

Current Affairs

MADE EASY

Annual Edition, 2016

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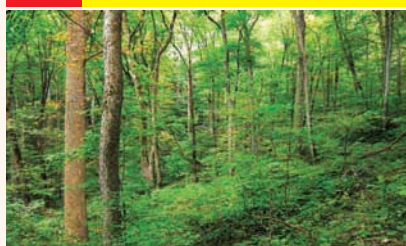


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MESSAGE TO READERS



B. Singh (Ex. IES)
CMD, MADE EASY Group

Dear Students,

This annual edition of Current Affairs is prepared to address the needs of Civil Services, Engineering Services, State Services, SSC exams and other competitive examinations. This edition contains the current issues – national as well as international affairs of last 12 months which are of importance from examination point of view. Over the last few years, it has been observed that UPSC examination is more tilted towards current affairs questions, hence current affairs should be given priority. Though there are several newspapers and monthly magazines which can be referred for study of Current Affairs topics but none of these are focused and oriented to address the need of UPSC Engineering Services Examination (ESE).

The annual issues of Current Affairs MADE EASY is very focused and contains detailed description of all important topics required for such competitive examinations.

In case of engineers, it is specifically observed that most of the engineering aspirants preparing for Engineering Services Examination do not get sufficient time to prepare Current Affairs because they hardly get time to prepare for GS due to vast syllabus of technical subjects and importance of other exams like GATE & PSUs.

Coming few months will see most of you burning midnight oil to get winning score meriting a jump to the next stage of the competition. For all aspirants preparing for competitive exams it is time to give finishing touch to your preparation. In last few weeks of your preparation this annual issue will prove to be an important tool to cover all important areas with precision in minimum possible time.

All aspirants are suggested to give last minute revision of important issues, concepts and formulae, as the case may be.

B. Singh (Ex. IES)
CMD, MADE EASY GROUP

A LETTER FROM EDITOR



Dear Readers,

In today's fast changing world, everything has become so competitive that sometimes even better is not enough, it requires only the best. Be it life or be it examination, it is imperative to have the best of the preparations and hence Timely and Timeless preparation is an essence of the success in the competitive examinations. Competitive examinations are sometimes less about strength or intelligence and more about understanding the examination requirements and incessant effort to unlock our potential for accomplishing the goal.

It gives me an immense pleasure and satisfaction in introducing the annual issue of "Current Affairs Made Easy". The very basic purpose of launching this Magazine is to be able to fulfill the requirement of various competitive examinations in an efficient and effective way and helping the aspirants achieving the desired success in those examinations. We have tried to provide an ingenious, resourceful, authentic and relevant informations in a most lucid, comprehensible, communicative and self- explanatory manner. With the comprehensive yet precise coverage, this issue of the Current Affairs Made Easy will be accomplishing the requirements of the various Competitive Examinations like Civil Services Examination, State Civil Services Examinations, Indian Engineering Services Examination, Indian Forest Services Examination, and the various Public Sector undertakings Examination. Despite Competitive examinations being the main focus, The Magazine will generate awareness about the Nation and the World among the General Readers too.

In this issue of the Magazine we have covered the wide ranging issues of National and International importance that occurred in the last twelve months or so with additional inputs in order to provide the basic understanding of the key issues. Background material has been covered for such issues which require greater attention keeping examination requirement in mind. All important Awards and Honours, Books and Authors, Persons and Places, Meeting and Summits, Institutions and Organisations have been covered in such a manner so that examination requirement is successfully met. Current issues related to Defence, Science and technology, Environment and wildlife, Art and Culture, Economy and Sports have also been covered extensively. Issues of greater importance like Climate Change Summit in Paris, WTO Ministerial Conference Meeting in Nairobi, Human Development Report 2015, Nobel Prizes 2015 and some other topics have been given both the objective and the analytical coverage.

I sincerely hope that this Magazine will help you access the hidden treasure trove of success and will act as a pathfinder through the journey towards your dream.

Wishing you all the very best and a bright future ahead..

Aniruddh Pratap Singh
Editor

Paris Climate Change Conference



The twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) took place

from 30 November to 11 December 2015, in Paris, France. The COP -21, adopted a new historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change under the UNFCCC, which would be open for signing by the Parties between April 22, 2016-April 21, 2017. Secretary-General of the United Nations would be the Depositary of the Agreement.

The conference concluded the work of Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action set up in 2011. In order to implement the decisions adopted, a new Ad hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement has been set up.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Prakash Javadekar lead the Indian inter-ministerial delegation that participated in the Paris conference.

The Paris Agreement represents the willingness of the global community to take collective measures for achieving tangible success in the fight against climate change. The spirit of accommodation by all parties was exhibited in the conference to ensure the best possible outcome for the entire planet and the human civilization. The Agreement, in enhancing the implementation of the Convention, including its objective, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty

Important highlights of the Paris Agreement are:

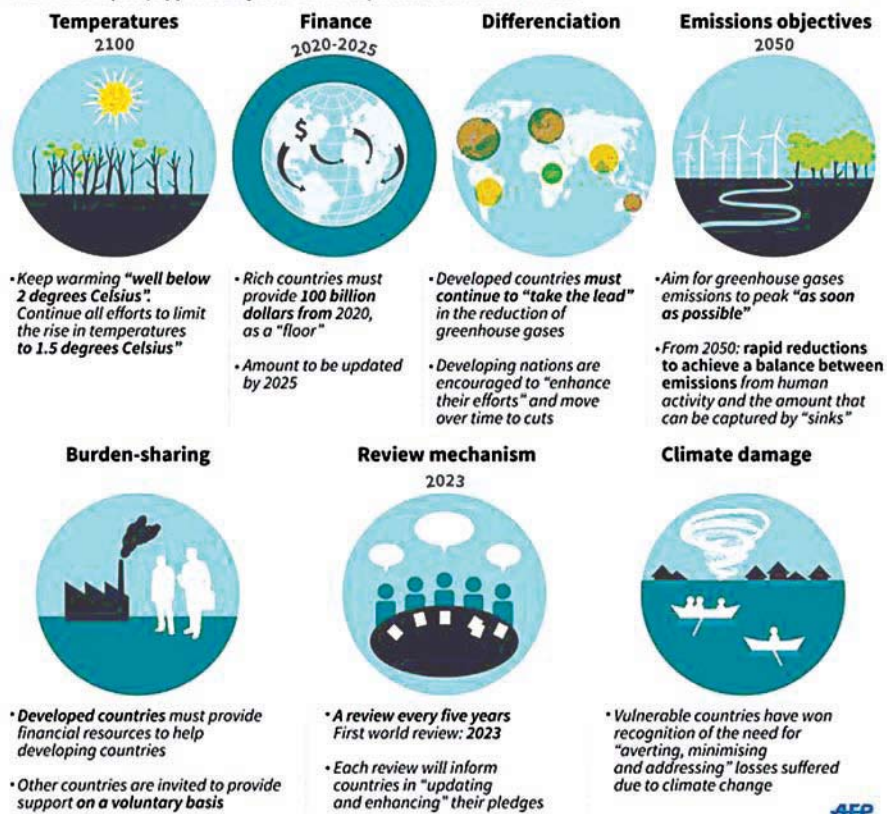
1. The agreement aims to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.
2. The agreement aims to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production
3. The agreement aims making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilient development.
4. The Agreement explicitly recognizes in the Preamble, the imperatives of climate justice and sustainable lifestyles as manifested in patterns of consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead. The issue of climate justice was raised by PM Modi during his address at the COP 21. The Preamble also recognizes the specific needs and special circumstances of the developing country parties, which are vulnerable to effects of climate change as provided under the Convention.
5. The Agreement explicitly recognizes that the principles of equity and Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances will be respected.



6. India has always highlighted the urgent need of Adaptation to deal with the impact of climate change. I am happy to state that the Agreement is not mitigation-centric and includes adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building as equal pillars.
7. In order to achieve the long term temperature goal, the Paris Agreement seeks to aim at the global peaking of emissions by the 2nd half of the century, while recognizing that the timeframe for peaking will be longer for developing countries. It also mandates that global peaking of emission shall be on the basis of equity and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty.
8. The country driven nature of the contribution has been preserved, as was strongly advocated by India. Parties' contributions are defined as 'Nationally Determined Contributions' and a top-down approach of apportioning mitigation ambition has been avoided.
9. A 5 year communication-cycle for Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) has been agreed to. This will apply to India Post-2030 as India has submitted a 10 year INDC (2021-2030). India may only has to re-confirm its INDC for 2025-2030. There is no mandatory ratchet up mechanism for Parties to raise their mitigation ambition. This will continue to be nationally determined. However, Parties would be free to raise their ambition voluntarily any time.
10. The Agreement continues differentiating in Mitigation actions of developed and developing countries. The agreement asks developed countries to continue taking the lead and undertake absolute targets, while developing countries should continue to enhance their mitigation efforts and are encouraged to move over time towards absolute targets.
11. A global stocktake will take place every 5 years to assess the progress in addressing climate change.
12. A new market mechanism to provide opportunities for voluntary cooperation in the implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions using international transfer of mitigation outcomes has been adopted. Implementation of REDD+ mechanism has also been anchored in the Agreement.
13. A global goal has been established to increase the adaptive capacity. Adaptation has been accorded equal importance

The Paris climate agreement: key points

The historic pact, approved by 195 countries, will take effect from 2020



to Mitigation as demanded by developing countries. International support is to be provided by the developed countries for adaptation actions.

14. Agreement mandates an obligation for developed countries to provide financial resources to developing countries.
15. The accompanying decision also lays down that US dollar 100 billion mobilization of funds per year by developed countries will be scaled up after 2020 and before 2025 taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries.
16. An enhanced system for transparency has been provided in the Agreement. In addition, a separate Capacity Building Initiative for transparency to help developing countries has been agreed to in order to build institutional and technical capacity.
17. A new technology framework has been established. Collaborative approaches to Research and Development and facilitating access to technology and financial support for the technology mechanism have been provided for.
18. A new Paris Committee will work out the modalities for enhancing capacity building activities in developing countries under the Agreement. Developed countries are to

provide financial support for capacity building to developing countries.

19. Loss and damage has also been accorded a prime place in the agreement. Decision has been taken on the continuation of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, following the review in 2016.

What is UNFCCC?

The United Nations framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is one of the three "Rio Conventions", adopted at the "Rio Earth Summit" held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) from June 3 to 14, 1992. Its sister Rio Conventions are the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification. Preventing "dangerous" human interference with the climate system by negating the negative impact of the human activities on the global climate by mainly reducing the emission of the anthropomorphized GHGs, is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC. The UNFCCC entered into force on 21 March 1994. The European Union and 196 countries are the Parties to the Convention. All United Nations members including India are the members of UNFCCC. Niue, the Cook Islands and the European Union are the other Members of the Convention on Climate change. UNFCCC is having its secretariat at Bonn, Germany.

20. Pre-2020 actions are also part of the decisions. The developed country parties were urged to scale up their level of financial support with a complete roadmap to achieve the goal of jointly providing US \$ 100 billion by 2020 for Mitigation and Adaptation by significantly increasing Adaptation finance from current levels and to further provide appropriate technology and capacity building support.

When the Agreement would become effective?

This Agreement would become effective on the thirtieth day after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55 percent of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Can a Country withdraw from the Agreement?

At any time after three years from the date on which this Agreement has entered into force for a Party, that Party may withdraw from the Agreement by giving written notification to the Depositary. Any such withdrawal shall take effect upon expiry of one year from the date of receipt by the Depositary of the notification of withdrawal, or on such later date as may be specified in the notification of withdrawal. Any Party that withdraws from the Convention shall be considered as also having withdrawn from this Agreement.

UN Climate Change Conferences		
Session	Session Date	Location
COP 21	30 Nov - 11 Dec 2015	Paris, France
COP 20	1 - 12 Dec 2014	Lima, Peru
COP 19	11 - 22 Nov 2013	Warsaw, Poland
COP 18	26 Nov - 7 Dec 2012	Doha, Qatar
COP 17	28 Nov - 9 Dec 2011	Durban, South Africa
COP 16	29 Nov - 10 Dec 2010	Cancun, Mexico
COP 15	7 - 18 Dec 2009	Copenhagen, Denmark
COP 14	1 - 12 Dec 2008	Poznan, Poland
COP 13	3 - 14 Dec 2007	Bali, Indonesia
COP 12	6 - 17 Nov 2006	Nairobi, Kenya
COP 11	28 Nov - 9 Dec 2005	Montreal, Canada
COP 10	6 - 17 Dec 2004	Buenos Aires, Argentina
COP 9	1 - 12 Dec 2003	Milan, Italy
COP 8	23 Oct - 1 Nov 2002	New Dehli, India
COP 7	29 Oct - 10 Nov 2001	Marrakech, Morocco
COP 6-2	16 - 27 Jul 2001	Bonn, Germany
COP 6	13 - 25 Nov 2000	The Hague, The Netherlands
COP 5	25 Oct - 5 Nov 1999	Bonn, Germany
COP 4	2 - 13 Nov 1998	Buenos Aires, Argentina
COP 3	1 - 10 Dec 1997	Kyoto, Japan
Cop 2	July 1996	Geneva, Switzerland
COP 1	28 March - 7 April 1995	Berlin, Germany

Breakthrough Energy Coalition

The Breakthrough Energy Coalition is working together with a growing group of visionary countries who are significantly increasing their public research pipeline through the Mission Innovation initiative to make that future a reality. 28 investors from 10 countries have joined the Breakthrough Energy Coalition to make an unprecedented commitment to invest patient capital in early-stage technology development coming out of Mission Innovation countries. The group is spearheaded by Bill Gates. These investments, which are guided by a set of Principles, will catalyze broad business participation in the commercialization and deployment of clean energy technologies worldwide.

Core investment principles of Breakthrough Energy Coalition:

- Invest Early
- Invest Wisely
- Invest Broadly
- Invest Together
- Invest Boldly

Investors who have joined the Breakthrough Energy Coalition

Mukesh Ambani , Chairman and Managing Director, Reliance Industries Limited, India
John Arnold , Co-chair, Laura and John Arnold Foundation, United States
Marc Benioff , Founder, Chairman and CEO, Salesforce.com, United States
Jeff Bezos , Founder and CEO, Amazon, United States
HRH Prince Alwaleed bin Talal , Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Alwaleed Philanthropies, Saudi Arabia
Richard Branson , Founder, Virgin Group, United Kingdom
Ray Dalio , Founder, Bridgewater Associates, United States
Aliko Dangote , Founder and Chief Executive, Dangote Group, Nigeria
John Doerr , General Partner, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, United States
Bill Gates , Co-chair, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, United States
Reid Hoffman , Founder, LinkedIn and Partner, Greylock, United States
Chris Hohn , Founder, The Children's Investment Fund, United Kingdom
Vinod Khosla , Founder, Khosla Ventures, United States
Jack Ma , Executive Chairman, Alibaba Group, China
Patrice Motsepe , Founder and Executive Chairman, African Rainbow Minerals (ARM), South Africa
Xavier Niel , Founder, Iliad Group, France
Hasso Plattner , Co-founder and Chairman, SAP, Germany
Julian Robertson , Founder and Chairman, Tiger Management, United States
Neil Shen , Founding Managing Partner, Sequoia Capital China, China
Nat Simons and Laura Baxter-Simons , Co-founders, Prelude Ventures, United States
Masayoshi Son , Founder, Chairman and CEO, SoftBank Group Corp., Japan
George Soros , Chairman, Soros Fund Management LLC, United States
Tom Steyer , Businessman, Philanthropist, and President, NextGen Climate, United States
Ratan Tata , Chairman Emeritus, Tata Sons, India
Meg Whitman , CEO, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, United States
Ms. Zhang Xin and Mr. Pan Shiyi , Co-founder and CEO, SOHO China, Chairman, SOHO China, China
Mark Zuckerberg and Dr. Priscilla Chan , Founder, Chairman and CEO, Facebook, Pediatrician and CEO, The Primary School, United States
University of California , United States

International Solar Alliance

At the Paris COP21 summit, PM Modi launched an international solar alliance of over 120 countries with the French president, François Hollande. The historic International Solar Alliance is conceived by PM Modi. The Alliance has invited all countries located fully or partly between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn to join. The Alliance is slated to carry out its functions from the National Institute of Solar Energy in India, Gurgaon. The Central government will provide land and \$30 million to form a secretariat for the Alliance, and also support it for five years.

This path-breaking alliance will provide an unprecedented boost to solar energy development and deployment for meeting the energy needs in a clean, affordable and sustainable manner. Many countries have expressed their interest in joining the alliance. The French President co-authored a book of quotes with our Prime Minister, which was also released at the high-level event.

The sun is the source of all energy. The world must turn to solar, the power of our future.

Mission Innovation

A 'Mission Innovation' was launched at the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2015 (COP21) in Paris-Le Bourget, France, November 30, 2015. The mission aims to dramatically accelerate public and private global clean energy innovation to address global climate change, provide affordable clean energy to consumers, including in the developing world, and create additional commercial opportunities in clean energy.

Each of the 20 participating countries will seek to double its governmental and/or state-directed clean energy research and development investment over five years. New investments will be focused on transformational clean energy technology

innovations that can be scaled to varying economic and energy market conditions that exist in participating countries and in the broader world.

20 Countries of Mission Innovation: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America:

India Pavilion

An India Pavilion was also set up in Paris, which highlighted the initiatives taken by various Ministries, State Government, Mission under National Action Plan on Climate Change, industries, civil societies, NGOs etc. The Prime Minister inaugurated the Indian Pavilion and released "PARAMPARA", a book on India's culture of climate- friendly sustainable practices.

India's Meeting on Sidelines of COP-21

India was also a part of several groupings of developing countries, including BASIC, Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDCs) and G-77 and China, which fought for the cause of developing countries. 19 bilateral meetings were held with a number of countries including Mozambique, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Vanuatu, Singapore, Sudan, Japan, USA, UK, France and Germany.

India's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution

While submitting its INDC, India conveyed that it had factored in its development agenda, particularly the eradication of poverty coupled with its commitment to following the low carbon path to progress and being sanguine about the unencumbered availability of clean technologies and financial resource from around the world. The INDC is for the period 2021 to 2030:



1. To put forward and further propagate a healthy and sustainable way of living based on traditions and values of conservation and moderation.
2. To adopt a climate friendly and a cleaner path than the one followed hitherto by others at corresponding level of economic development.
3. To reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33 to 35 percent by 2030 from 2005 level.
4. To achieve about 40 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from nonfossil fuel based energy resources by 2030 with the help of transfer of technology and low cost international finance including from Green Climate Fund (GCF).
5. To create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.
6. To better adapt to climate change by enhancing investments in development programmes in sectors vulnerable to climate change, particularly agriculture, water resources, Himalayan region, coastal regions, health and disaster management.

Country	Base Level	Reduction Target	Target Year
China	2005	Emissions peaking	2030 (or before)
		60-65 percent (carbon intensity)	2030
United States	2005	26-28 percent	2025
EU	1990	40 percent	2030
India	2005	33-35 percent (carbon intensity)	2030
Russia	1990	25-30 percent	2030
Japan	2005	25.4 percent	2030
	2013	26 percent	2030
Brazil	2005	37 percent	2025
		43 percent (indicative)	2030

7. To mobilize domestic and new & additional funds from developed countries to implement the above mitigation and adaptation actions in view of the resource required and the resource gap.
8. To build capacities, create domestic framework and international architecture for quick diffusion of cutting edge climate technology in India and for joint collaborative R&D for such future technologies.

Mitigation strategies by India

Green Generation for Clean & Energy Secure India: more than 5 times increase in Renewable Capacity from 35 GW (upto March 2015) to 175 GW by 2022.

- National Solar Mission scaled up five-fold from 20 GW to 100 GW by 2022.
- Kochi Airport is the World's first airport to fully run on solar power.
- Solar powered toll plazas envisaged for all toll collection booths across the country.
- National Smart Grid Mission launched for efficient transmission & distribution network.
- Green Energy Corridor projects being rolled out to ensure evacuation from renewable energy plants.

- Nationwide Campaign for Energy Conservation launched with the target to save 10% of current energy consumption by the year 2018-19.
- Launched Smart Cities Mission to develop new generation cities by building a clean and sustainable environment.
- National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY) launched to bring together urban planning, economic growth and heritage conservation in an inclusive manner.
- Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) is a new urban renewal mission for 500 cities across India.
- Launched one-of-its kind 'Swachh Bharat Mission' (Clean India Mission) to make country clean and litter free by 2019.
- Zero Effect, Zero Defect (ZED) with Make in India campaign to enhance energy& resource efficiency, pollution control, use of renewable energy, waste management etc.
- Formulated Green Highways (Plantation & Maintenance) Policy to develop 140,000 km long "tree-line" along both sides of national highways.
- Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid & Electric Vehicles (FAME India) to promote faster adoption and manufacturing of hybrid and electric vehicles.
- Country's first passenger vehicle fuel-efficiency standards finalized.
- Policies to increase production of energy efficient 3 phase locomotives and switchover to 100% of these locos from 2016-17 onwards.
- Policy directive issued to use 5% bio-diesel in traction fuel in diesel locomotives.
- National Air Quality Index launched with One Number, One Color and One Description to give the status of air pollution in a particular city.

Adaptation Strategies by India

- India has launched Soil Health Card Scheme. Additionally, 100 mobile soil-testing laboratories have been setup across the country.
- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana launched to promote organic farming practices.
- The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana launched to promote efficient irrigation practices.
- Neeranchal is a new programme to give additional impetus to watershed development in the country.
- Launched National Mission for Clean Ganga (Namami Gange) which seeks to rejuvenate the river.
- National Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (NBWUE) proposed for promotion, regulation and control efficient use of water.
- 'Give It Up' Campaign launched to encourage citizens to give up subsidy on cooking gas to meet the needs of the truly needy citizens, thereby promote shift away from inefficient use of biomass in rural areas.

Climate finance policies by India

- A National Adaptation Fund with an initial allocation of INR 3,500 million has been established to combat the adaptation needs.
- India has cut subsidies on fossil fuels including diesel, kerosene and domestic LPG. India has launched 'Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme' for cooking gas, where subsidy will be transferred directly into the bank accounts of the targeted beneficiaries. Over the past one year India has almost cut its petroleum subsidy by about 26%.
- Coal cess quadrupled from INR 50 imposed in the year 2010 to INR 200 per tonne to help finance clean energy projects and Ganga rejuvenation. This cess on coal forms the corpus for the National Clean Environment Fund.
- For funding of renewable energy projects during the year 2015-16, Tax Free Infrastructure Bonds of INR 50 billion are being introduced.

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Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference



The WTO's Tenth Ministerial Conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 15 to 19 December 2015, the first such meeting hosted by an African nation. The Conference was chaired by Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Amina Mohamed.

The Conference was opened on 15 December by Kenya's President, Uhuru Kenyatta. During the opening session, the Conference was also addressed by the Chair of the Conference Amina Mohamed, Director-General Roberto Azevêdo and the Chair of the General Council, Fernando de Mateo.

The Vice-Chairs of the Conference were Mr. Alexander Mora (Costa Rica), Mr. Carlo Calenda (Italy) and Mr Gregory L. Domingo (Philippines).

The plenary sessions began on 16 December. These sessions provided an opportunity for ministers to make prepared statements. A special ceremony was held on 16 December for the WTO accession of Liberia and on 17 December for the accession of Afghanistan. Liberia and Afghanistan after ratification of the accession documents will become 163rd and 164th members of the WTO respectively.

WTO Members
Founder : 128 GATT Signatories including India
164th : Afghanistan
163rd : Liberia
162nd : Kazakhstan
161st: Seychelles
160th : Yemen

At the closing session on 19 December, ministers adopted the Nairobi Package, a series of six Ministerial Decisions on agriculture, cotton and issues related to Least-developed countries (LDCs). A Ministerial Declaration outlining the Package and the future work of the WTO was also adopted.

The Nairobi Package

The Nairobi Package contains a series of six Ministerial Decisions on agriculture, cotton and issues related to least-developed countries. These include a commitment to abolish export subsidies for farm exports, which Director-General Roberto Azevêdo hailed as the "most significant outcome on agriculture" in the organization's 20-year history.

Nairobi Package: 6 Ministerial Decisions

- Special Safeguard Mechanism for Developing Country Members
- Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes
- Export Competition
- Cotton
- Preferential Rules of Origin for Least Developed Countries
- Implementation of Preferential Treatment in Favour of Services and Service Suppliers of Least Developed Countries and Increasing LDC Participation in Services Trade

Decision on Export Competition

A centrepiece of the Nairobi Package is a Ministerial Decision on Export Competition, including a commitment to eliminate subsidies for farm exports. A number of countries are currently using export subsidies to support agriculture exports. The legally-binding decision would eliminate these subsidies and prevent governments from reverting to trade-distorting export support in the future.

Under the decision, developed members have committed to remove export subsidies immediately, except for a handful of agriculture products, and developing countries will do so by 2018. Developing members will keep the flexibility to cover marketing and transport costs for agriculture exports until the end of 2023, and the poorest and food-importing countries would enjoy additional time to cut export subsidies.

The decision contains disciplines to ensure that other export policies are not used as a disguised form of subsidies. These disciplines include terms to limit the benefits of financing support to agriculture exporters, rules on state enterprises engaging in agriculture trade, and disciplines to ensure that food aid does not negatively affect domestic production. Developing countries are given longer time to implement these rules.

Decision on Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM)

A Ministerial Decision on a Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) for Developing Countries recognizes that developing members will have the right to temporarily increase tariffs in face of import surges by using an SSM. Members will continue to negotiate the mechanism in dedicated sessions of the Agriculture Committee.

Decision on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes

Ministers also adopted a Ministerial

Decision on Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes. The decision commits members to engage constructively in finding a permanent solution to this issue. Under the Bali Ministerial Decision of 2013, developing countries are allowed to continue food stockpile programmes, which are otherwise in risk of breaching the WTO's domestic subsidy cap, until a permanent solution is found by the 11th Ministerial Conference in 2017.

Decision on Cotton

A Ministerial Decision on Cotton stresses the vital importance of the cotton sector to LDCs. The decision includes three agriculture elements: market access, domestic support and export competition. On market access, the decision calls for cotton from LDCs to be given duty-free and quota-free access to the markets of developed countries — and to those of developing countries declaring that they are able to do so — from 1 January 2016. The domestic support part of the cotton decision acknowledges members' reforms in their domestic cotton policies and stresses that more efforts remain to be made. On export competition for cotton, the decision mandates that developed countries prohibit cotton export subsidies immediately and developing countries do so at a later date.

Decision on Preferential rules of origin for LDCs

The Ministerial Conference adopted a decision that will facilitate opportunities for least-developed countries' export of goods to both developed and developing countries under unilateral preferential trade arrangements in favour of LDCs.

The decision in Nairobi builds on the 2013 Bali Ministerial Decision on preferential rules of origin for LDCs. The Bali Decision set out, for the first time, a set of multilaterally agreed guidelines to help make it easier for LDC exports to qualify for preferential market access.

The Nairobi Decision expands upon this by providing more detailed directions on specific issues such as methods for determining when a product qualifies as "made in an LDC," and when inputs from other sources can be "cumulated" — or combined together — into the consideration of origin. It calls on preference-granting members to consider allowing the use of non-originating materials up to 75% of the final value of the product.

The decision also calls on preference-granting members to consider simplifying documentary and procedural requirements related to origin.

Decision on LDC trade in services

The Ministerial Decision on Implementation of Preferential Treatment in Favour of Services and Service Suppliers of Least Developed Countries and Increasing LDC Participation in Services Trade extends the current waiver period under which non-LDC WTO members may grant preferential treatment to LDC services and service suppliers. The period has been extended 15 years until 31 December 2030.

The waiver allows WTO members to deviate from their most-favoured nation obligation under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). To date, 21 members have submitted notifications granting preferences to LDC services and service suppliers.

The decision also instructs the WTO's Trade in Services Council to encourage discussions among members on technical assistance aimed at increasing the capacity of LDCs to participate in services trade. It also sets up a review to monitor the operation of the notified preferences.

About WTO Ministerial Conference:

WTO's Ministerial conference is the highest decision-making body of the WTO. It usually meets every two years. The Ministerial Conference can take

decisions on all matters under any of the multilateral trade agreements. The Ministerial Conference is the topmost body of the WTO under the governance structure set up by the "Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO". Ministerial Conference is composed of representatives of all the Members.

List of WTO Ministerial Conferences

1. Singapore, 9-13 December 1996
2. Geneva (Switzerland), 18-20 May 1998
3. Seattle (USA), November 30 – December 3, 1999
4. Doha (Qatar), 9-13 November 2001
5. Cancún (Mexico), 10-14 September 2003
6. Hong Kong, 13-18 December 2005
7. Geneva, 30 November - 2 December 2009
8. Geneva, 15-17 December 2011
9. Bali (Indonesia), 3-6 December 2013
10. Nairobi (Kenya), 15 -19 December 2015

Groups in the Negotiations

During negotiation at the WTO platforms, various countries are represented by their own representatives but a large number of countries have formed certain coalitions groups in the WTO with an aim of often speaking with one voice using a single coordinator or negotiating team. With this they can increase their bargaining powers at the negotiations. India is also a member of certain groups WTO. India is a member of the groups which include G-20, G-33, NAMA-11, "W52" sponsors.

G-20 is a coalition of developing countries pressing for ambitious reforms of agriculture in developed countries with some flexibility for developing countries. This group was emerged at the 5th Ministerial WTO conference held in Cancun (Mexico) in 2003. It presently consist of 23 members and the members are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Uruguay, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

G-33 is presently a coalition of 48 countries. It is also called as "Friends of Special Products" in agriculture. It is a coalition of developing countries pressing for flexibility for developing countries to undertake limited market opening in agriculture. Present members are: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, China, Congo, Cuba, Dominican, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Korea, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Taiwan (Chinese Taipei), Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe

NAMA-11 is a coalition of developing countries seeking flexibilities to limit market opening in industrial goods trade. Present members are: Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Namibia, Philippines, South Africa, Tunisia, and Venezuela.

"W52" sponsors: This is a group of 109 countries. A coalition of sponsors of a proposal for "modalities" in negotiations on geographical indications (the multilateral register for wines and spirits, and extending the higher level of protection beyond wines and spirits) and "disclosure" (patent applicants to disclose the origin of genetic resources and traditional knowledge used in the inventions).

Geographical indications (GIs): Place names (or words associated with a place) used to identify products (for example, "Champagne", "Tequila" or "Roquefort") which have a particular quality, reputation or other characteristic because they come from that place.

Cotton Four: Four African cotton producing countries are known informally as the "Cotton-4". These countries are — Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali.

Cairns Group: It is a coalition of agricultural exporting nations lobbying for agricultural trade liberalization. It has 20 members: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Uruguay, Viet Nam.

G-10

G-10 is one of the groups in the WTO's agriculture negotiations. It is a coalition of countries lobbying for agriculture to be treated as diverse and special because of non-trade concerns. The group at present consist of: Iceland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Republic of, Liechtenstein, Mauritius, Norway, Switzerland, Chinese Taipei



