

ENERGY CONSERVATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2022

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-III (CONSERVATION)

CONTEXT: To meet India's commitment to exceeding its Paris Agreement climate targets, the Government of India plans to table the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill 2022 in the ongoing Monsoon session of Parliament.

The Bill proposes to amend the Energy Conservation Act 2001 last amended in 2010.

ABOUT ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT 2001

Energy Conservation Act, 2001 was enacted to provide for efficient use of energy and its conservation and for matters connected therewith. The key provisions of the act are as follows:

- **Norms for energy efficiency:** The Act empowers the Centre to specify norms and standards of energy efficiency for appliances, industrial equipment, and buildings with a connected load over 100 kilowatts (kW) or a contractual demand of more than 15 kilovolt-amperes (kVA).
- **BEE:** The Act established the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**. The 2010 amendment extended the tenure of the Director General of the Bureau of Energy Efficiency from three to five years. This Bureau can specify qualifications required for energy auditors who monitor and review the power consumption of various industries.
- **Energy Saving Certificates:** The Centre can issue energy savings certificates to those industries which consume less than their maximum allotted energy. However, this certificate can be sold to customers who consume higher than their maximum allowed energy threshold – providing for a framework for energy trading.
- The Act allows the Centre to prohibit the manufacture, sale, purchase or import of any equipment unless it conforms to specified norms issued six months/ one year before.
- **Penalty:** In case of any violations under this Act, each offence shall attract a penalty of Rs ten lakh with an additional penalty of Rs 10,000 for each day the offence continues.
- **Appeals:** Any appeals against any such order passed by the Central or state government will be heard by the appellate tribunal already established under the Electricity Act, 2003.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT

- Defining the minimum share of renewable energy to be consumed by industrial units or any establishment. This consumption may be done directly from a renewable energy source or indirectly via the power grid.
- Incentivizing efforts to use clean energy by issuing carbon saving certificates.
- Strengthening institutions set up originally under the Act, such as the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.
- Facilitating the promotion of green Hydrogen as an alternative to the fossil fuels used by industries.
- Considering additional incentives like carbon credits for the use of clean energy to lure the private sector to climate action.

- Including larger residential buildings under energy conservation standards to promote sustainable habitats. Currently, only large industries and their buildings come under the ambit of the Act.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT

- To reduce India's **power consumption via fossil fuels and thereby minimize the nation's carbon footprint.**
- To develop **India's carbon market** and boost the adoption of clean technology.
- To meet its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as mentioned in the Paris Climate Agreement before its 2030 target date.

DRUG MENACE IN INDIA

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-II (HEALTH, HUMAN RESOURCE)

CONTEXT: The Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that the Centre was effectively pursuing a decisive war against the drugs menace. He made these remarks while addressing the National Conference on 'Drug Trafficking and National Security' in Chandigarh.

DRUG MENACE: STATISTICS

- India is caught in the vicious circle of drug abuse, and the number of drug addicts are increasing significantly.
- India is sandwiched between **two largest Opium producing regions of the world that is the Golden triangle on one side and the Golden crescent on other.**
- The golden triangle area comprises **Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Laos.**
- The golden crescent area includes **Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran.**
- According to the **World Drug Report 2021**, prescription drugs and their ingredients or 'precursors' are being increasingly diverted for recreational use in India--the largest manufacturer of generic drugs in the world.
- India is also linked to shipment of drugs sold on the 19 major darknet markets analyzed over 2011-2020.
- As per the report **Magnitude of Substance Use in India released by All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) in 2019:**
 1. Around 5 crore Indians reported to have used cannabis and opioids at the time of the survey (conducted in the year 2018).
 2. It has been estimated that there are about 8.5 lakh people who inject drugs.
 3. Of the total cases estimated by the report, more than half of them are contributed by states like Punjab, Assam, Delhi, Haryana, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim, and Uttar Pradesh.



- According to the **National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India**, in 2019, about 2.1% of the country's population (2.26 crore individuals) use opioids.
- As per the survey, 2.8% of the Indians aged 10-75 years (3.1 crore individuals) were using **cannabis as bhang, ganja and charas**.

REASONS FOR WIDESPREAD DRUG ABUSE IN INDIA

- **To escape from the hard realities of life:** The disintegration of the joint family system, the decline of religious and moral values etc. has led to a rise in the number of drug addicts.
- **Loosening of the traditional methods of social control** thus making an individual vulnerable to the stresses and strains of modern life.
- **Peer pressure:** Many youths start using drug under the pressure from their friends, seniors at educational institutions, or by members of their informal groupings.
- **Easy Availability:** India is situated between the **Golden Crescent** on its west and the **Golden Triangle** on its east.
- **Economic Prosperity:** The agricultural reforms and other industrial activities have led to an increase in income in the regions of Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra etc., which has led to an increase in its use.

STEPS TAKEN

Coordination with Various International Organizations:

- The **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)** coordinated with various international organizations for sharing information and intelligence to combat transnational drug trafficking.
- They included the **SAARC, BRICS, Colombo Plan, ASEAN, BIMSTEC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the International Narcotics Control Board**.

Coordination among Various Central and State Agencies:

- For this, the **Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) mechanism was set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in 2016** for effective drug law enforcement.
- This NCORD system was restructured into a four-tier scheme up to district level in July 2019, for better coordination.
- A Joint Coordination Committee with the NCB Director General as its chairperson was set up in July 2019, to monitor the investigation into cases involving large seizures.

SIMS (Seizure Information Management System) Portal:

- For digitization of pan-India drug seizure data, the **MHA launched an e-portal called 'SIMS' in 2019** for all the drug law enforcement agencies under the mandate of Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS).

National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse:

- It was constituted to meet the expenditure incurred in connection with combating illicit traffic in Narcotic Drugs; rehabilitating addicts, and educating the public against drug abuse, etc.

National Drug Abuse Survey:

- The government is also conducting the Survey to measure trends of drug abuse in India through **the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment with the help of National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre of AIIMS**.

Project Sunrise:

- It was launched by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2016**, to tackle the rising HIV prevalence in north-eastern states in India, especially among people injecting drugs.

The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, (NDPS) 1985:

- It prohibits a person from producing, possessing, selling, purchasing, transporting, storing, and/or consuming any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.
- The NDPS Act has since been amended thrice – in 1988, 2001 and 2014.
- The Act extends to the whole of India and it applies also to all Indian citizens outside India and to all persons on ships and aircraft registered in India.

'Nasha Mukh Bharat,' or Drug-Free India Campaign:

- It focuses on community outreach programs.

International Treaties and Conventions to Combat Drug Menace:

India is signatory of the following international treaties and conventions to combat the menace of Drug Abuse:

- **United Nations (UN) Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)**
- **UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971).**
- **UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)**
- **UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) 2000**

INDIA TO HOST UNSC MEET ON COUNTER TERRORISM

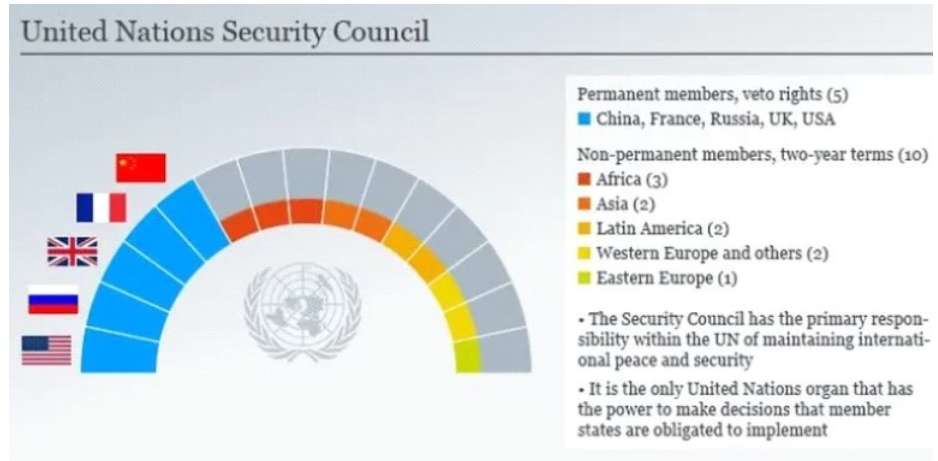
SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-II (IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS)

CONTEXT: In a first, India will **host diplomats and officials from all 15 countries of the United Nations Security Council, including China, Russia, and the United States**, for a special meeting on terrorism, **in Delhi and Mumbai in October.**

The meeting of the **Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), which India is chairing for 2022 as a member of the UNSC**, will focus particularly on challenges such as terrorism financing, cyberthreats and the use of drones, said officials.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Cross-border threats from Pakistan and Afghanistan:** India is expected to highlight cross-border threats from Pakistan and Afghanistan at the meeting, which will come two months before India completes its tenure as an elected member of the UNSC (2021-22).
- **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism:** In addition, India has been pushing for the UN members to adopt a



Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (first proposed in 1996), which is likely to be raised during the meeting.

- **Victim of terrorism:** The event will highlight India's role as a victim of terrorism as well as a country at the forefront of global counter-terrorism efforts.
- **India as President of UNSC:** They said the CTC meeting in India could also pave the way for a visit to **New York by the Prime Minister in December**, where India will be the **President of the UNSC for the entire month**.
- **Focus on significant areas:** The special meeting will specifically focus on three significant areas:
 1. **Where emerging technologies are experiencing rapid development**
 2. **Growing use by Member States (including for security and counter-terrorism purposes)**
 3. **Increasing threat of abuse for terrorism purposes, namely:**
 - a. **The Internet and social media**
 - b. **Terrorism financing, and**
 - c. **Unmanned aerial systems.**

PRELIMS FACTS

BIOMINING

- According to a report, at **Ghazipur dumpsite (Delhi)**, legacy waste that is **bio-mined** is only 6.86% of the total.
- Biomining is the process of using microorganisms (microbes) to extract metals of economic interest from rock ores or mine waste.
- Biomining techniques may also be used to clean up sites that have been polluted with metals.
- Metals extracted through bioleaching include: **Gold, Copper, Silver, Cobalt, Uranium, Zinc, Nickel etc.**

FORMATION OF FARMER PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS (FPOs)

- The Government of India has launched the Central Sector Scheme for "**Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)**" in the year 2020 with a total budgetary outlay of Rs.6865 Crores which will leverage **economies of scale, reduction of cost of production and enhance farmers' incomes** thus playing a key role towards increasing the income of farmers.
- FPOs are **voluntary organizations** controlled by their farmer-members who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions.
- They are **open to all people able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.**

- FPOs operatives provide education and training for their farmer-members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their FPOs.
- FPOs in **Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan** and some other states have shown encouraging results and have been able to realize higher returns for their produce.

INDIA ADDS 10 MORE WETLANDS DESIGNATED AS RAMSAR SITES

- India is one of the contracting parties to Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971.
- So far, 64 wetlands have been designated as Ramsar sites of international importance from India.

List of 10 new wetlands of India added to the Ramsar Sites list	
Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu
Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve	
Vembannur Wetland Complex	
Vellode Bird Sanctuary	
Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary	
Udhayamarthandapuram Bird Sanctuary	
Nanda Lake	Goa
Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary	Karnataka
Sirpur Wetland	Madhya Pradesh
Satkosia Gorge	Odisha