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Current Affairs - 30 September 2025

NATIONAL CRIME RECORDS BUREAU



**NATIONAL
CRIME
RECORDS
BUREAU**

- It was **established in 1986** to act as a repository of information on **crime and criminals**.
- It was set up based on the **recommendations of the Tandon Committee**, the National Police Commission (1977-1981) and the Task Force of the Home Ministry.
- **Nodal Ministry:** It comes under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**, Government of India.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Functions of National Crime Records Bureau**
 - It is responsible for **collecting and analysing crime data** as well as serving as a repository of such information to aid investigators in tracing crimes and criminals.
 - It is entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring, coordination, and implementing the **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and System (CCTNS)** project.
 - Under the **National Digital Police Portal** police officers look for a criminal or suspect on the CCTNS database and gives citizens with services such as online complaint filing, etc.
 - The Bureau has also been entrusted to maintain the **National Database of Sexual Offenders (NDSO)** and share it with the States/UTs on a regular basis.
 - NCRB has also been designated as the Central Nodal Agency to manage the technical and operational functions of the '**Online Cyber-Crime Reporting Portal**' through which any citizen can lodge a complaint or upload a video clip as evidence of crime related to child pornography, rape/gang rape.
 - The NCRB has also **launched CyTrain**, a portal for online training of different stakeholders in cybercrime investigations and prosecution.



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- The **Central Finger Print Bureau** under the NCRB is a national repository of all fingerprints in the country.
 - NCRB also compiles and publishes National Crime Statistics i.e. Crime in India, Accidental Deaths & Suicides, and also Prison Statistics.
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EV CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE - GOVT ROLLS OUT 100% SUBSIDY

- India has set ambitious targets for transitioning towards sustainable transportation, with electric vehicles (EVs) positioned at the centre of its clean mobility vision.
- To bridge the critical infrastructure gap, the government has rolled out guidelines under the Rs. 10,000 crore **PM E-Drive scheme**, offering up to 100% subsidy for setting up EV charging stations and battery swapping stations.

India's Push for EV Adoption

- The EV sector in India has gained momentum over the past decade, supported by policies such as the **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME)** scheme and state-level incentives.
- However, the lack of sufficient charging points continues to deter buyers. India currently has fewer than 20,000 public charging stations, far behind global EV leaders like China and the U.S.
- The PM E-Drive scheme seeks to address this bottleneck by prioritising subsidies for high-density urban areas, smart cities, and critical transport corridors.

Key Features of the PM E-Drive Subsidy Scheme

- The new guidelines allocate Rs. 2,000 crore out of the Rs. 10,000 crore scheme exclusively for charging infrastructure. Some of the notable features include:
- **100% Subsidy Coverage:** Eligible entities will receive full financial support for upstream infrastructure like transformers, cables, circuit breakers, and civil works. In some cases, cost of EV supply equipment including charging guns, will be subsidised.
- **Priority Areas:** Focus on cities with populations above one million, notified smart cities, satellite towns near metros, and cities under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).



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- **Highways Integration:** Selected inter-city and inter-state highways will be made EV-ready through coordinated planning with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
- **Eligible Entities:** Central ministries, State governments, PSUs, and CPSEs can submit proposals. IOCL, BPCL, HPCL, NHAI, AAI, metro rail corporations are also eligible.
- **Operational Flexibility:** Entities may directly operate charging stations or appoint Charge Point Operators (CPOs).

Expected Impact on EV Ecosystem

- The subsidy scheme is designed to create a network of charging stations that matches the pace of EV adoption in India. The immediate benefits include:
- **Boost to EV Sales:** Assured availability of charging infrastructure is expected to encourage more consumers to switch from internal combustion engine vehicles to EVs.
- **Public Sector Leadership:** Involving large PSUs such as IOCL and NHAI ensures that the scheme benefits from established networks and infrastructure expertise.
- **Pollution Reduction:** By prioritising NCAP cities and capital cities, the scheme aligns EV infrastructure growth with India's clean air goals.
- **Economic Opportunities:** The expansion of charging networks will create business opportunities for Charge Point Operators, equipment manufacturers, & service providers.

Challenges Ahead

- While the subsidy plan is a breakthrough, its success will depend on implementation. Some key challenges include:
 - **Land Acquisition:** Identifying and securing suitable sites for charging stations in densely populated urban areas.
 - **Grid Readiness:** Strengthening India's power distribution systems to handle increased EV charging load without causing disruptions.
 - **Private Sector Participation:** Encouraging private players to complement PSU-led efforts for a balanced rollout.
 - **Consumer Awareness:** Educating users about charging locations, pricing models, and safety standards.
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INDIA PUSHES E-WASTE RECYCLING AMID COLLECTION CHALLENGES

- E-waste refers to discarded electronic devices such as smartphones, laptops, TVs, fridges, and chargers.
- While these often contain valuable materials, they are usually dumped instead of being reused or recycled.
- **Need for effective e-waste management**
 - **Health Risks** - E-waste contains toxic substances like lead, mercury, and cadmium. Improper handling leads to contamination of soil and water, causing neurological disorders, kidney failure, and long-term chronic diseases.
 - **Environmental Damage** - Hazardous recycling practices pollute air, soil, and water. They also release greenhouse gases, worsening climate change and harming ecosystems.
 - **Economic Loss** - Inefficient recycling causes wastage of valuable resources such as gold, silver, and copper, which could otherwise be recovered and reused in production.

E-Waste Volumes and Processing

- According to the Global E-Waste Monitor 2020, India is the **world's third-largest e-waste generator** after China and the USA.
 - With India being one of the fastest-growing electronics markets, this trend is expected to rise further.
- India generated an estimated **4.17 million metric tonnes of e-waste in 2022**, but only one-third was processed through proper channels.
- **Legal Framework for E-Waste Management**
 - Improper disposal of end-of-life EEE products has severe negative externalities, including risks to human health and environmental degradation. Effective management is essential to mitigate these harms.



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- E-waste in India is regulated by the **E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022**, published by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). These rules came into force on April 1, 2023.
- State Pollution Control Boards, responsible for inventorying, use inconsistent methods, causing discrepancies between Indian and international data.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Framework and Associated Concerns

- **Dominance of Informal Sector**
 - A 2023 Indian Cellular and Electronics Association report flagged the dominance of the informal sector in India's recycling ecosystem.
 - These operators focus on repairing and harvesting components, but remain outside formal frameworks, hindering the creation of a circular economy.
 - Even within EPR, issues like "paper trading" persist, with recyclers overstating volumes for financial incentives.
- **Concerns on Traceability and Best Practices**
 - Experts stress that malpractices plague the sector, with **many players lacking true metal extraction capacity**.
 - They highlighted the need for **third-party audits, better environmental safeguards, and life-cycle visibility of products**.
 - **Inventorying remains weak in India**, unlike Western countries that count products as potential e-waste from the point of sale.

Future Potential

- While the share of recycled precious metals in India's supply chains remains negligible, industry leaders argue that with the right policy push, India could meet up to 70% of its rare earth requirements within 18 months.
 - Recycling's impact is growing each year, highlighting its potential as a key pillar in India's electronics ecosystem.
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INDIA SECURES SECOND DEEP-SEA MINERAL EXPLORATION CONTRACT IN INDIAN OCEAN

India has signed a new contract with the International Seabed Authority (ISA) granting exclusive rights to explore **Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS)** in the Carlsberg Ridge of the Indian Ocean. With this, India has become the **first country in the world to hold two such ISA contracts**, commanding the largest seabed area allocated internationally for PMS exploration.

The **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)**, Goa, will begin exploration in 2026 through geophysical and hydrographic surveys. India's application, submitted in 2024, was approved last week, allotting a **10,000 sq km area in the Carlsberg Ridge**.

This builds on its earlier 2016 contract for exploration in the Central and Southwest Indian Ridges, marking both a scientific breakthrough and a strategic advantage.

Polymetallic Sulphides and Their Importance for India

- PMS are rich seabed deposits containing **copper, zinc, lead, gold, silver**, and trace amounts of rare and precious elements.
- Found near hydrothermal vents on the ocean floor, these deposits form when seawater seeps into cracks, interacts with magma beneath the Earth's crust, and resurfaces as mineral-rich hot water that solidifies on the seabed.
- For India, PMS exploration is vital as land-based reserves of such minerals are limited.
- Securing these resources is crucial for **strategic industries, renewable energy systems, high-technology applications, and green technologies**, thereby enhancing the country's **resource security and self-reliance**.

How ISA Allocates Mineral Exploration Sites?

- The **International Seabed Authority (ISA)**, established under the **UNCLOS framework**, manages mineral exploration in international waters.
- Countries, through their governments, public sector bodies, or sponsored entities, apply to the ISA for exploration rights.



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- Applications must include details of the proposed area, a **work plan**, **environmental baseline studies**, and proof of **technical and financial capacity**.
- The ISA's **Legal and Technical Commission (LTC)** reviews these submissions for compliance.
- If approved, the application is forwarded to the **ISA Council** for final clearance, granting the applicant exclusive exploration rights in the designated seabed area.

India's Plans for Additional Mineral Exploration in the Indian Ocean

- As part of its **Blue Economy initiatives**, India is pursuing more seabed mineral exploration rights in the Indian Ocean.
- Beyond its existing contracts for **Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS)**, India has applied to the ISA for rights to explore **cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts** on the **Afanasy-Nikitin Seamount** in the Central Indian Ocean. This application is currently under review.
- Securing such rights would further strengthen India's access to **strategic and critical minerals** vital for technology, renewable energy, and long-term resource security.

SWACHH SHEHAR JODI INITIATIVE



- It is a **structured mentorship and collaborative action program** involving **72 mentor cities** and around **200 mentee cities**.
- Based on their recent performance in the **Swachh Survekshan rankings**, **top-performing cities have been identified as mentor cities** and paired with **low-performing mentee cities**. It is implemented under the **Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban (SBM-U)**.
- It is aimed to **foster knowledge and experience sharing**, peer learning and transforming best practices in sanitation and waste management across urban India.

Objectives of Swachh Shehar Jodi Initiative

- The objective is to support comparatively low performing cities in improving their **swachhata performance** by drawing on the experience of mentor cities to:



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- Replicate tested best practices in sanitation and waste management
- It is envisioned that the **mentor cities** will be those cities that adhere to the following criteria:
 - Top performing cities that have featured across **Rank 1, 2 or 3 in Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2022, 2023, and 2024** (i.e. – cities that are part of the Super Swachh League)
 - Top three cities that are featured across population **categories in SS 2024.**
 - Promising clean cities that emerge across States/UTs as part of SS 2024.
- The **mentee city** may be selected on the basis of the following criteria:
 - Featured in the **bottom of the State cumulative ranking** of the latest SS rankings
 - Geographical proximity of the jodi cities to each other
- **Funding:** Both mentor and mentee cities may utilize the **Capacity Building (CB) Funds** allocated to each State/UT as part of **SBM-U 2.0.** **State/UT Governments** are encouraged to top up this fund, if required.
- Cities can also leverage funds from other sources / partner organizations.

RED SANDERS



- It is native to the **Southern Eastern Ghats** and found particularly in the **districts of Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa, and Kurnool of Andhra Pradesh.**
- **Required Climatic Conditions:** It usually grows in **rocky, degraded and fallow lands** with Red Soil and a hot and dry climate.
- **Threats:** It has been under heavy threat due to its **high commercial value, leading to rampant smuggling.**
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN:** Endangered
 - **CITES:** Appendix II
 - **The Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972:** Schedule IV



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Key facts about National Biodiversity Authority:

- It is a **statutory body** established under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
 - It was **formally set up in 2003**.
 - **Composition of National Biodiversity Authority**
 - **Chairperson:** An eminent person with **proven knowledge and experience** in biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biological resources, and equitable sharing of benefits.
 - **10 Ex-officio Members:** Senior representatives from the Government of India, nominated to provide policy insights and ensure inter-ministerial coordination.
 - **5 Non-Official Members:** Experts and **professionals from diverse fields** related to biodiversity management, nominated to contribute independent perspectives and specialized expertise.
 - To ensure effective implementation of the Act at different administrative levels, two additional entities were created alongside the NBA:
 - **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs):** Functioning at the state level to regulate access to biological resources within their jurisdiction.
 - **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs):** Established at the local village or panchayat level to promote grassroots-level biodiversity conservation and documentation.
 - **Headquarters:** Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
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