



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**31st March 2025**



# Unleashing Potential of electronics Manufacturing

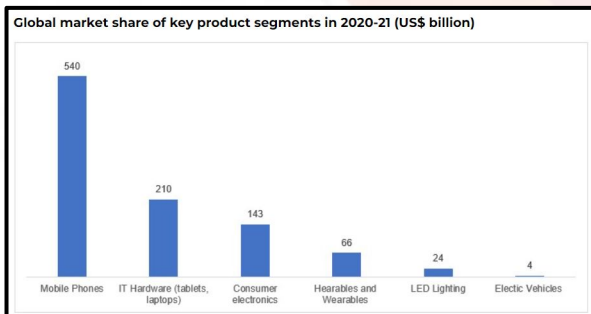
**CONTEXT:** Recently the Electronics & IT Minister highlighted that our next target is to design software in India so that we can transform India from a "Manufacturing hub" into a full-fledged electronics design & manufacturing centre.

## Manufacturing landscape

- **China leads with 28.4%** of global output, followed by the **USA (16.6%)**.
- **India - 3.3%** of the global share.

## Significance:

- **Economic Contribution:**
  - 13 - 17.7% to GDP.
  - Global electronics finished goods market is projected to grow at a **5% CAGR, USD 3.5 trillion** by the **2030**.
- **Supply Chain Shift**
- **India's Potential**
- **Boosting Exports:**
  - electronics production **nearly doubled** from **USD 48 billion** in **FY17** to **USD 101 billion** in **FY23**.
  - **expected to reach \$120 Bn** by **FY26**.



## Challenges

- **Low participation in GVCs**
- **Relatively high import tariffs:**
  - 7.5% (compared to China's 4%, Malaysia's 3.5%, and Mexico's 2.7%)
- **Lack of Robust Electronics Component Ecosystem**

India's participation in GVC is low, at <1% share in ~\$3T electronics trade flow globally. Vietnam exports ~6X of India

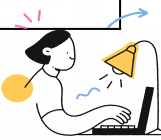


India's could target to 5-6% of \$4T Electronics GVC (\$200-250Bn exports) by 2030

- **Low R&D**
- **Skill Gap**
- **Environmental Sustainability**

## Government Initiatives

- **PLI Schemes:** Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing and IT Hardware
- **Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0)**
- **100% FDI is allowed under the automatic route**
- **Setting up of Semiconductor Fabs**
- **Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS).**



# Unleashing Potential of electronics Manufacturing



**CONTEXT:** Recently the Electronics & IT Minister that highlighted that our next target is to design software in India so that we can transform India from a “Manufacturing hub” into a full-fledged electronics design & manufacturing centre.

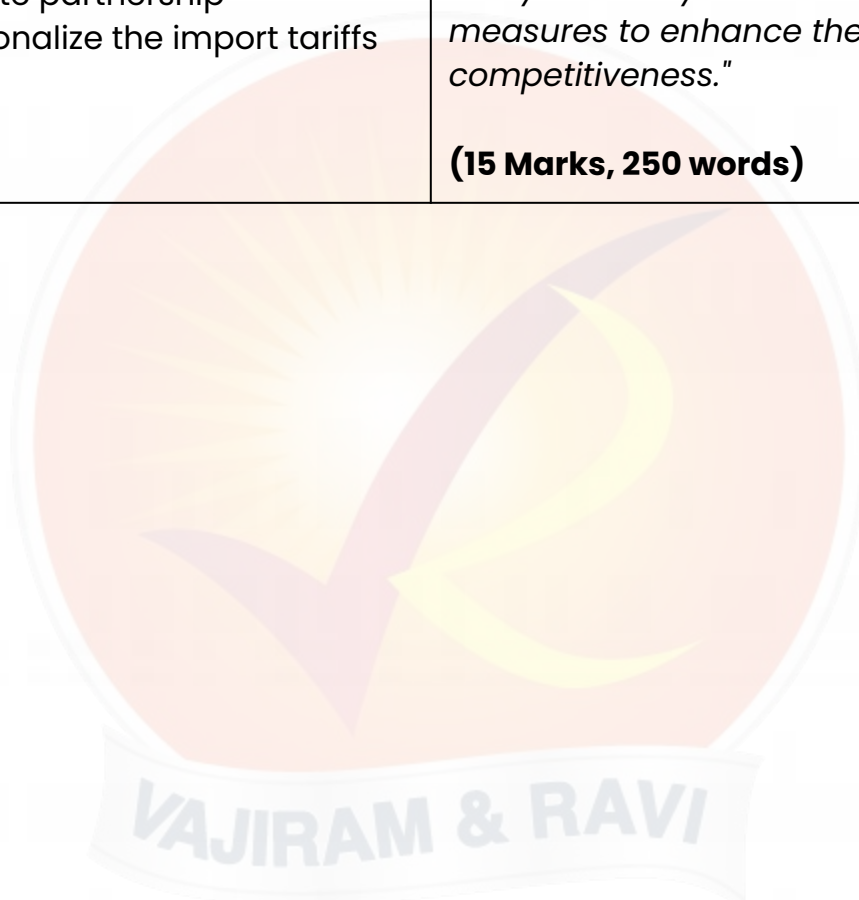
## Way forward

- Increasing Scalability
- Industry academia collaborations
- Increasing Flexibility
- Public-private partnership
- Need to rationalize the import tariffs

## Mains Practise Question

*"Despite various policy initiatives, India's electronics manufacturing sector continues to face significant challenges. Analyze the key obstacles and suggest measures to enhance the sector's global competitiveness."*

**(15 Marks, 250 words)**





# Unity in Diversity



**CONTEXT:** In his recent Mann ki Baat episode PM highlighted that how languages & regions differ but festival show unity in Diversity.

## What it implies ?

- The term '**diversity**' emphasizes **differences** rather than inequalities.
- **Unity** means integration.
- "**unity without uniformity**" and "**diversity without fragmentation**".
- 

## Forms of diversity:

- **Geographical Diversity:** 8% of all recorded species.
- **Religious Diversity:**
  - Hindus (82.41%), Muslims (11.6%), Christians (2.32%), Sikhs (1.99%), Buddhists (0.77%) and Jains (0.41%).
- **Caste Diversity:** 3,000 Jatis in India
- **Language Diversity:**
  - **Austic family**– Santhal, Munda, Ho, etc.
  - **Dravidian family** –Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, etc.
  - **Sino-Tibetan family**– Sikkimese, Sikkimese, Bodo, etc.
  - **Indo-European family**– Hindi, Punjabi, Sindhi, Marathi, etc
- **Racial Diversity:** Indo-Aryans, Dravidians, and Mongoloids.

## Factors that threaten India's Unity

- **Geographical isolation**
- **Regionalism: Son of soil**
- **Inter-state conflicts**
- **Communalism**
- **Language related issues**
- **Forced assimilation and cultural homogenization**

## Factors Leading to Unity amidst Diversity

- **Climatic integration via monsoon**
- **Constitutional identity**
- **Dual-language framework**
- **Culture of pluralism and mutual respect**
- **Economic Integration**
- **Sports and Cinema**

## Mains Practise Question

*"India's unity in diversity is both its strength and its challenge." Discuss with suitable examples.*

**(15 Marks, 250 words)**



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Polity

**Newspaper :** The Hindu; **Page No :** 6

There are no marks for guessing what the incident being referred to is – the recent and shocking discovery by the Delhi fire brigade of half-burnt currency notes while putting out a fire that broke out in the official residence of a Delhi High Court Judge. One hopes that the internal inquiry that has been ordered by the Chief Justice of India will be completed early and its findings made public. The judge in the eye of the storm has been repatriated to his parent High Court. Any other public servant would have faced a first information report followed by an investigation. Many may recall the case of a former CJI who included himself as a member of the inquiry committee that had been constituted to probe a complaint of sexual harassment that had been lodged by a court staff against the CJI. This led to such public outrage that the CJI had to opt out.

Over the past few days, social media has been awash with several memes. Of these, there is one that appears to be the best – “For the first time, a fire brigade has ignited more fire than what it extinguished.” The fact is the fire is still raging.

That this incident has happened just after two recent developments has not helped matters. In the first instance, the Supreme Court of India took objection to an order passed by the Lokpal taking cognisance of a complaint of corruption against a High Court Judge and referred it to the CJI. The Court has taken *suo motu* notice of this ‘disturbing’ order, as in its view, the Lokpal has no jurisdiction to act upon complaints against judges. The matter is before the Court.

The second instance happens to be a repulsive order passed by a High Court Judge wherein the Lordship was of the view that grabbing body parts of a minor girl and ‘breaking the strings of her pyjama’ were not enough to charge an accused with the offence of rape or attempt to rape. Mercifully, this obnoxious order has been stayed by the Supreme Court, due to its “total lack of sensitivity”.

What is the common factor in these three cases that involve High Court Judges? The answer is that all the judges have passed through the existing system of selection by the Collegium of Judges. This is a selection process that has drawn criticism on and off for many years, because of its opaque nature and the stranglehold of a few families over this system. Judicial dynasties sometimes result in the selection of incompetent and mediocre persons.

## Have an Indian Judicial Service

All this has also led to the revival of the debate on the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act. This Act was passed by Parliament with the ratification of 16 State Assemblies and had the assent of the President of India in December 2014. But the Supreme Court chose to strike it down, although many were of the view that the Court could have gone in for a judicial review only to decide whether the legislation passed by the Parliament was in conformity with constitutional provisions.

While this debate may go on, a much simpler and immediate solution could be to have an exclusive all India service for senior positions in the judiciary on the pattern of the Union Public Service Commission’s highly competitive, transparent and merit-based selection process for the civil services such as the Indian Administrative Service, the Indian Foreign Service, the Indian Police Service and Indian Revenue Service.





**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Polity

**Newspaper :** The Hindu; **Page No :** 6

## Will ensure course correction

There are several **advantages** in having an Indian Judicial Service. First, it would result in the higher judiciary becoming more inclusive and representative in character. At present, the higher judiciary is an **elite club dominated by a few families**. Women and the marginalised sections of society are very poorly represented. There is an urgent need to open the doors of the judiciary to meritorious candidates from all parts of India and all walks of life to compete for senior judicial positions.

**Second**, recruitment may be entrusted to the UPSC by the Supreme Court, stipulating the **criteria and the method of selection** for the senior judicial positions, **in consultation with High Courts and legal luminaries**. This process would also insulate the judiciary from any interference of the executive.

**Third**, a transparent selection process, with **details in the public domain**, is obviously much better than the **closed-door meetings of the Collegium**. Post-selection, a comprehensive training programme would ensure that those selected are well versed in the multiple branches of law. The Supreme Court may also evolve a **system of oversight to ensure integrity and to initiate disciplinary action against those who lack integrity**.

In this writer's view, this will greatly help in restoring the faith of the people as well as the image of the higher judiciary in the largest parliamentary democracy of the world.

## About AIJS:

- **Article 312(1)** – Rajya Sabha is required to pass a resolution supported by not less than two-thirds of its members present and voting.
- Thereafter, Parliament can by **simple majority amend Article 233** to create an **AIJS**.
- **Article 312 (3)** – The all-India judicial service referred to in clause (1) **shall not include any post inferior to that of a district judge** as defined in **article 236**.
- **A district judge can include** a city civil court judge, additional district judge, joint district judge, assistant district judge, chief judge of a small cause court, chief presidency magistrate, additional chief presidency magistrate, sessions judge, additional sessions judge, and assistant sessions judge.
- The **recruitment and conditions** which are put forward for persons appointed to All India services can be **regulated by the Parliament** as it enacted the **All India Service Act, 1951**.
- It does **not require an amendment** of the Constitution, under **Article 368**.



# Why Nepalis want King's Return?

**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Current events of National & International importance

**Newspaper :** Indian Express; **Page No :** 12

A MONARCH who lost his throne 19 years ago has turned into a rallying point for citizens angry and frustrated with the system, the constitution, and the leaders of the democratic republic of Nepal.

## Genesis: The King's call

The former King has not openly expressed a desire to return. He has confined his activities to issuing messages expressing concern over Nepal's worsening economic scenario, and the flight of youths abroad for livelihood opportunities.

public anger against widespread corruption and the alleged scams in which almost every Prime Minister and senior politician is seen as being involved, is boiling over, and getting organised.

It has been a practice since 2006 to grant immunity to politicians against investigation if a "policy decision", which is essentially a decision by the cabinet, is taken for it.

■ PM Oli faces a contempt case for violating a Supreme Court order against converting a tea estate into commercial plots.

■ Three other former PMs, Madhav Nepal (2009-11), Baburam Bhattarai (2011-13), and Khil Raj Regmi (2013-14), are accused in scams to give government land to private individuals.

■ Complaints are pending against three-time PM Prachanda for allegedly making billions by diverting money meant for Maoist guerrillas when they were kept in UN-monitored cantonments during the peace process



that began in late 2006.

■ Five-time PM Sher Bahadur Deuba is accused of taking illegal commissions in the purchase of aircraft, and his wife Arzu Rana Deuba, currently the foreign affairs minister, has often faced questions in Parliament about her alleged role in fraudulently turning Nepali citizens into Bhutanese nationals on paper, and sending them to the US as "refugees".

It is widely believed that the collapse of the republican experiment and a return to Nepal's former monarchical system could lead to an investigation of the alleged misdeeds of all these politicians, and likely trials and convictions.

However, Friday's street protests indicate that the refusal to negotiate with the monarchist may only prolong the social conflict that has wracked Nepal since the mid-1990s. The pro-republic forces may ultimately be forced to course-correct and hold a dialogue with these groups.





**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Environment

**Newspaper :** Indian Express; **Page No :** 12

A STRIP of the Pacific Ocean seabed that was mined for metals more than 40 years ago has still not recovered, according to a new study. It found that the mining had led to long-term sediment changes and reduced the populations of many of the larger organisms living in that region.

The study, 'Long-term impact and biological recovery in a deep-sea mining track', was published in the journal *Nature* on March 26. It was carried out by a team of scientists led by Britain's National Oceanography Centre.

The findings have come at a time when there has been a growing demand for establishing a moratorium on all deep-sea mining activity. In fact, last week, 36 countries attended a council meeting of the United Nations' International Seabed Authority in Kingston, Jamaica, to discuss if mining companies should be allowed to extract metals from the ocean floor.



**Polymetallic nodules contain rare metals.** *Wikimedia Commons*

these as strategically important resources that will be needed as onshore reserves are depleted and demand for the metals continues to rise.

#### What were the findings of the study?

The study examined the impact of a small-scale mining experiment on a part of the Pacific Ocean's seafloor. Carried out

Kingston, Jamaica, to discuss if mining companies should be allowed to extract metals from the ocean floor.

#### What is deep-sea mining?

Deep-sea mining involves removing mineral deposits and metals from the ocean's seabed. There are three types of such mining: taking deposit-rich polymetallic nodules off the ocean floor, mining massive seafloor sulphide deposits, and stripping cobalt crusts from rock.

These nodules, deposits and crusts contain substances like nickel, rare earths, and cobalt. They are needed for producing batteries and materials used in tapping renewable energy, as well as for everyday technology like cellphones and computers.

Engineering and technology used for deep-sea mining are still evolving. Some companies are looking to vacuum materials from the seafloor using massive pumps. Others are developing artificial intelligence-based technology that would teach deep sea robots how to pluck nodules from the floor. Some are looking to use advanced machines that could mine materials offside of huge underwater mountains and volcanoes.

Companies and governments view

#### What were the findings of the study?

The study examined the impact of a small-scale mining experiment on a part of the Pacific Ocean's seafloor. Carried out in 1979, the experiment involved removing polymetallic nodules off the seabed. The scientists analysed an 8-metre strip during an expedition in 2023.

They found that the experiment had led to long-term changes in the sediments of that area, and a dip in the population of the organisms living there.

"The evidence provided by this study is critical for understanding potential long-term impacts... Although we saw some areas with little or no recovery, some animal groups were showing the first signs of recolonisation and repopulation," NOC expedition leader Daniel Jones told *Reuters*.

This is not the first time that scientists have raised concerns about deep-sea mining. Previous studies have shown that mining below 200 metres can lead to harmful noise, vibration, sediment plumes, and light pollution. A 2023 study published in the journal *Current Biology* found that animal populations decrease in regions where deep-sea mining is done and it leaves a greater footprint than previously thought. (WITHAPINPUTS)





**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Environment

**Newspaper :** Indian Express; **Page No :** 12

**Context:** Study - “**Long-term impact & biological recovery in a deep –sea mining track**” published in journal **Nature**.

### **Findings of Study:**

- A strip of **Pacific Ocean seabed** mined in **1979** for polymetallic nodules has still not recovered.
- **Long term sediment changes**
- **Impact on biodiversity**

### **Previous Studies:**

- Mining **below 200 metres** - harmful noise, light pollution.
- **2023** - Journal “**Current Biology**”

### **Significance of Study:**

- **Onshore reserves depleted**
- Last week, **36 countries**, attended council meeting - **International Seabed Authority - Jamaica** - “mining companies should be allowed to extract metals”

### **About Deep Sea Mining?**

- involves removing **mineral deposits and metals** from the ocean’s seabed.
- **Three types:**
  - Taking deposit-rich polymetallic nodules off the ocean floor
  - Mining massive seafloor sulfide deposits
  - Stripping cobalt crusts from rock.

- contain materials, such as **nickel, rare earths, cobalt** and more, that are needed for **batteries** and other materials used in tapping **Renewable Energy** and also for everyday technology like **cellphones and computers**.
- **Options explored:**
  - **Massive pumps**
  - **Developing AI** - Tech robots - pluck nodules
  - **Advanced machines** mine minerals offside huge underwater **mountain & Volcanoes**.

### **About International Seabed Authority**

- Autonomous organization within the **United Nations**.
- **Headquarters - Kingston, Jamaica.**
- **All States parties to the 1982 UNCLOS are members** of the Authority, amounting to **168 members**, including the **European Union**.
- It is **one of the three international institutions** established by **UNCLOS**.
- **Primary function** is to **regulate exploration for, and exploitation of deep seabed minerals** found in 'the Area', which is defined by the Convention as the seabed and subsoil **beyond the limits of national jurisdiction**.



# Impacts of Deep Sea-Mining



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Environment

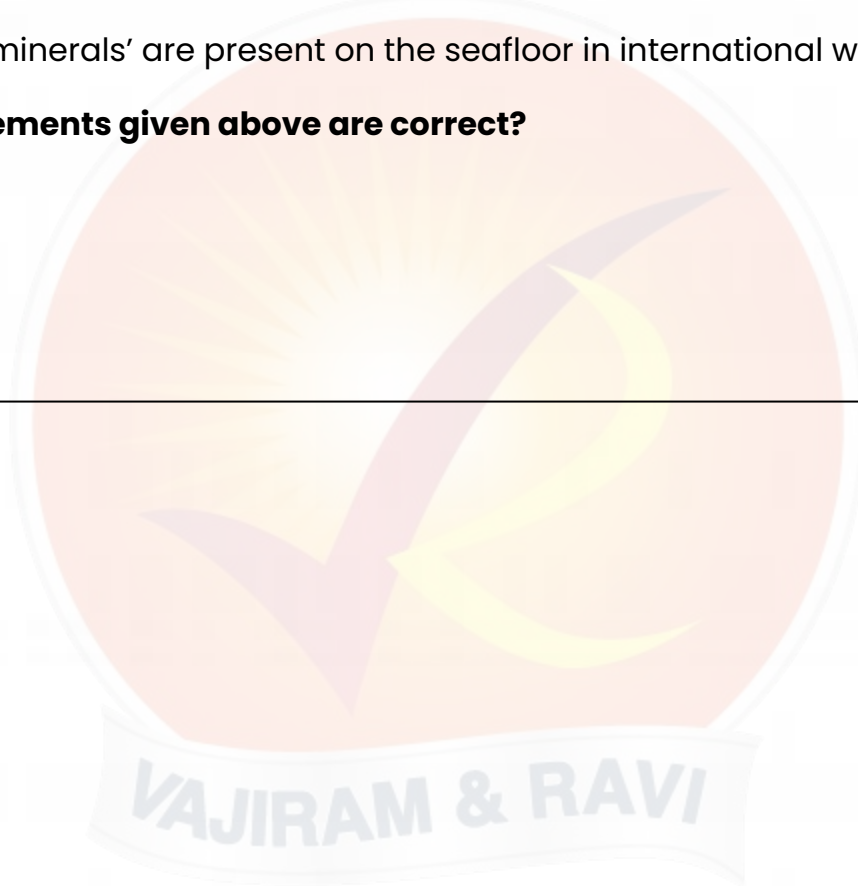
**Newspaper :** Indian Express; **Page No :** 12

**PYQ. Consider the following statements: (2021)**

1. The Global Ocean Commission grants licences for seabed exploration and mining in international waters.
2. India has received licences for seabed mineral exploration in international waters
3. 'Rare earth minerals' are present on the seafloor in international waters.

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

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3





**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Environment

**Newspaper :** Indian Express; **Page No :** 1

## Before rolling out Green Credits, MoEF sidestepped Law queries

NIKHIL GHANEKAR  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 30

THE ENVIRONMENT Ministry's ambitious Green Credit Programme (GCP), which aims to enhance the country's forest and tree cover and encourage "pro-planet actions", was rolled out despite apprehensions from

### YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW AN EXPRESS RTI APPLICATION

the Law Ministry, records obtained by *The Indian Express* under the Right to Information

(RTI) Act show.

A week before the Environment Ministry notified the Green Credit Rules on October 12, 2023, the Legislative Department under the Ministry of Law and Justice cautioned that provisions of the Environment Protection Act, 1986, "perhaps" did not support the business

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

model envisioned under the programme.

It flagged this to the Environment Ministry twice, advising it to "examine the legality of the proposed Green Credit Rules in consultation with the Department of Legal Affairs". While the Legislative Department drafts laws for ministries, the Department of Legal Affairs advises them on legal matters.

Records show that the Environment Ministry proceeded with the programme without the suggested legal review, notifying it shortly before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public announcement at the Dubai climate conference in December 2023.

It justified its decision by arguing that the Environment Protection Act (EPA), 1986 — the parent law under which the Green Credit Rules were notified — permits the planning and execution of a nationwide programme for the prevention, control, and abatement of environmental pollution.

### What is the GCP?

Under the programme, individuals, communities and private industries that engage in environment-positive actions get tradable 'green credits'. Such actions could include increasing forest cover, water management, and sustainable agriculture. These credits can then be traded on a domestic platform to meet legal obligations such as compensatory afforestation for industrial or infrastructure projects.

Since its launch, 384 entities, including 41 PSUs such as Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd, and National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd, have registered for participation under the scheme.

### The to and fro

According to records obtained under the RTI Act, Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav approved the final draft of the Green Credit Rules on August 18, 2023, before sending it to the Law Ministry's Legislative Department for vetting.

On October 5, 2023, the Legislative Department, apart from suggesting tweaks from a drafting angle, noted, "Perhaps, the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, do not support such business objects or activity and rules to be framed for the purposes. In view of the above, the administrative ministry may examine the legality of the proposed Green Credit Rules in consultation with the Department of Legal Affairs."

Explaining the rationale, a highly placed source in the Law Ministry drew a parallel with the Energy Conservation Act, which was amended in 2023 to enable the creation of a carbon credit trading scheme after the Law Ministry made similar observations on the market-linked mechanism.

In response to the Law Ministry's suggestion, the Environment Ministry argued that the GCP simply supported environmental protection and improvement, placing it well within the scope of the EPA. In response to the Legislative Department's comments, a scientist-level officer in the environment ministry noted in internal files on October 10, 2023, that the EPA "provides power to the central government for planning and execution of a nationwide programme for prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollution".

In the same correspondence chain, a director-level officer in the environment ministry noted that observations made by the Law Ministry

have been "duly considered". "Matter has been discussed. Considering the importance of launch and early roll out for implementation of the Green Credit Programme, it is proposed to notify the Green Credit Rules in the official gazette," the file noting states.

The Environment Minister approved the draft rules on October 12, 2023, and they were published on October 13.

The question of the legality of GCP Rules came up again on January 4, 2024. While reviewing the Environment Ministry's draft notification on the methodology for tree plantation-based credits, a pilot component of the GCP, the Legislative Department noted it had no record of advice from the Department of Legal Affairs. To this, on January 29, 2024, the Environment Ministry simply referred to its submissions from October 10, 2023.

Responding to the queries by *The Indian Express* on whether it got the GCP rules examined by the Legal Affairs department, the Environment Ministry said, "LD, MoJ (Legislative Department, Ministry of Law and Justice) had suggested for examination of the legality of the proposed GCR in consultation with DoLA (Department of Legal Affairs). It is to be noted that the observations of LD, MoJ were duly considered and fully addressed." The ministry did not expand further.

It added that "the Rules were notified in line with MoEF&CC's mandate to plan and implement national programs for preventing, controlling, and reducing environmental pollution". Regarding concerns over the creation of a market-based mechanism under the EPA, it said, "In so far as market-based mechanisms are concerned, these already exist, such as the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework under waste man-

agement rules where EPR certificates generated by recyclers are purchased by producers to meet their EPR obligations. This incentivises environmental actions in the field of waste management." The Ministry of Law and Justice did not respond to detailed queries by *The Indian Express*.

Officers in the Law Ministry, who did not wish to be named, told *The Indian Express* that irrespective of what mechanism was operational for the waste sector under EPA, the Environment Ministry ought to have addressed concerns regarding the legal examination of the Green Credit Rules.

### Why the Law Ministry's concerns are important

Prakriti Srivastava, a retired Indian Forest Service officer and former Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, Kerala, said that "the Environment Protection Act (under which the Rules were notified) in no way provides for a business model for exchange of green credits for compensatory afforestation".

"This seems to have been clearly pointed out by the Law Ministry. If EPA had to be used, it should have been amended following all due process, including parliamentary approval, and subsequently, preparing Rules to enable the business model for GCP as authorised now," Srivastava said.

On the ministry's comparison of Green Credit Rules with the EPR framework, senior advocate Sanjay Upadhyay said, "The comparison of extended producer responsibility framework and green credit is an unfair comparison and almost amounts to comparing apples with oranges. This is because EPR is not voluntary but obligatory and the green credit program is a voluntary program." (WITH INPUTS FROM DAMINI NATH)





**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Environment  
**Newspaper :** Indian Express; **Page No :** 1

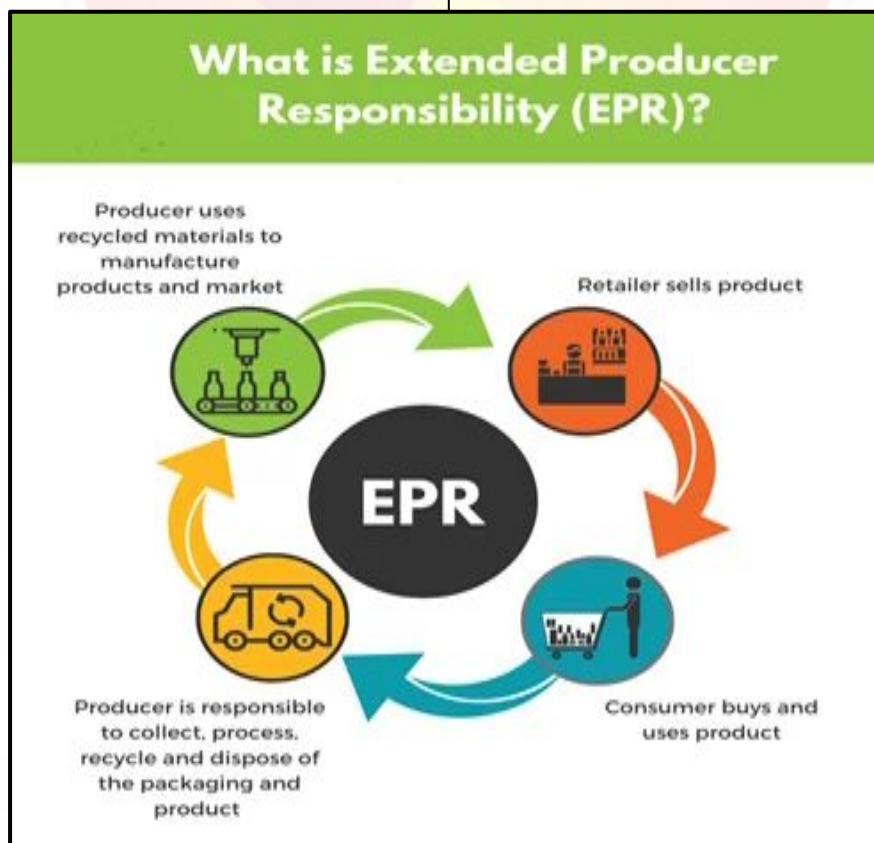
**Context:** A week before Environment Ministry notified the **Green Credit Rules** on **12th October, 2023** the **Law Ministry** has cautioned that the **EPA, 1986** did not support the **“business – model” for exchange of green credits** for compensatory afforestation.

### **About Green Credit Programme:**

- To take ahead the 'LiFE', 2023.
- Innovative **market-based mechanism** designed to **incentivize voluntary environmental positive actions** – like individuals, communities, private sector industries.
- **Administrator** – Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education

- Credits can be traded on a **domestic platform** to meet legal obligations such as Compensatory afforestation.
- **Green Credit Registry** and trading platform, being developed by **ICFRE**.
- **Concerns – Green Deserts**

- Environment Ministry pointed out **“Extended Producer Responsibility”**.
- **Law Ministry Concerns:**
- ◆ **EPR** – obligatory v/s **GCP** – Voluntary
  - ◆ Amending EPA following all due process – Like **Energy Conservation Act amended in 2023**.





**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Art & Culture

**Newspaper :** The Hindu; **Page No :** 8

## What is the controversy over the Bodh Gaya temple?

Why are Buddhist monks protesting near the Bodh Gaya's Mahabodhi Mahavihara? What does the Bodh Gaya Temple Act (BTA), 1949 entail? When was a Hindu temple established?

**Ziya Us Salam**

**The story so far:**

**B**eginning February, nearly 100 Buddhist monks under the All India Buddhist Forum (AIBF) have been protesting, first at the Bodh Gaya's Mahabodhi Temple or Mahavihara, and later a little down the road, demanding a repeal of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act (BTA), 1949. The AIBF has support from prominent Buddhist bodies, and has submitted a memorandum to the Bihar government. The Bodh Gaya is one of the four sacred sites of Buddhism; the other three being Buddha's birthplace Lumbini, Sarnath where he gave his first sermon and Kusinagar where he attained parinirvana.

**Have there been protests before?**  
In November 2023, Buddhist monks held a rally in Gaya and submitted a

memorandum to the Central and State governments. As it failed to have the desired effect, the monks scaled up the protest and held a rally in Patna last year to press for repealing the Act. Back in 2012, monks had filed a writ petition before the Supreme Court to repeal the Act. The petition is yet to be heard.

**What is the Act?**

The BTA established an eight-member management committee having equal number of Buddhists and Hindus. The Act made the local district magistrate an ex-officio chairperson of the committee. As the district magistrate hailed from the majority community, it translated to a Hindu majority on the committee, something which was resented by Buddhist bodies. Ever since then, various Buddhist bodies have been raising their voice intermittently for gaining autonomy over the Bodh Gaya temple, which they

call the Bodh Gaya Mahavihara.

**What do the annals say?**

Noted poet Edwin Arnold in his well-known poem, "The Light of Asia" talks about Gautam Siddhartha's enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. Bodh Gaya was then described as the Mecca of Buddhism, and in many ways popularised Buddhism in the West. However, Bodh Gaya's claim to fame goes much further back in time. In the third century, Mauryan Emperor Ashoka worshipped the Bodhi tree and built the temple there. From the time of Ashoka to the Palas, the Bodhi temple continued to be a Buddhist place of worship and a site of pilgrimage. Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang visited it in 629 AD during the reign of Harshavardhana. Incidentally, Hiuen Tsang called it a Buddhist site, and is said to have found only Buddhist relics here save for a statue of Avaloktishvara.

Things changed with the invasion of Bakhtiyar Khilji in the 13th century. The invasion ended the Pala rule, and thus began the decline of Buddhism. During Akbar's reign, in 1590, a Hindu monk established the Bodh Gaya mutt. With this the temple lapsed into the hands of the Hindu community. Following Independence, the Bihar Assembly passed the BTA in 1949 and control of the temple was transferred from the Hindu head to the new management committee.

**How has the government intervened?**

The BTA was passed by the Bihar government to resolve a festering dispute between the Buddhist and Hindu heads of the Mahabodhi temple for control over the same. The Buddhist side was unhappy at the stipulation that the district magistrate, who was the ex-officio chairman, could only assume leadership if he was from the Hindu community. It changed in 2013 after the State government amended the rule and inserted a provision for the ex-officio chairman to be of any faith.

In the early 1990s, then Chief Minister of Bihar Lalu Prasad Yadav, drafted the Bodh Gaya Mahavihara Bill to replace the BTA. It was supposed to hand over the management of the temple to the Buddhist community. The Bill prohibited idol immersions near the temple and Hindu marriages inside the temple. However, the Bill went into cold storage.

### About Mahabodhi Temple Complex

- It is one of the four holy sites related to the life of the Lord Buddha, and particularly to the attainment of Enlightenment (Bodhi).
- The other three are:
  - Lumbini (Birth) in Nepal
  - Sarnath (Dharma-Chakra-Pravartana - 1st Sermon)
  - Kushinagar (Mahaparinirvana- death) in Uttar Pradesh.
- The first temple was built by Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century B.C., and the present temple dates from the 5th or 6th centuries.



# Bodh Gaya Temple



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Art & Culture  
**Newspaper :** The Hindu; **Page No :** 8

- It is **one of the earliest Buddhist temples built entirely in brick**, still standing from the **late Gupta period**, and it is considered to have had a significant influence in the **development of brick architecture**.
- **Ashoka's stone slab** purporting to **mark the exact position where the Buddha sat** is traditionally called the **Buddha's vajrasana** (literally "diamond throne" or "thunder seat").
- Recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2002**.

**Context:** Beginning **February**, nearly **100 Buddhist monks** under the **All India Buddhist Forum** are protesting and are demanding a **repeal of the Bodh Gaya Temple Act, 1949**.

## Timeline:

- **3rd Century - Ashoka** built it
- **629 AD - Hiuen Tsang** visited during reign of **Harshavardhana**.
- **13th Century - Invasion of Bakhtiyar Khilji** - ended Pala rule

- **1590 - Akbar's reign** - Hindu monk established "**Bodh Gaya mutt**".
- **1949 - BTA passed** by Bihar Assembly:
  - **Control:** Transferred from **Hindu's to New Management Committee**.
  - **Equal number of Buddhists and Hindus**.
  - **Local district magistrate** an **ex-officio chairperson** of the committee.
- As the district magistrate hailed from the majority community, it translated to a **Hindu majority** on the committee.
- **2012 - writ petition in SC**
- **2013 - Changes in BTA:**
  - **Then** - District magistrate could **assume leadership** if from **hindu Community**.
  - **Now** - Any faith
- **Nov, 2023** - Memorandum to Centre & state





**Q1. Regarding the global manufacturing landscape, consider the following statements:**

1. China contributes over one-fourth of the world's total manufacturing output.
2. India's electronics production is expected to surpass USD 1,500 billion by FY26.
3. India's manufacturing sector contributes more than 20% to its GDP.

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

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 1, 2, and 3
- d) None

**Answer: a**

**Q2. Consider the following statements:**

1. To initiate the All India Judicial Service (AIJS), the Rajya Sabha has to pass a resolution with at least a two-thirds majority of its members present and voting.
2. Once the resolution is passed, Parliament can amend Article 233 by a simple majority to create AIJS.

**Which of the statements given above is/are NOT correct?**

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

**Answer: d**

**Q3. Consider the following statements:**

1. Uttar Pradesh shares the longest border with Nepal among Indian states.
2. Nepal shares a border with only four Indian states.
3. The Sharda River forms part of the India-Nepal boundary.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

**Answer: a**

**Q4. Consider the following statements:**

1. The International Seabed Authority regulates Deep-sea mining (DSM) beyond national jurisdictions.
2. Polymetallic nodules, rich in manganese, nickel, and cobalt, are commonly extracted in DSM.
3. India holds an exploration contract for DSM in the Atlantic Ocean under ISA.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

**Answer: b**

**Q5. Regarding the Green Credit Programme (GCP), consider the following statements:**

1. The Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education administers the programme and develops the Green Credit trading platform.
2. Green Credits cannot be used to fulfill Compensatory Afforestation obligations.
3. A major concern associated with the programme is the creation of "Green Deserts."

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

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1 only
- c) 2 only
- d) 1 and 3 only

**Answer: d**





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