

**ON THE REALITY BEHIND THE  
COMMITMENT TO RENEWABLE ENERGY****The Hindu**Paper - III (Environment  
& Ecology)

The boundary wall enclosing discussions around global climate is 1.5°C, or the average increase in global temperatures since pre-industrial times. Now that 1°C is crossed, all the wrangling under way at the climate summit in Dubai is to cap the half-degree rise. Global pledges to cut emissions are insufficient to achieve this. Current estimates are that to limit warming to 1.5°C, the world requires three times more renewable energy capacity by 2030, or at least 11,000 GW. That there is wide global consensus on the need for this tripling was first formally articulated in the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration at the G-20 summit in Delhi in September. In the run-up to the Dubai summit, it was perceived that this would be widely endorsed by the larger group of about 190 countries signatory to the UN convention on climate. It turns out that, so far, 118 countries have endorsed the pledge and two major countries, i.e., India and China, have so far abstained from signing. The Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge, while still a draft text, says that in their pursuit of tripling renewable energy capacity, signatories should also commit to "...phase down of unabated coal power, in particular ending the continued investment in unabated new coal-fired power plants". This is a major red line for India.

While India has positioned itself as a champion for renewable energy — its 2030 targets as articulated in its formal, nationally determined contributions (NDC) speak of tripling renewable energy capacity to 500 GW from the current 170 GW — it has reiterated several times that it could not be forced to give up certain fuels. Coal-fired plants are responsible for nearly 70% of India's greenhouse gas emissions. Developed countries that have made commitments to give up coal often have other large, fossil-fuel resources as back-up. The United States joined 56 other countries at Dubai in a commitment to completely eschew coal for its energy use, by 2035. However the U.S. only draws about 20% of its energy from coal and at least 55% from oil and gas, with plans to actually produce more of it in 2030 than at present. The paradox of the world's major economies' commitment to renewable energy is that it is not, as of now, actively geared to replace fossil fuel. Till there is an honest commitment to actually replace existing and future fossil capacity with clean energy, pledges and declarations are worth little more than the paper they are drafted on.

### Expected Question

**Que. Consider the following statements-**

1. India has talked about increasing the renewable energy capacity three times from the current 170 GW to 500 GW by 2030.
2. Coal-fired plants are responsible for about 70 percent of India's greenhouse gas emissions.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) Only 1
- (b) Only 2
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer : c**

### Mains Expected Question & Format

**Que.:** "Till there is an honest commitment to actually replace existing and future fossil capacity with clean energy, pledges and declarations are worth little more than the paper they are drafted on." **Comment on this statement in the context of current climate change efforts.**

**Answer Format :**

- ❖ In the first part of the answer, discuss the efforts related to climate change.
- ❖ In the second part, discuss the limitations of these efforts in the context of the statement given in the question.
- ❖ Finally give a conclusion giving suggestions.

**Note:** - The question of the main examination given for practice is designed keeping in mind the upcoming UPSC mains examination. Therefore, to get an answer to this question, you can take the help of this source as well as other sources related to this topic.