



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 24-03-2025**

### **GS-1**

1. Holocene Epoch

### **GS-2**

2. Public Accounts Committee (PAC)
3. International Olympic Committee (IOC)

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## **Holocene Epoch**

### **Syllabus: GS-1; Geography**

#### **Context**

- Rates of relative sea-level rise during the final stage of the last deglaciation, the early Holocene, are key to understanding future ice melt and sea-level change under a warming climate.

#### **Key Features of the Holocene Epoch**

##### **Definition and Origin:**

- The term "Holocene" was introduced by **French scientist Paul Gervais in 1869** and formally adopted by the International Geological Congress in 1885.
- Derived from the Greek words **holos (whole) and kainos (new)**, it signifies the "entirely recent" epoch.
- It began with the retreat of ice sheets and glaciers at the end of the last Ice Age, leading to a significant warming trend.

##### **Climatic Stability:**

- The Holocene is marked by a period of relative climatic stability, which contrasts sharply with the extreme fluctuations of the preceding **Pleistocene Epoch**.
- This stability allowed ecosystems to flourish and provided a conducive environment for the development of human societies.

##### **Geological Significance:**

- Holocene sediments, both continental and marine, cover the largest area of the globe compared to any other epoch.
- These sediments provide valuable insights into past climate conditions, sea-level changes, and the evolution of ecosystems.

#### **Human Civilization and the Holocene**

##### **Rise of Agriculture and Settlements:**

- The Holocene witnessed the transition of humans from hunter-gatherer societies to agricultural communities.
- The stable climate enabled the domestication of plants and animals, leading to the establishment of permanent settlements and the rise of complex civilizations.

##### **Cultural and Technological Advancements:**

- This epoch saw significant advancements in human culture, technology, and societal organization, including the development of writing, trade, and urbanization.

### **Anthropocene Debate:**

- Due to the profound impact of human activities on Earth's ecosystems and climate, some scientists propose that we have entered a new epoch called the Anthropocene.
- The Anthropocene highlights the role of human-induced changes such as deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change, which are altering the planet's geological and ecological systems.

### **Environmental and Climatic Changes in the Holocene**

#### **Sea-Level Rise:**

- During the early Holocene, rapid sea-level rise occurred due to the melting of ice sheets.
- Studying these changes helps scientists understand and predict future sea-level rise in response to global warming.

#### **Interglacial Period:**

- The Holocene is an interglacial period, characterized by warmer temperatures and the retreat of glaciers.
- It is unique among interglacial periods for the development of human civilizations.

## **Public Accounts Committee (PAC)**

### **Syllabus: GS-2; Polity**

#### **Context**

- The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has criticised the Union Ministry of Tourism for the poor implementation of the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

#### **About**

#### **Establishment and Purpose:**

- **Established:** 1921 (oldest parliamentary committee in India).
- **Purpose:** To audit the revenue and expenditure of the Government of India, ensuring that public funds are spent efficiently, legally, and as intended.

### Key Functions:

- **Examination of CAG Reports:** Reviews the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) audit reports on government expenditure.
- **Oversight of Expenditure:** Ensures that funds sanctioned by Parliament are used appropriately and effectively.
- **Investigation of Irregularities:** Investigates financial irregularities, losses, and inefficiencies in government spending.

### Membership:

- **Total Members:** 22 (15 from Lok Sabha and 7 from Rajya Sabha).
- **Chairperson:** A Lok Sabha MP, traditionally from the Opposition.
- **Term:** One year.
- **Exclusion of Ministers:** Ministers cannot be members of the PAC.

### Swadesh Darshan Scheme

#### Launch and Objective:

- **Launched:** 2015 by the Ministry of Tourism.
- **Objective:** To develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations in India by creating thematic tourist circuits.

#### Funding:

- **Type:** 100% centrally funded scheme.

#### Implementation:

- **Financial Assistance:** Provided to State Governments, Union Territory (UT) Administrations, and Central Agencies by the Ministry of Tourism.
- **Operation & Maintenance (O&M):** Responsibility of the respective State/UT government.

#### Key Features:

- **Theme-Based Tourism Circuits:** Development of tourism circuits based on specific themes.

- **Infrastructure Development:** Includes roads, signage, parking, and public amenities.
- **Eco-Tourism and Heritage Conservation:** Efforts to promote eco-tourism and conserve heritage sites.

## **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**

### **Syllabus: GS-2; International Relations- Sports Policy**

#### **Context**

- The International Olympic Committee's next leader will be 41-year-old Kirsty Coventry, who won the IOC election.



#### **About**

- The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** is a pivotal organization in the world of sports.

#### **1. Overview of the IOC**

- **Establishment:** Founded on **23 June 1894** by **Pierre de Coubertin**, a French educator and historian, in Paris, France.
- **Headquarters:** Located in **Lausanne, Switzerland**.

- **Purpose:** The IOC is the supreme authority of the Olympic Movement, responsible for organizing the **Summer and Winter Olympic Games** and promoting the Olympic values worldwide.
- **Motto:** *Citius, Altius, Fortius* (Latin for "Faster, Higher, Stronger"). In 2021, the IOC added the word "*Communiter*" (Together) to emphasize unity.

## 2. Key Functions of the IOC

- **Organizing the Olympic Games:** The IOC oversees the planning, funding, and execution of the Summer and Winter Olympics.
- **Promoting Olympic Values:** The IOC promotes the values of **excellence, friendship, and respect** through sports.
- **Ensuring Fair Play:** It works to combat doping, corruption, and other unethical practices in sports.
- **Supporting Athletes:** The IOC provides funding, training, and support to athletes worldwide.
- **Global Outreach:** It collaborates with governments, NGOs, and other organizations to promote sports as a tool for social development and peace.

## 3. Structure of the IOC

- **IOC Session:** The general assembly of IOC members, which meets once a year and is the supreme decision-making body.
- **Executive Board:** Comprises the President, Vice-Presidents, and other members who oversee the administration of the IOC.
- **President:** The current President of the IOC (as of October 2023) is **Thomas Bach**, a German Olympic fencer who has been in office since 2013.
- **Members:** The IOC consists of up to 115 members, including athletes, former athletes, and representatives from international sports federations and national Olympic committees.

## 4. Olympic Movement

The IOC is the leader of the **Olympic Movement**, which includes:

- **National Olympic Committees (NOCs):** Responsible for promoting the Olympic Movement in their respective countries (e.g., the Indian Olympic Association in India).
- **International Sports Federations (IFs):** Govern individual sports (e.g., FIFA for football, World Athletics for athletics).

- **Organizing Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs):** Responsible for planning and hosting the Games.

## 5. Key Initiatives by the IOC

- **Olympic Agenda 2020:** A strategic roadmap to modernize the Olympic Movement, focusing on sustainability, youth engagement, and good governance.
- **Youth Olympic Games:** Introduced in 2010 to encourage young athletes (aged 14–18) to participate in sports.
- **Olympic Solidarity:** A program that provides financial and technical support to NOCs, particularly in developing countries.
- **Sustainability:** The IOC has committed to making the Olympics more environmentally friendly, with a focus on reducing carbon emissions and promoting renewable energy.

## 6. India and the IOC

- India has been an active participant in the Olympic Movement since 1920.
- The **Indian Olympic Association (IOA)** is the NOC for India and is responsible for selecting and sending Indian athletes to the Olympics.
- Notable Indian members of the IOC include **Nita Ambani**, who was elected as an IOC member in 2016.
- India has hosted several IOC-supported events, including the **2010 Commonwealth Games** in Delhi.

## 7. Challenges Faced by the IOC

- **Corruption and Scandals:** The IOC has faced criticism for corruption, particularly during the bidding process for hosting the Games.
- **Doping:** Ensuring a level playing field by combating doping remains a significant challenge.
- **Cost of Hosting:** The high cost of hosting the Olympics has led to fewer cities bidding for the Games.
- **Political Issues:** The IOC often faces pressure to address political issues, such as human rights violations in host countries.

## 8. Recent Developments

- **Olympic Games 2024:** Scheduled to be held in **Paris, France**.
- **Olympic Games 2028:** Scheduled to be held in **Los Angeles, USA**.
- **Olympic Games 2032:** Scheduled to be held in **Brisbane, Australia**.

- **Esports:** The IOC has shown interest in integrating esports into the Olympic program, reflecting the growing popularity of competitive gaming.

## **Iguana**

**Syllabus: GS-3; Environment & Ecology**

### **Context**

- Voyage of the Iguanas: How They Traveled from the Americas to Fiji.



### **What Are Iguanas?**

- **Description:** Large, stout lizards with scaly skin, warts, spines along their back, and a dewlap (flap of flesh) under their necks.
- **Colour Morphs:** Exhibit various colours, including green, blue, and grey.
- **Diet:** Herbivores, feeding on leaves, flowers, and fruits.
- **Adaptability:** Thrive in diverse environments, from deserts to rainforests.

### **Geographic Range**



1. **Native Habitat:**

- Found throughout **Central and South America**, from **Mexico** to **Paraguay** and **Brazil**.

2. **Introduced Regions:**

- Established populations in **Florida, Hawaii**, and **Caribbean islands**.

3. **Largest Lizard in the USA:**

- The green iguana is the largest lizard species found within U.S. borders.

4. **Arboreal Nature:**

- Primarily tree-dwelling (canopy layers), descending only for nesting.

### Preferred Environments

- **Terrestrial Biomes:** Forests, rainforests.
- **Aquatic Biomes:** Rivers, lakes, coastal waters.
- **Wetlands:** Swamps.
- **Human-Altered Areas:** Urban and agricultural regions (showing suburban adaptability).

### Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List:** Not threatened (for most species, e.g., green iguana).
- **CITES Listing:** Appendix II (regulated trade to prevent overexploitation).
- **Threats to Population:**
  - Overexploitation for the **pet trade** and **leather industry**.
  - **Habitat destruction** due to deforestation and urbanization.

### How Did Iguanas Reach Fiji?

- A recent study published in the **Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences** suggests that the ancestors of Fijian iguanas travelled nearly **8,000 km** across the Pacific Ocean on rafts of floating vegetation from the Americas.
- **Theory of Rafting:**
  - Rafting is a process where animals hitch a ride on floating vegetation across oceans.
  - Common among small invertebrates but rare for large vertebrates due to survival challenges.
- **Previous Evidence of Iguana Rafting:**
  - **1995 Caribbean Observation:** 15 green iguanas rafted over **300 km** on hurricane debris.

- **Galápagos Iguanas:** Likely rafted **1,000 km** from South America.
- **Fijian Crossing:** Nearly **8 times longer** than previous records, making it an extraordinary event.

## **Corbett Tiger Reserve**

**Syllabus: GS-3; Biodiversity**

### **Context**

- SC raps Uttarakhand govt for 'snail's pace' action on Corbett illegalities.

### **About**

- Corbett Tiger Reserve, officially known as Jim Corbett National Park, is one of India's most renowned wildlife sanctuaries.



### Location and History

- **Location:** Situated in the Nainital district of Uttarakhand, India.
- **Establishment:** It was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park, making it the oldest national park in India.
- **Renaming:** In 1957, it was renamed Corbett National Park in honor of Jim Corbett, a British-Indian hunter, conservationist, and author who played a key role in its establishment.
- **Tiger Reserve Status:** It was declared a tiger reserve in 1973 under Project Tiger, India's flagship conservation program.

### Geography and Biodiversity

- **Area:** The reserve spans approximately 1,318 square kilometers, including core and buffer zones.
- **Landscape:** It features diverse landscapes such as hills, riverine belts, marshy depressions, grasslands, and dense forests.
- **Rivers:** The Ramganga, Kosi, and Sonanadi rivers flow through the reserve, providing vital water sources for wildlife.

### Flora and Fauna

- **Flora:** The park is home to a variety of vegetation, including sal forests, mixed deciduous forests, and grasslands.
- **Fauna:**
  - **Mammals:** Bengal tigers, leopards, elephants, sloth bears, deer (sambar, spotted deer, hog deer), and wild boars.
  - **Birds:** Over 600 species, including the great hornbill, crested serpent eagle, and kingfishers.
  - **Reptiles:** Indian python, mugger crocodile, and gharials.
  - **Aquatic Life:** Mahseer fish, found in the Ramganga River.

### Conservation Efforts

- **Project Tiger:** Corbett was one of the first nine tiger reserves under Project Tiger, aimed at conserving the Bengal tiger.

- **Anti-Poaching Measures:** The reserve has a strong anti-poaching mechanism, including patrols, camera traps, and community involvement.
- **Eco-Tourism:** Controlled tourism is promoted to generate awareness and funds for conservation while minimizing ecological impact.

#### Zones for Tourism

- **Dhikala Zone:** The most popular zone, known for its grasslands and wildlife sightings.
- **Bijrani Zone:** Known for its dense forests and diverse fauna.
- **Jhirna Zone:** Open throughout the year, it is rich in birdlife.
- **Durga Devi Zone:** Famous for its riverine and hilly terrain.
- **Sitabani Zone:** A buffer zone with historical and religious significance.

#### Challenges

- **Human-Wildlife Conflict:** Increasing human settlements around the reserve lead to conflicts, especially with elephants and tigers.
- **Tourism Pressure:** Unregulated tourism can disturb wildlife and degrade habitats.
- **Climate Change:** Alters the ecosystem, affecting flora and fauna.
- **Poaching:** Despite strict measures, poaching remains a threat.