI grade fuel only has 10 ppm sulphur
  - BS VI can bring **Particulate Matter in diesel cars down by 80 per cent**. The new norms will bring down nitrogen oxides from diesel cars by 70 per cent and in petrol cars by 25 per cent.
- ❖ Recently, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has issued notification dated 22nd May 2020 regarding the **emission norms for Quadricycle category** for BS VI. This notification completes the process of BS VI for all categories of vehicles in India.

#### **Quadricycle**

- A quadricycle is a vehicle of the **size of a three-wheeler** but with four-tyres and is fully covered like a car. It has an engine like that of a three-wheeler. This makes it a cheap and safe mode of transport for last-mile connectivity

#### **The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)**

- The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is a **statutory organisation** constituted in 1974 under the **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**. CPCB was also entrusted with the powers and functions under the **Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**.

#### **Functions**

- to promote **cleanliness of streams and wells in different areas** of the States by prevention, control and abatement of water pollution
- to improve the quality of air and to prevent, control or abate air pollution in the country.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/cars-uvs/bharat-stage-vi-norms-know-how-they-will-impact-you/articleshow/66362907.cms?from=mdr>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1626585>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/auto-news/10-day-extension-of-bs-vi-deadline-unlikely-to-do-any-good-to-auto-industry-report/articleshow/74894332.cms?from=mdr>

<https://www.business-standard.com/about/what-is-bs-vi-norms>

### 5. Consider the following

1. Carbon monoxide
2. Methane
3. Ozone
4. Sulphur dioxide

**Which of the above are released into the atmosphere due to the burning of crop/biomass residue?**

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- c) 1 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**5.) Ans: D**

#### **Explanation**

- Biomass burning is the **combustion of organic matter**. Burning can be from natural or manmade fires. Examples are the **burning of crop stubble, forest residues and vegetation burnt for land clearing**

- Burning of agricultural biomass residue, or **Crop Residue Burning (CRB)** has been identified as a major health hazard. Burning of crop residues not only **degrade the atmospheric quality** but also **affect the climate and ultimate the human health**.
  - Crop residue and biomass burning (forest fires) are considered as a **major source of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), Ozone**, volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides, **Sulphur dioxide** and halogen compounds
  - It is also a significant source of **aerosol in the atmosphere**, having potential impact on global air quality and that of a climate
  - It was observed that **levels of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub> increases during the burning months** (October–November) incorporated with the effect of meteorological parameters especially wind direction, precipitation and atmospheric temperature.
- ❖ Recently, there has **been a spike in incidents of stubble burning** in Punjab, compared with the past two years as many farmers continue to defy the ban on the practice. Government data show that across the State, between April 15 and May 24, **as many as 13,026 incidents of straw fire have been reported**. Last year the number of such incidents during the same period was 10,476 and in 2018, it was 11,236.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/with-wheat-harvest-over-punjab-registers-spike-in-stubble-burning/article31674936.ece>

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/publications/smoke-biomass-burning>

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/air/crop-burning-punjab-haryana-s-killer-fields-55960>