



3rd India-Central Asia Dialogue

For Prelims: International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), Central Asian countries, Chabahar Port, China's Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Financial Action Task Force standards, International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC).

For Mains: Significance of India-Central Asian countries in the restoration of peace in Afghanistan, Support for permanent membership of India in the UN Security Council (UNSC), Relation between Indian and Central Asian countries.

Why in News

Recently, the 3rd meeting of the [India-Central Asia Dialogue](#) was held in New Delhi.

- It is a ministerial-level dialogue between India and the [Central Asian countries](#) namely [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and [Uzbekistan](#).
- India virtually hosted the second meeting of the [India-Central Asia Dialogue in 2020](#).

Key Points

- **International North-South Transport Corridor:**
 - Emphasis on **optimum usage of the [International North-South Transport Corridor \(INSTC\)](#)** as well as [Ashgabat Agreement](#) on International Transport and Transit Corridor to enhance connectivity between India and the Central Asian countries.
 - Stressed on including [Chabahar Port](#) **within the framework of INSTC** and **expressed interest in cooperation** on issues related to the **development and strengthening of regional connectivity** in Central and South Asia.
 - Agreed to **develop the transit and transport potential of their countries**, improve the regional logistics network and promote joint initiatives to create new transport corridors.
 - Agreed to explore the possibility of **establishing joint working groups** to address the **free movements of goods and services** between India and the Central Asian states.
- **Connectivity Projects:**
 - The connectivity initiatives ([China's Belt and Road Initiative](#)) should be based on the principles of transparency, broad participation, local priorities, financial sustainability and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries.
- **Situation of Afghanistan:**
 - Discussed the **current situation in Afghanistan** and its impact on the region, following the [Taliban's occupancy](#).
 - Issues like current humanitarian situation, terrorism, territorial integrity, respect for sovereignty and unity were discussed too.
 - Pushed for concerted action against all terror groups.
 - The Afghanistan's soil must not be used for planning terror attacks, even as they pledged to provide immediate humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

- Condemned **all forms of terrorism** and opposed “providing safe haven, using terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism, terror financing, arms and drugs trafficking, dissemination of a radical ideology and abuse of cyber space to spread disinformation and incite violence.
 - Supported a **peaceful and stable Afghanistan** and emphasised respect for **sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in its internal affairs.**
 - Pointed to the importance of [UN Security Council Resolution 2593](#), which “unequivocally demands that Afghan territory not be used for sheltering, training, planning or financing terrorist acts and called for concerted action against all terrorist groups”.
- **Counter Terrorism Efforts:**
 - Perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of terror acts must be brought to justice in accordance with principle of “extradite or prosecute”.
 - Called on the world community to implement relevant **UN resolutions**, [global counter-terrorism strategy](#) and [Financial Action Task Force standards](#).
- **Line of Credit:**
 - All the countries are currently discussing the use of a [USD 1 billion line of credit](#) announced by India last year for infrastructure projects in Central Asia.
 - A **line of credit** is a preset borrowing limit that can be tapped into at any time.
 - The borrower can take money out as needed until the limit is reached, and as money is repaid, it can be borrowed again in the case of an open line of credit.
- **Post-pandemic Recovery:**
 - All the countries **stressed the importance of extensive vaccination** and called for **cooperation through sharing of vaccine doses, transfer of technology, development of local production capacities, promotion of supply chains for medical products, and ensuring price transparency.**
- **Restoration of Tourism:**
 - Backed the **gradual restoration of tourism and business** ties between India and the Central Asian countries.
 - The foreign ministers of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan welcomed the [mutual recognition of Covid-19 vaccination certificates](#) between India and their countries, while the ministers of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan sought early mutual recognition of certificates.
- **Historical and Cultural Ties:**
 - Need **to build on the historical and cultural ties of their region** with India and highlight the **potential for cooperation** in areas such as connectivity, transport, transit and energy.
- **International Solar Alliance (ISA):**
 - India highlighted the role of ["International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)"](#) initiative in collective, rapid and massive deployment of solar energy for effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.
- **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure:**
 - India also underlined the role of ["Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure \(CDRI\)"](#) in promoting disaster resilient infrastructure for reducing economic losses.
- **Permanent membership at UNSC:**
 - Reiterated support of their countries for [permanent membership of India](#) in an expanded and reformed [UN Security Council](#) (UNSC).
 - Welcomed the ongoing [non-permanent tenure of India in the UNSC](#) and its priorities.
- **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation:**
 - Appreciated the important role of the [Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation \(ITEC\)](#) Programme in **capacity building and human resource development** of their countries, especially in **Information Technology and Communication Skills** in the **English language**.



- It is a ministerial-level dialogue between India and the **Central Asian** countries namely **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan**, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and **Uzbekistan**.
 - All five nations became independent states after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, post-**Cold war**.
- All the countries participating in the dialogue, except for Turkmenistan, are also members of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation**.
- The dialogue focuses on a number of issues including ways to improve connectivity and stabilise war-ravaged Afghanistan.

[Source: TH](#)

FCRA Licence of NGOs Revoked

For Prelims: Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010, Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Articles 19 & 20 of the Constitution, Right to free speech

For Mains: Issues related to cancellation of FCRA registration of NGOs working in India, Controversies Related to FCRA, Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020.

Why in News

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has **cancelled the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010** registration of various **non-governmental organisations (NGOs)**.

- Suspension of FCRA licence means that the **NGO can no longer receive fresh foreign funds from donors** pending a probe by the Home Ministry. The FCRA is **mandatory for associations and NGOs** to receive foreign funds.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The FCRA registration of **Vadodara-based NGO** is cancelled because it was accused of

[illegally converting members of the Hindu community](#), [funding the anti-CAA protests](#) and for **criminal activities to strengthen Islam**.

- The FCRA registration of two other Christian NGOs — the **New Hope Foundation**, based in Tamil Nadu, and **Holy Spirit Ministries** from Karnataka were also cancelled.
- The FCRA registration of **AFMI Charitable Trust** was cancelled by the MHA for violating the provisions of the Act.
- **Prior Reference Category:**
 - The MHA had put 10 Australian, American and European donors on its watchlist.
 - Following which the [Reserve Bank of India](#) wrote to all banks that any funds sent by the foreign donors should be brought to the notice of the Ministry and not cleared without its permission.
 - All the donors that were placed on the watchlist or “**prior reference category**” work in the field of [climate change](#), environment and [child rights](#).
- **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010:** Foreign funding of persons in India is regulated under FCRA act and is **implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs**.
 - Individuals are permitted to accept foreign contributions without permission of MHA.
 - However, the **monetary limit** for acceptance of such foreign contributions shall be less than **Rs. 25,000**.
 - The Act **ensures that the recipients of foreign contributions adhere to the stated purpose** for which such contribution has been obtained.
 - Under the Act, organisations are required to register themselves every five years.
 - Registered NGOs **can receive foreign contributions for five purposes:**
 - Social, educational, religious, economic and cultural.
- **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020:**
 - **Prohibition to accept foreign contribution:** The Act **bars public servants from receiving foreign contributions**.
 - Public servant includes any person who is in service or paid by the government, or remunerated by the government for the performance of any public duty.
 - **Transfer of foreign contribution:** The Act **prohibits the transfer of foreign contribution to any other person** not registered to accept foreign contributions.
 - **Aadhaar for registration:** The Act makes [Aadhaar number](#) **mandatory** for all office bearers, directors or key functionaries of a person receiving foreign contribution, as an identification document.
 - **FCRA account:** The Act states that foreign contributions **must be received only in an account designated by the bank** as FCRA account in such branches of the State Bank of India, New Delhi.
 - **Reduction in use of foreign contribution for administrative purposes:** The Act proposes that **not more than 20% of the total foreign funds received could be defrayed for administrative expenses**. In FCRA 2010 the limit was 50%.
 - **Surrender of certificate:** The Act allows the central government to permit a person to surrender their registration certificate.

Issues Related to FCRA

- The FCRA regulates the receipt of funding from sources outside of India to NGOs working in India. **It prohibits the receipt of foreign contributions “for any activities detrimental to the national interest”**.
- The Act also held that the government can refuse permission if it believes that the donation to the NGO will adversely affect “**public interest**” or the “**economic interest of the state**”.
 - However, there is **no clear guidance** on what constitutes “public interest”.
- The FCRA restrictions have serious consequences on both the **rights to free speech** and **freedom of association** under [Articles 19\(1\)\(a\) and 19\(1\)\(c\)](#) of the Constitution.
- The [right to free speech](#) is affected in **two ways:**
 - By **allowing only some political groups to receive foreign donations** and disallowing some others, can induce biases in favour of the government.
 - NGOs need to tread carefully when they criticise the regime, knowing that too much criticism could cost their survival.
 - FCRA norms can reduce critical voices by declaring them to be against the public interest. This chilling effect on free speech can lead to self-censorship.

- Similar to this on **unclear guidelines** on public interest, in [Shreya Singhal v. Union of India \(2015\)](#), the [Supreme Court \(SC\)](#) struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act. The SC held that the Act could be used in a manner that has a chilling effect on free speech.
- Besides, given that the right to freedom of association is part of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(Article 20\)](#), a violation of this right also constitutes a human rights violation.
- In April 2016, the **UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association** undertook a legal analysis of the FCRA, 2010.
 - It stated that restrictions in the name of “public interest” and “economic interest” as invoked under the FCRA failed the test of “legitimate restrictions”.
 - The terms were too vague and gave the state excessive discretionary powers to apply the provision in an arbitrary manner.
- In this context, though it is **necessary to regulate corrupt NGOs**, there needs to be **clarity on terms like public interest**.

Way Forward

- **Excessive regulation** on foreign contribution **may affect working of the NGOs** which are **helpful in implementing government schemes** at the grassroots. They fill the gaps, where the government fails to do their jobs.
- The **regulation should not hamper sharing of resources across national boundaries** essential to the functioning of a global community, and should not be discouraged unless there is reason to believe the funds are being used to aid illegal activities.

[Source: TH](#)

Agni-P Missile

For Prelims: Agni-P Missile, BrahMos supersonic cruise missile (air version), Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM), Nag, Akash, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), IGMDP.

For Mains: Missile Technology of India in comparison of other countries and related examples, Evolution of missile technology in India.

Why in News

Recently, the [Defence Research and Development Organisation \(DRDO\)](#) successfully test-fired the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile ‘**Agni Prime**’.

- This is the second test of the missile, the [first test took place in June 2021](#).
- The Agni-P missile aims to **further strengthen India’s credible deterrence capabilities**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - Agni-P is a **two-stage canisterised solid propellant missile** with dual redundant navigation and guidance system.
 - It has been termed as a **new generation advanced variant of Agni class of missiles**

with improved parameters, including manoeuvring and accuracy.

- **Canisterisation of missiles reduces the time required** to launch the missile while improving the storage and ease of handling.
- The surface-to-surface ballistic missile has a **range of 1,000 to 2,000 km.**
- **Agni Class of Missiles:**
 - Agni class of missiles are the **mainstay of India's nuclear launch capability**, which also includes the [Prithvi short-range ballistic missiles](#), submarine launched ballistic missiles and fighter aircraft.
 - **Agni-V**, an **Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)** with a range of over 5,000 km, had been tested several times and validated for induction.
 - The **Agni-P** and **Agni-5 ballistic missiles** trace their origins back to the [Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme \(IGMDP\)](#), which was spearheaded by former DRDO chief and ex-Indian president Dr APJ Abdul Kalam in the early 1980s.
- **Other Ranges of Agni Missiles:**
 - **Agni I:** Range of 700-800 km.
 - **Agni II:** Range more than 2000 km.
 - **Agni III:** Range of more than 2,500 Km
 - **Agni IV:** Range is more than 3,500 km and can fire from a road mobile launcher.
 - **Agni-V:** The **longest of the Agni series**, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km.
- **Recently Tested Missile:**
 - [BrahMos supersonic cruise missile \(air version\)](#)
 - [Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile \(VL-SRSAM\)](#)

IGMDP (Integrated Guided Missile Development Program)

- It was **conceived by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam** to enable India attain self-sufficiency in the field of missile technology. It was approved by the **Government of India in 1983 and completed in March 2012.**
- The 5 missiles (P-A-T-N-A) developed under this program are:
 - **Prithvi:** Short range surface to surface ballistic missile.
 - **Agni:** Ballistic missiles with different ranges, i.e. Agni (1,2,3,4,5)
 - **Trishul:** Short range low level surface to air missile.
 - **Nag:** 3rd generation anti-tank missile.
 - **Akash:** Medium range surface to air missile.

History of Missile Technology in India

- **About:**
 - Before Independence, several kingdoms in India were using **rockets as part of their warfare technologies.**
 - [Mysore ruler Hyder Ali](#) started inducting iron-cased rockets in his army in the mid-18th century.
 - At the time of Independence, **India did not have any indigenous missile capabilities.**
 - The government created the **Special Weapon Development Team in 1958.**
 - This was later expanded and called the **Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL)**, which moved from Delhi to Hyderabad by 1962.

- In 1972, Project Devil, for the development of a **medium range Surface-to-Surface Missile** was initiated.
- By 1982, **DRDL was working on several missile technologies** under the Integrated Guided Missiles Development Programme (IGMDP).

▪ **Kind of Missiles India Have:**

◦ **Surface-Launched Systems:**

- **Anti-Tank Guided Missile:**

- [Nag](#)

- **Surface-to-Air Missile:**

- [Akash](#)

- **Medium-Range Sam:**

- Production of MRSAM systems for the Navy is complete, and it is placing its order

- **Short-Range Sam:**

- For the Navy, the first flight tests have been successfully conducted.

◦ **Several Air-Launched Systems:**

- **Air-To-Air:**

- [Astra](#)

- **Air-to-Ground:**

- [Rudram](#)

- [BrahMos](#)

▪ **Most Important India's Missile:**

◦ **Agni (range around 5,000):**

- It is India's only contender for an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), which is available with only a few countries.

◦ **Prithvi:**

- It is a short-range surface-to-surface missile with a 350 km range and has strategic uses.

- India also tested a anti-satellite system in April 2019.

- A modified anti-ballistic missile named **Prithvi Defence Vehicle Mk 2** was used to hit a low-orbit satellite.

- It put India only behind the US, Russia and China in this capability.

▪ **Hypersonic Technology:**

- India is just behind the US, Russia and China.

- DRDO successfully tested a **Hypersonic Technology Demonstrated Vehicle (HSTDV)** in September 2020, and demonstrated its hypersonic air-breathing scramjet technology.

▪ **Missile technology of India in Comparison to (Pakistan and China):**

◦ **India:**

- Under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMP) first came Prithvi, then Agni.

- BrahMos, at 2.5-3 times the speed of sound, was among the fastest in the world when developed.

- India is working on **Agni VI and Agni VII**, which should have a much longer range.

- **China and Pakistan:**

- While China is ahead of India, a “lot of things about China are psychological”.
- China has given Pakistan the technology, “but getting a technology and really using it, and thereafter evolving and adopting a policy is totally different”.
- India does not call BrahMos nuclear, it can be used.
- India’s only nuclear missiles are **Prithvi and Agni**, but beyond those, tactical nuclear weapons can be fired from some [Indian Air Force](#) fighter jets or from Army guns, which have a low range, around 50 km.

[Source: TH](#)

Amendment to Minerals Rules

For Prelims: Features of Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015 and Mineral (Auction) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2021, The National Mineral Policy 2019, Minerals in India.

For Mains: Mining sector of India, Mineral Distribution in India, Amendment to Minerals Rules and its significance.

Why in News

Recently, the **Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Second Amendment Rules, 2021** and the **Mineral (Auction) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2021** have been notified.

- These two rules will amend the **Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015 [MEMC Rules]** and the **Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 [Auction Rules]**, respectively.
- Earlier, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha both cleared the [Mines and Minerals \(Development and Regulation\) \(MMDR\) Amendment Bill, 2021](#).

Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015

- It have been **recently amended in June, 2021**, inter alia, to **provide for auction to grant a composite licence in respect of areas** where at least Reconnaissance Survey (G4) level has been completed or where mineral potentiality of the block has been identified based on the available geoscience data but resources are yet to be established.
 - A **Reconnaissance Survey** provides a snapshot of potential historic resources in a particular location at a specific point in time.
- These amendments were **aimed at identifying more mineral blocks for auction** and thereby increasing the pace of exploration and production resulting in improving the availability of minerals in the country and increasing employment in the sector.

Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015

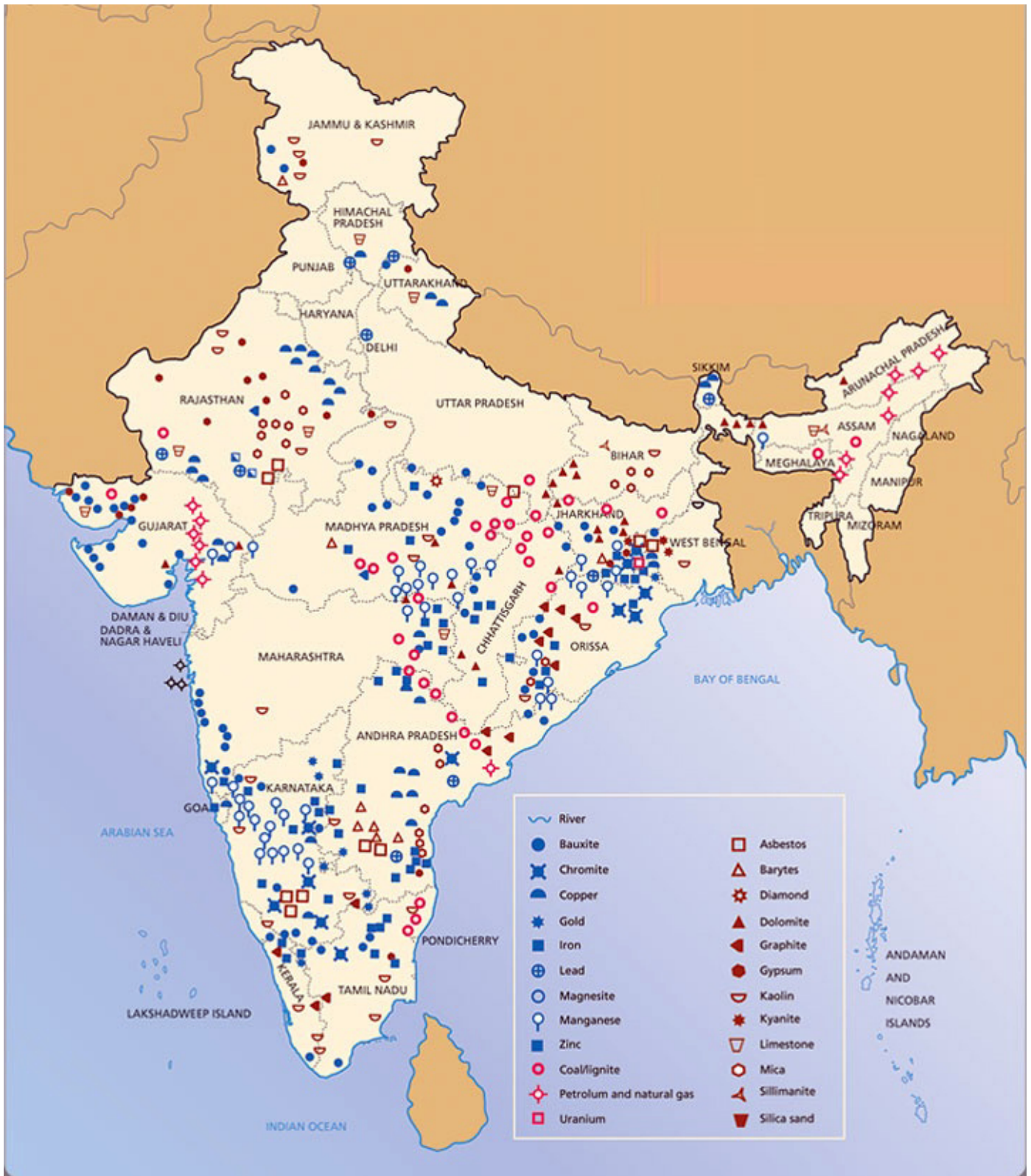
- It was amended, inter alia, to prescribe bid security, performance security and other eligibility conditions **to enable auction of such blocks for composite licence**.
- [Geological Survey of India \(GSI\)](#) has also made available the database of baseline geoscience data for geological potential areas in the **Online Core Business Integrated System Project (OCBIS) portal** for assistance of prospective bidders and other stakeholders.

Key Points

- **Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Second Amendment Rules, 2021:**
 - It will **enable any person** (who is intending to participate in auction) to propose suitable blocks for auction for composite licence where mineral potentiality of the blocks has been identified based on the available geoscience data.
 - A committee constituted by the State Government shall **assess the mineral potentiality of the blocks** so proposed and recommend the block for auction.
- **Mineral (Auction) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2021:**
 - It would provide that in case the blocks proposed by any person are notified for auction, the said **person would be provided incentive of depositing only half of the bid security amount in auction** of the blocks proposed by him.
 - **Part surrender of mining lease area has been allowed** in all cases.
 - Till now, **part surrender was allowed only in case of non-grant of forest clearance.**
 - Provisions have also been added to **allow disposal of overburden/ waste rock/ mineral below the threshold value**, which is generated during the course of mining or beneficiation of the mineral.
 - **Minimum area** for grant of mining lease has been revised from 5 ha. (hectares) to 4 ha. For certain specific deposits, minimum 2 ha. is provided.
- **Aim:**
 - To **identify more mineral blocks for auction** and thereby increase the pace of exploration and production resulting in improving the availability of minerals in the country,
- **Significance:**
 - It will **encourage more participation in auctions** and promote competition.
 - It will **facilitate State governments in identifying more blocks** for auction of composite licence.
- **Initiatives Related to Mining:**
 - [The National Mineral Policy 2019](#)
 - Initiatives are being taken to ensure early operationalisation of auctioned greenfield mineral blocks.
 - Rationalisation of taxes in the mining sector is also being considered.
 - Under the [Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme](#), enhancing private investments in the mineral sector and bringing in other reforms has been announced.
 - [District Mineral Foundation Funds](#)

Minerals in India

- India is richly endowed with mineral resources. Explorations have found **over 20,000 known mineral deposits** and recoverable reserves of more than 60 minerals.
- 11 states account for **90% of the total number of operational mines** (Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Karnataka).
- Globally, **India is ranked as one of the leading producers of valuable minerals** such as chromite, iron ore, coal and bauxite.
- The total geographical area of India is **around 328 million hectares** out of which mining lease (other than fuel, atomic and minor minerals) constitutes around 0.14%, barely 20% of it is mined.
- The Indian subsoils are rich in onshore and offshore crude oil and gas, coal, iron ore, copper, bauxite, etc.
- India **produces as many as 95 minerals**, which includes 4 fuel, 10 metallic, 23 non-metallic, 3 atomic and 55 minor minerals (including building and other materials).



[Source:PIB](#)

Indian Desert Cat

Why in News

Recently, an **Indian Desert Cat** has been spotted for the first time in **Madhya Pradesh's [Panna Tiger Reserve \(PTR\)](#)**.

- The Indian Desert Cat is also known as the **Asiatic Wildcat or the Asian Steppe Wildcat**.

Key Points

- **Scientific Name:** *Felis silvestris ornata*



▪ About:

- It is usually a creature of the **Thar desert in Rajasthan, and inhabits scrub desert areas**.
- The cat occurs in **arid and semi-arid zones of western India** which includes Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra up to Pune and Nagpur.
- This cat is found in deserts **and can survive without water**.
- The **toes of the species have cushion-like hair** which help it balance the fluctuating desert temperatures.

▪ Habitat:

- It can be found mostly in **scrub deserts, up to 2,000-3,000 m elevation**, mountainous areas with sufficient vegetation, as well as **temperate forests**.
- The Asiatic wildcat usually **occurs close to water sources but can also live in low-water areas**. It does not seem to avoid cultivated areas and human settlements.

- It avoids vast deserts, dense forests and deep snow.

▪ Threats:

- It possesses beautiful soft fur, hence, most sought after in the **international fur trade**.
- **Hybridisation** with domestic cats can lead to **the loss of genetic information and is thought to be one of the main threats**. Hybridisation was reported from Pakistan and Central Asia and is most likely also a problem in India.
- Another important threat is from **poaching related to conflict with humans**.
- **Habitat destruction** and reduced habitat quality remain important issues. The Asiatic wildcat is under heavy pressure due to **land use changes**.
- **Rodenticides** and other chemicals may also threaten it.

▪ Protection Status:

- [IUCN Red List](#): **Least Concern**
- [CITES](#): **Appendix-II**
- [Wildlife protection Act's](#): Schedule-I.

Panna Tiger Reserve

▪ Location:

- It was established in 1981 and is situated in the **Vindhya mountain range** in the northern part of Madhya Pradesh.
- Ken river (a tributary of the Yamuna River) flows through the reserve.
- The region is also famous for Panna diamond mining.
- [Ken-Betwa river interlinking project](#) will be located within the tiger reserve.

▪ Recognition:

- In July, 2021, PTR was awarded the **Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CAITS) certificate** by the [National Tiger Conservation Authority](#) for meeting the established international standards for tiger conservation and management.
- [The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#) designated the Panna Tiger Reserve as a Biosphere Reserve on August 25, 2011.

▪ Other Tiger Reserves in Madhya Pradesh:

- Sanjay-Dubri.
- [Satpura.](#)
- [Bandhavgarh.](#)
- [Madhav National Park](#)
- [Pench Tiger Reserves](#)

[Source: IE](#)

Breastfeeding-friendly Tags for Hospitals

Why in News

Recently, the **Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI)** launched the **National Accreditation Centre (NAC)** for **Breastfeeding Friendly Hospitals**.

- **BPNI** is a 30-year-old organisation for protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding in India, is a national organisation that **works towards protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding** and appropriate complementary feeding of infants & young children.

Key Points

▪ About:

- It is a new initiative where hospitals across the country will be certified as **Breastfeeding Friendly**.
- The move came in the wake of the [latest National Family Health Survey \(NFHS\)](#) showing a further increase in caesarean deliveries.
 - A caesarean delivery, also called a C-section, is **a surgical procedure performed when a vaginal delivery is not possible** or safe. During this procedure, **the baby is delivered through surgical incisions made** in the abdomen and the uterus.

- The objective is **to assess the hospitals on policy, programmes and practises.**
- It will help in reducing neonatal mortality and will impact our [Infant Mortality Rate \(IMR\)](#).

- **Neonatal mortality** is defined as death **within the first 28 days of life.**

- **Significance of Breastfeeding:**

- It is **optimal for both mothers and babies.** It can protect babies against infections and reduce the rates of later health problems like diabetes, obesity, and asthma.
 - The protein present in breast milk **is easily digested by the baby rather than in formula or cow's milk.** Also, calcium and iron present in breast milk are more easily absorbed.
- It is said that for mothers, breastfeeding helps the uterus to contract and bleeding to cease more quickly after delivery. Also, **it reduces the risk of breast and ovarian cancer** and helps to generate a great bond for mothers with their babies.

- **Related Data:**

- According to the latest NFHS (2019-21), only **41.8% of mothers were able to breastfeed within the first hour of birth** and provide skin-to-skin contact to the baby shortly after birth. It means that 58 % of mothers are not enabled.
- Going by approximately 24.5 million births annually, **14.2 million are deprived of the mother's milk and its benefits to the newborn** and moms, violating the human rights of mother and child.

Related Government Initiatives

- [MAA - "Mothers Absolute Affection"](#)
- [Adolescent Friendly Health Services Program](#)
- [Auxiliary Nurse Midwife](#)
- [Janani Suraksha Yojana \(JSY\)](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana \(PMMVY\)](#)
- [Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojna \(IGMSY\)](#)
- [Kudumbashree in Kerala](#)
- [Poshan Abhiyaan](#)

[Source: TH](#)

PM Gets Bhutan's Highest Civilian Award

Why in News

Recently, the **Prime Minister of India has been conferred by Bhutan's highest civilian award, 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo'** also known as **"Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo"**.

Key Points

- **About:**

- The announcement of the award coincided with the occasion of the **114th National Day of**

Bhutan.

- This is the **highest decoration of Bhutan** and is awarded in recognition of a **lifetime of service to the people** and the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- Order of the Dragon King was founded on 7th November 2008, to **reward those who devoted a lifetime of service to the nation** and people of Bhutan.
- The honours exist in two categories. **Order of the Dragon King** is the pinnacle of the honour system in Bhutan and also takes precedence over all other orders, medals and decorations.

Other Awards Won by the Indian PM

- **Order of Abdulaziz Al Saud (2016):** The highest honour of **Saudi Arabia** awarded to non-muslim dignitaries.
- **State Order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan (2016):** The highest civilian honour of **Afghanistan**.
- **Grand Collar of the State of Palestine Award (2018):** The highest honour of **Palestine** awarded to foreign dignitaries.
- **Order of Zayed Award (2019):** The highest civilian honour of the **United Arab Emirates**.
- **Order of St. Andrew award (2019):** The highest civilian honour of Russia
- Order of the Distinguished Rule of Nishan Izzuddin (2019) The highest honour of the Maldives awarded to foreign dignitaries.
- **King Hamad Order of the Renaissance - First Class (2019):** **Bahrain's** top honour.
- **Legion of Merit by the US Government (2020):** The **United States Armed Forces** award given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.
- **Seoul Peace Prize (2018):** Seoul Peace Prize Cultural Foundation's biennial award (**South Korea**) to those individuals who have made their mark through contributions to the harmony of mankind, reconciliation between nations and world peace.
- **Champions of The Earth Award (2018):** The **United Nation's** highest environmental honour
- **First Philip Kotler Presidential award (2019):** Offered to the leader of a nation.
- **Global Goalkeeper Award:** Honour by **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation** for **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** (2019)
- **Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award (2021):** Awarded by the **Cambridge Energy Research Associates CERA** for commitment of leadership towards the future of global energy and the environment.

[Source: IE](#)