



## 1. Zero Tolerance for Green Washing



### Topic: Environment and Ecology

**In News:** In the first official acknowledgement, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned companies and other non-state entities pursuing net-zero goals to not indulge in “greenwashing”.

#### More on the Topic

- Greenwashing refers to the act of misleading the public to believe that a company or entity is doing more to protect the environment than it is – and weak net-zero pledges and provides a roadmap to bring integrity to net-zero commitments by industry, financial institutions, cities and regions and to support a global, equitable transition to a sustainable future.
- An expert group of the UN Secretary General published its first report on the matter, slamming greenwashing activities by corporate entities.

#### Details from the report:

- Actors cannot claim to be ‘net zero’ while continuing to build or invest in new fossil fuel supply or any kind of environmentally destructive activities.
- Further, they can also not participate in lobbying activities against climate change.
- The report also points out **guidelines and has suggested that the non-state entities with net-zero targets must not allow any fresh investment in fossil fuels.**

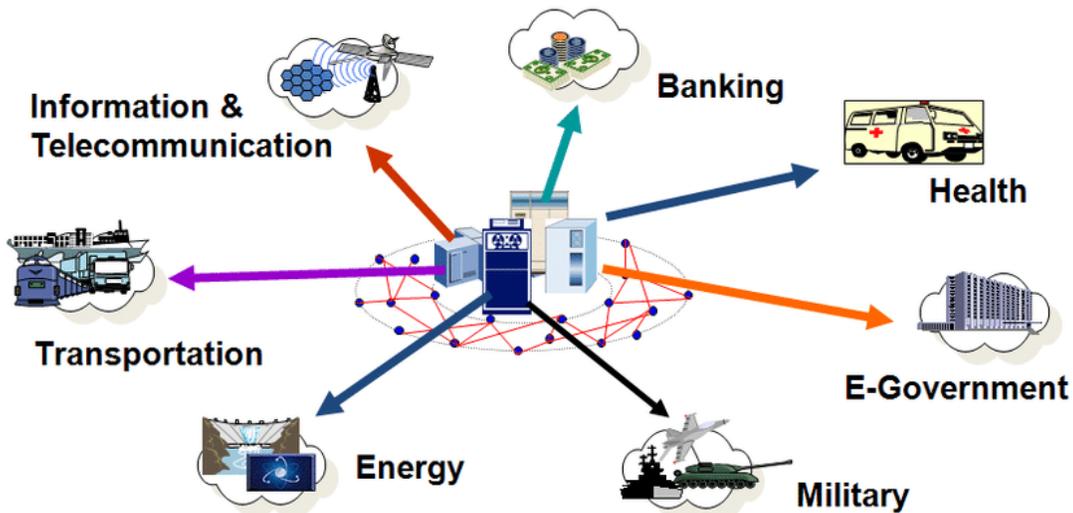
- It further added that they must present **verifiable short-term emission reduction goals on the path to achieving net-zero**, and, by 2025, must bring to an end all their activities that directly or indirectly lead to deforestation.

**The Report’s Recommendations:**

- The net-zero pledges must in line with the **UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scenarios limiting warming to 1.5 degrees.**
- Furthermore, the net-zero pledges should be accompanied by **a plan for how the transition is being made.**
- Management must be accountable for delivering on these pledges.
- This means publicly advocating for decisive climate action and disclosing all lobbying activity.
- The UN Secretary General also urged all government leaders to provide **non-State entities with a level playing field to transition to a just, net-zero future**, advocating for strong political leadership for solving the climate crisis.

Source: Indian Express

## 2. Critical Information Infrastructure



**Topic: Science and Technology**

**In News:** The government has declared as critical information infrastructure certain databases related to the Census and the National Population Register (NPR).

**More on the Topic:**



- The Information Technology Act of 2000 defines “Critical Information Infrastructure” as a **“computer resource, the incapacitation or destruction of which shall have debilitating impact on national security, economy, public health or safety”**.
- The government, under the Act, has the power to declare any data, database, IT network or communications infrastructure as CII to protect that digital asset.

#### **Why is CII classification and protection necessary?**

- World over governments have been moving with alacrity to protect their critical information infrastructure.
- **IT resources form the backbone of countless critical operations** in a country’s infrastructure, and given their interconnectedness, disruptions can have a cascading effect across sectors.
- An information technology failure at a power grid can lead to prolonged outages crippling other sectors like healthcare, banking services.
- **Example:** On October 12, 2020 as India battled the pandemic, the electric grid supply to **Mumbai** suddenly snapped hitting the mega city’s hospitals, trains and businesses.
- Later, a study by a US firm that looks into the use of the internet by states, claimed that this power outage could have been a cyber attack, allegedly from a China-linked group, aimed at critical infrastructure.
- The government, however, was quick to deny any cyber attack in Mumbai.

#### **How are CIIs protected in India?**

- Created in January 2014, the **National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) is the nodal agency** for taking all measures to protect the nation’s critical information infrastructure.
- It is mandated to guard CIIs from **“unauthorized access, modification, use, disclosure, disruption, incapacitation or distraction”**.

Source: PIB

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### **3. Mother Tongue Survey of India**



### Topic: Culture

**In News:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has completed the Mother Tongue Survey of India (MTSI) with field videography of the country's 576 languages.

#### More on the Topic:

- The Mother Tongue Survey of India is a project that “surveys the mother tongues, which are returned consistently across two and more Census decades”. It also documents the linguistic features of the selected languages.

#### How many “mother tongues” does India have, and what is spoken the most?

- As per an analysis of 2011 linguistic census data in 2018, **more than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues.**
- According to the 2011 linguistic census, Hindi is the most widely spoken mother tongue, with 52.8 crore people or 43.6 per cent of the population declaring it as the mother tongue.
- The next highest is Bengali, mother tongue for 9.7 crore individuals, and accounting for 8 per cent of the population.

Source: Hindu

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## 4. Middle East Green Initiative



**Topic: Environment and Ecology**

**In News:** Saudi Arabia's would contribute \$2.5 billion Middle east green initiative i and host its headquarters.

**More on the Topic:**

- It is a **Saudi Arabia led regional dialogue on climate launched in 2021 to bring together leaders from across the MENA region** (Middle East/North Africa) and beyond.
- The Middle East Green Initiative aims to reduce carbon emissions from regional hydrocarbon production by more than 60%.
- It also plans to plant 50 billion trees across the Middle EAsT and restore an area equivalent to 200 million hectares of degraded land. The initiative will help reduce global carbon levels by 2.5%.

**Source: Indian Express**

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## 5. Blood Moon



**Topic: Science and Technology**

**In News:** The Blood moon was witnessed at many parts of Indian subcontinent.

**More on the Topic:**

- A total lunar eclipse occurs when the Earth casts its shadow completely over a full moon, **blocking reflection of all direct sunlight from the lunar orb and dimming the color of the moon to a reddish hue**, hence the term “blood moon.”
- This is only possible **when the orbits of the Earth, moon and sun align so that the moon is directly behind Earth relative to the sun.**
- Otherwise, the moon passes above or below Earth’s shadow because its orbit around Earth is usually tilted relative to Earth’s orbit about the sun.

**Source:** Hindu

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## 6. Tibetan Antelope



### Topic: Environment and Ecology

**In News:** Pashmina shawl traders have moved Delhi High Court complaining of being subjected to Customs and criminal prosecutions on the ground that their export consignments carry articles suspected to be Shahtoosh.

#### More on the Topic:

- Kashmir Pashmina is a fine type of wool which is obtained from breeds of mountain goats found in Tibet and parts of Ladakh and the trade of Pashmina shawls is completely legal.
- Shahtoosh shawls are made from the fine undercoat fibre obtained from the **Tibetan Antelope (known locally as Chiru)**, an antelope species living mainly in the northern parts of the Changthang Plateau in Tibet.
- Due to their high smoothness and warmth, Shahtoosh shawls are a highly expensive and tradable commodity.

#### The Grievance:

- Due to concern about the survival of the species, the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora), established in 1973, included the Tibetan Antelope in 1979.
- **Sale, purchase, and possession of Tibetan Antelope parts and products, including Shahtoosh, are strictly prohibited.**
- The petition submits that **many genuine consignments carrying Pashmina wool are erroneously identified as Shahtoosh**, possession and sale of which is banned under the Wild Life Protection Act and CITES.
- The petition states that some forms of Pashmina may appear similar to Shahtoosh but in reality are different materials emanating from different species of animal.
- Owing to the two materials having similar physical properties and tangibility, **the differentiation thereof is near impossible without proper and advanced scientific forensic analysis methods.**

#### Conservation Status:

No 18, B.B.M.P Building  
Kanakapura road ,  
Tata Silk Farm, Jayanagar,  
Bengaluru, Karnataka-560028

+91 89710 43904 | [rvta@rvei.edu.in](mailto:rvta@rvei.edu.in)

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- Tibetan Antelopes are an endangered species with high protection.
- Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 - Schedule I
- CITES - Appendix I
- IUCN - Near Threatened

Source: Business Standard

## 7. Utah Salt Flats



### Topic: Geography

**In News:** The glistening white salt of the world famous Bonneville Salt Flats is shrinking near the Utah-Nevada line (USA).

#### More on the Topic:

- The Utah desert is a treeless expanse of pristine white salt crystals. The salt surface contains potassium, magnesium lithium and sodium chloride (common table salt).
- Ponds and marshy areas can be found in spots near the edges of the flats and **they provide critical habitat for plants and animals.**
- Research has time and again shown that **the briny water in the aquifer below the flats is depleting faster than nature can replenish it.**



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- As nearby groundwater replaces the mineral-rich brine, evaporation yields less salt than historic cycles of flooding and evaporation left on the landscape.
- It's thinned by roughly one-third in the last 60 years.

**Source: Business Standard**

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