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National Mineral Policy

Why In News?

The Union Cabinet approved the National Mineral Policy 2019 that is aimed at bringing about more effective regulation to the sector as well as a more sustainable approach while addressing the issues of those affected by mining.

In Brief:

Benefits of the Policy:

- The New National Mineral Policy will ensure more effective regulation.
- It will lead to sustainable mining sector development in future while addressing the issues of project affected persons especially those residing in tribal areas.

Objective of the Policy:

The aim of National Mineral Policy 2019 is to have a more effective, meaningful and implementable policy that brings in further transparency, better regulation and enforcement, balanced social and economic growth as well as sustainable mining practices.

Details of the Policy:

The National Mineral Policy 2019 includes provisions which will give boost to mining sector such as

- Introduction of Right of First Refusal for RP/PL holders,
- Encouraging the private sector to take up exploration,
- Auctioning in virgin areas for composite RP cum PL cum ML on revenue share basis,
- Encouragement of merger and acquisition of mining entities and
- Transfer of mining leases and creation of dedicated mineral corridors to boost private sector mining areas.
- The 2019 Policy proposes to grant status of industry to mining activity to boost financing of mining for private sector and for acquisitions of mineral assets in other countries by private sector.
- It also mentions that Long term import export policy for mineral will help private sector in better planning and stability in business.
- The Policy also mentions rationalize reserved areas given to PSUs which have not been used and to put these areas to auction, which will give more opportunity to private sector for participation.
- The Policy also mentions to make efforts to harmonize taxes, levies & royalty with world benchmarks to help private sector.

Note

Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019

Why In News?



The Union Cabinet approved the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019 that will pave the way to extend reservation in jobs, promotions and education to people living 10 km from the International Border (IB) in Jammu.

Earlier the benefits were only reserved for people living 10 km beyond the Line of Control (LoC) and affected by shelling and firing from across the border.

Impact of the Ordinance:

It would pave the way for bringing persons residing in the areas adjoining International Border within the ambit of Reservation at par with persons living in areas adjoining Actual Line of Control.

Background

People living near the International Border have been brought at par with those living near the Line of Control for reservation in State Government jobs by amending the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004 through an Ordinance.

Earlier, the provision of 3% reservation was available only for youth living within 6 kms. Of LoC in J&K. Now, this provision will be applicable for people living near the international border also. This has been a long-pending demand of the population living near the international border, as they have been facing the brunt of cross border firing in J&K.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004 and Rules there under namely The Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Rules, 2005 provide for vertical reservation in direct recruitment, promotions and admission in different professional courses to various categories viz. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (Residents of Backward Area (RBA), Residents of Areas adjoining Actual Line of Control (ALoC) and Weak and Under Privileged Classes (Social Castes) alongwith horizontal reservation to the Ex-Serviceman and Physically Challenged Persons. However, the reservation benefits are not extended to the persons residing in the areas adjoining International Border.

Due to continuous cross border tensions, persons living alongside International Border suffer from socio-economic and educational backwardness. Shelling from across the border often compels these residents to move to safer places and is adversely impacting their education as Educational Institutions remain closed for long periods. Hence, it was felt justifiable to extend the reservation benefits to persons residing in the areas adjoining International Border on the similar lines of the persons living in areas adjoining Actual Line of Control.

Rhino Beyond Borders

Why In News:

The **New Delhi Declaration** adopted at the second meeting of the Asian rhino range countries that ended underscored trans-boundary collaboration among India, Nepal, and Bhutan for the conservation and protection of the greater one-horned rhino.

There are no rhinos in Bhutan, but some from the Manas National Park in adjoining Assam or Buxa Tiger Reserve in West Bengal are known to cross over occasionally.

What is Rhino beyond Borders?

•Rhinos Without Borders is a project of hope in which two like-minded conservation and travel companies, and Beyond and Great Plains

Note



Conservation, have joined forces in the fight against poaching to translocate 100 rhino from South Africa to the safe haven of Botswana.

- The aim is to create a viable breeding population of rhino in Botswana, thus broadening the gene pool and increasing the habitat for rhino in Africa, in this way spreading the risk.
- The goal for Rhinos without Borders is to place these animals in wildlife concessions and national parks throughout Botswana, letting them roam free. Although the animals' movements are unhindered and they may move away from the original release locations, we will keep these locations confidential in order not to attract unwanted attention and raise security concerns.



Photo voter slip no longer a standalone identification document

Why In News?

The Election Commission on Thursday said those not having their Electors Photo Identity Cards can now show any of the 11 alternative documents, including Aadhaar card, for exercising their franchise. Henceforth, photo voter slip will not be accepted as a standalone identification paper.

In Brief:

- The documents accepted are passport, driving licence, service identity cards of the Central and State governments, public sector undertakings and public limited companies, bank or post office passbooks carrying photographs of voters, PAN card, smart cards issued under the National Population Register, MNREGA job card and health insurance smart card.
- Pension documents with photograph, official identity cards issued to the legislators and Aadhaar card have also been included.
- The Commission, in its order, said minor discrepancies in the voters' identity card should be ignored, provided the identity of the elector can be established by the card.
- If an elector produces a card issued by the Electoral Registration Officer of another Assembly constituency, such card will be accepted provided the name of that elector finds place in the electoral roll pertaining to the polling station concerned.

Note

