

*Regent Education and Research Foundation Group of Institutions*  
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*(Useful for UPSC/WBPSC/SSC Exams.)*

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- ▶ SEEI has been developed by the **BEE in collaboration with Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE)** to track Energy Efficiency (EE) initiatives in the states and UTs.  
It assesses the performance of **36 states and UTs** in Energy Efficiency (EE) implementation using **65 indicators** distributed across **seven demand sectors**:
    - ◆ Buildings, Industry, Municipal services, Transport, Agriculture, Distribution Company (DISCOM), and Cross-Sector Initiatives.States and UTs are categorized as **Front Runner, Achiever, Contender, and Aspirant** based on their total scores.
  - ▶ **Key Outcomes of SEEI-2023:**  
**Top Performers:** Karnataka (only state with active “Energy Conservation and Energy Efficiency Policy”) followed by Andhra Pradesh.  
**15 states improved scores** compared to SEEI 2021-22 with Maharashtra and Haryana showing most improvement.
  - ▶ **Key Recommendations of SEEI-2023**  
**Effective implementation of State Energy Efficiency Action Plans (SEEAPs)** requires comprehensive investment analysis and robust monitoring.  
Synergize efforts for **state energy transition** through collaboration, data sharing mechanisms and transparent reporting.  
Leveraging the **State Energy Conservation Fund** in the revolving investment mode.  
Enabling adoption of EE through **Energy Service Companies** in states.  
**Leverage the carbon market** for energy efficient technologies.
- Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**

It is a **statutory body** established in 2002, under the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001**.

**Objective:** Reduce **Energy Intensity** of Indian Economy.

**Ministry:** Ministry of Power.

**Regulatory functions:** Develop minimum energy performance standards for equipment and appliances, and commercial buildings, certify energy managers and energy auditors.
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- ▶ **IndiaTex** is launched at **BHARAT TEX 2024**, one of the largest-ever global textile events organized in India.
  - ▶ **IndiaTex** is a four-year (2023-2027) **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) project**.  
It is a part of the **One UNEP Textile Initiative**.
    - ◆ This initiative provides **strategic leadership** and **encourages sector-wide collaboration** to accelerate a **just transition** towards a sustainable and circular textile value chain.
  - ▶ **About IndiaTex**  
**Objective:** Accelerate the transition of the Indian textile sector towards circularity.  
**Implementation:** In collaboration with **Ministry of Textiles**.
    - ◆ It will be funded by Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is based on **3 key concepts**:
      - ◆ **Eco-innovation: Guides Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in incorporating circularity and resilience** into every aspect to reduce the environmental and social impact of human activity.
      - ◆ **Product Environmental Footprint (PEF):** PEF measures the environmental performance of a good or service throughout its life cycle.
      - ◆ **Circularity:** Based on principle **Reduce by design**, as well as value-retention processes: Reduce, Reuse, Refurbish, Repurpose, Recycle, etc.
  - ▶ **Benefits for India:** Will improve the textiles sector's competitiveness and market access.

## Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments (Amendment) (HRI & CEA) Bill, 2024 passed by Karnataka State Legislature

- ▶ The HRI & CEA bill will amend **Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments Act, 1997**.
- ▶ Earlier, the bill was defeated In **Legislative Council**.
  - ⊕ However, after reconsideration and **passage** by the legislative assembly, it was again sent to the legislative council, where too it got passed.
- ▶ As per **Article 197 of the constitution**, after a bill is rejected by the Council for the first time,
  - ⊕ **Legislative Assembly** may pass the Bill again with or without such **amendments**, as have been suggested by the Legislative Council. Bill so passed for the second time is transmitted to the **Legislative Council**, and is deemed to have been passed by both the houses if the council,
    - ◆ **Rejects** the bill
    - ◆ Takes no action on the bill for more than one month.
    - ◆ Passes the bill with **amendments** to which the Legislative Assembly does not agree.
- ▶ **Temple Regulation in India:**

**Article 25(2)** provides for State to make laws for

  - ◆ Regulating secular activities of religious places,
  - ◆ Social welfare, reform or the throwing open of **Hindu religious institutions** to all sections of Hindus.

**Management of religious endowments** and religious institutions falls in **concurrent list** under the **Schedule VII** of the Constitution.

Many states have **enacted legislation** to regulate temples.

- ▶ Resolution was **submitted by India** as part of its **push towards adopting environment-friendly lifestyles (Mission LiFE)**, and **co-sponsored by Sri Lanka and Bolivia**.

It recognizes potential of **behavioural changes toward sustainable lifestyles** in achieving sustainable development.

It recognizes work of **10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Patterns**, adopted at **Rio+20 in 2012**.

  - ◆ It consists of **six programs dealing with sustainability** of Public Procurement, Consumer Information for SCP, Tourism, Lifestyles and Education, Buildings and Construction, and Food Systems.
  - ◆ It is implemented by the **One Planet Network**.

Resolution **encourages member states** to foster public-private collaboration, pursue education and awareness raising initiatives about sustainable lifestyles.
- ▶ **Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)**

Mission LiFE was introduced by India at the **UNFCCC COP26 in Glasgow**. It aims at **nudging individual and community actions to protect and preserve the environment**.

**Three phases of Mission LiFE:**

  - ◆ **Change in Demand:** Nudging individuals to practice simple yet effective environment-friendly actions in their daily lives.
  - ◆ **Change in Supply:** Enabling industries and markets to respond swiftly to the changing demand.
  - ◆ **Change in Policy:** Influence government and industrial policy to support SCP.

### United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)

- ▶ Established in 2012 as a result of Rio+20, it is **world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment**.
- ▶ It also serves as the **governing body of the UN Environment Programme**.
- ▶ It meets **biennially** in Nairobi, Kenya.
- ▶ UNEA-6 adopted a **Ministerial Declaration aimed at halting the progression of the triple planetary crisis** of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste.

## 5,000 Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs) registered on ONDC portal platform: Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare

- ▶ The registration of FPOs on **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)** has helped them to reach out to buyers in different part of the country.
  - ⊕ **ONDC** aims at creating a **unified digital commerce infrastructure** that connects buyers and sellers across different platforms.
    - ◆ **ONDC** is an initiative of the **Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, Ministry of Commerce.
- ▶ **ONDC** is empowering FPOs with **direct access** to digital marketing, online payment, business-to-business and business-to-consumer transactions.
- ▶ **About FPO**

FPO is one type of Producer Organisation (PO) where the **members are farmers**.

  - ◆ PO is a **legal entity** formed by primary producers, viz. farmers, milk producers, craftsmen etc.
  - ◆ A PO can be a **producer company, a cooperative society or any other legal form** which provides for **sharing of profits among the members**.
  - ◆ The ownership of the PO is with its members.
- ▶ FPOs are **mainly registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Society Act, 2002**, Cooperative Societies Act of the respective State, Companies Act, 2013, etc.
- ▶ **Role of FPOs in Promoting Interest of Farmers:** Improves bargaining power, access to resources, improves post-harvest management mitigating risk etc.

### Initiatives Taken to Promote FPOs

#### Formation and Promotion of 10,000 new FPOs, a Central Sector Scheme

Over 8000 FPOs have been registered under it.

Supported by **Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC)**, NABARD, National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) etc.

FPOs registered as producer companies are Exempted from income tax upto Rs.100 crore, whereas FPOs registered as cooperative societies are exempted from income tax.

### Abu Dhabi Ministerial Declaration (ADMD)

- ▶ 13<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (**MC13**) of **WTO** concluded with the adoption of Abu Dhabi Ministerial Declaration (ADMD)
- ▶ **About Declaration**
  - ⊕ Members committed to preserve and strengthen the ability of the multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core.
  - ⊕ Declaration underlines the centrality of the development dimension in the work of the WTO to achieve the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.
- ▶ **WTO** also agreed to further **extend the moratorium on imposing import duties on e-commerce trade for two more years**.

## Union Cabinet approves royalty rates for mining of 12 critical and strategic minerals including Beryllium, Cadmium, Cobalt, Tungsten, Vanadium etc.

- ▶ This would **enable the Central Government to auction blocks** for these 12 minerals for **first time** in India.
- ▶ For specifying royalty, Cabinet approved the amendment of **Second Schedule** (containing royalty rates) to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (**MMDR**) Act, 1957.

**Royalty** means payment made to owner of certain types of rights (**government as mineral rights holder**) by those who are permitted to exercise such rights.

MMDR Amendment Act 2023 had listed **24 critical and strategic minerals in Part D of First Schedule of MMDR Act**.

Critical and strategic minerals are those minerals that are **essential for economic development and national security** but their **supply is limited and subject to disruption**.

**Significances of Critical Minerals Foundation of modern technology** such as smartphones, electric vehicles, semiconductors etc.

**Role in manufacturing of clean energy technologies** e.g. solar panels, advanced batteries etc.

**Strategic and geopolitical significance** with usage in frontier technologies, defence equipment and concentrated supply chains.

**Concerns associated with Critical Minerals for India** Despite significant reserves (e.g. rare earth elements(REEs), titanium, thorium), India **lacks commercial production capability** due to **high exploration and extraction costs**. **High import dependency** on few countries like DR Congo, Australia, and China.

### Initiatives by India for critical and strategic minerals

**Identification of 30 critical minerals** crucial for self-reliance. India joined the **Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)** to bolster critical minerals supply chains.

**Partnership with Australia** for lithium and cobalt and with **Argentina** for lithium.

**Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL)** formed to identify, acquire, process and make commercial use of strategic minerals in overseas locations for supply in India.

### National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

- ▶ NSDC along with a NBFC unveiled **skill development initiative - Project Odisev** in Odisha.
- ▶ **About NSDC**
  - ⊕ NSDC is a **not-for-profit public limited company** incorporated under **section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013**.
  - ⊕ The **Government of India holds 49% of the share capital of NSDC**, while the private sector has the balance of 51% of the share capital.
  - ⊕ NSDC aims to **promote skill development** by catalyzing the creation of large, quality, and for-profit vocational institutions.



## Seamounts

- Researchers discovered **four gigantic seamounts** in the deep sea off the coast of **Peru and Chile**.
- **About Seamounts**
  - ⊖ A seamount is an **underwater mountain** with steep sides rising from the seafloor.
  - ⊖ Most seamounts are **remnants of extinct volcanoes** and are **typically cone shaped**.
    - ◆ **Seamounts** with large **flat summits** are called **guyots**. Seamounts are **found in every world ocean basin**. Seamounts function as **oases of life or biological hotspots** with higher species diversity and biomass on and around it. World's highest seamount is **Hawaii's dormant volcano Mauna Kea**.

## BioTRIG System

- Researchers find that **Bioenergy Trigeration (BioTRIG)** becomes technically feasible for pyrolysis.
  - Pyrolysis is a process of **thermal decomposition of organic matter in the absence of oxygen**.
  - Pyrolysis can convert carbonaceous materials like waste biomass (crop residues, food waste and animal manure) into **biochar and bio-oil and generate syngas**.
  - These pyrolysis products (**bioenergy trigeration**) can provide **three major benefits to rural communities** in India -
    - ◆ Biochar can improve soil quality.
    - ◆ Bio-oil can be used for electricity generation.
    - ◆ Syngas can be used as a clean efficient cooking fuel.

## Sugar Development Fund (SDF)

- To provide relief to sugar mills, the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution** has revised guidelines for restructuring of loans taken under SDF.
  - Revised guidelines provide sugar factories option of **debt restructuring and One Time Settlement**.
- SDF provides **financial assistance to sugar factories** at concessional interest rates in accordance with **SDF Act 1982 and SDF Rules 1983**. Assistance is provided for **modernization cum expansion, cane development, bagasse based co-generation power projects, ethanol production** from molasses, and conversion to **zero liquid discharge plant**.



## National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT)

- According to the RBI, NEFT system has registered a **growth of 700% in terms of the volume of transactions** from 2014-23.
  - **About NEFT**
    - ⊖ **Nation-wide centralized payment system** owned and operated by RBI.
    - ⊖ **Users:** Individuals, firms and corporations can use the NEFT facility.
    - Limits:** No limit imposed by the RBI for funds transfer through NEFT.
- The **outbound remittances** through the NEFT system are **permitted only to Nepal under the Indo-Nepal Remittance Facility (INRF) Scheme**.

The other Fund Transfer systems in India are **Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)** and **Immediate Payment Service (IMPS)**.

## Planetary Boundaries Framework

The **2024 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement** will be awarded to **Johan Rockstrom** for his work on the Planetary Boundaries framework.

### About Planetary Boundaries framework

First published in 2009, the Planetary Boundaries integrate **nine systems** that determine the **functioning and the state of the planet**.

**Nine planetary boundaries** include Climate Change, Biosphere Integrity, Land-System Change, Freshwater Change, Biogeochemical Flows, Novel Entities, Stratospheric Ozone Depletion, Atmospheric Aerosol Loading, and Ocean Acidification.

They provide **life-support to humans** and humanity is well **outside of safe operating space on first six planetary boundaries**.

## Exercise Samudra Laksamana

It is a **bilateral Naval Exercise** between India and Malasiya.

## Cambodia (Capital: Phnom Penh)

- India signed an MoU with Cambodia on biodiversity conservation with special focus on tiger reintroduction in Cambodia.
- **Political Boundaries**
  - Located on **Indochinese mainland of Southeast Asia**.
  - Bordered by **Thailand** (west and northwest), **Laos** (northeast), **Vietnam** (east and southeast), and **Gulf of Thailand** (southwest).
- **Geographical features**
  - ⊖ **Major Mountain Range:** Dangrek
  - ⊖ **Highest Peak:** Phnom Aural Major
  - ⊖ **River:** Mekong
  - ⊖ **Major Lake:** Tonle Sap (Great Lake)