



India-US Strategic Clean Energy Partnership

For Prelims: India US [Strategic Clean Energy Partnership](#), Renewable Energy Technologies Action Platform

For Mains: India-US Relations

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in the News?

The Ministerial meeting of the US-India [Strategic Clean Energy Partnership \(SCEP\)](#) was held between Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and US Energy Secretary in New Delhi.

- Both sides noted the critical importance of bilateral clean energy engagement and the achievements of the SCEP in **strengthening energy security, creating opportunities for clean energy innovation**, addressing climate change and creating employment generation opportunities.

What are the Key Highlights of the Meeting?

- **Review of the Ambitious and Dynamic SCEP Mandate:**
 - Collaboration across a wide breadth of clean energy work streams, including clean and renewable energy, energy efficiency
 - Emerging technologies like battery storage and swapping technologies, gas hydrates, **advanced [biofuels](#), and hydrogen and electrolyzed production.**
- **Commitments:**
 - Agreed to work toward development of **Net zero village in India** to support the clean energy transition.
 - Establishment of the **public-private Energy Storage Task Force** to support the clean energy transition;
 - Deployment of **hydrogen technologies** through the public-private Hydrogen Task Force.
 - Launch of the U.S.-India New and Emerging **Renewable Energy Technologies Action Platform (RETAP)** to accelerate development of key technologies to advance common ambitious clean energy goals.
- **Affirmed Global Biofuels Alliance:**
 - This Alliance will be aimed at facilitating cooperation and intensifying the use of sustainable biofuels, including in the transportation sector.
 - **Brazil, India and US** as leading biofuel producers and consumers, with other interested countries.
 - The Alliance shall work in collaboration with the Clean Energy Ministerial Biofuture Platform, the Mission Innovation Bioenergy initiatives, and **the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP).**
- **South Asia Group for Energy (SAGE):**
 - Both sides launched the SAGE to deepen the engagement between Indian agencies and US national laboratories **to support research, analysis and capacity building activities**

such as building modelling capacity in Life Cycle Assessment of low carbon technologies and analytics on energy consumption in building sector.

▪ **Other Concerns:**

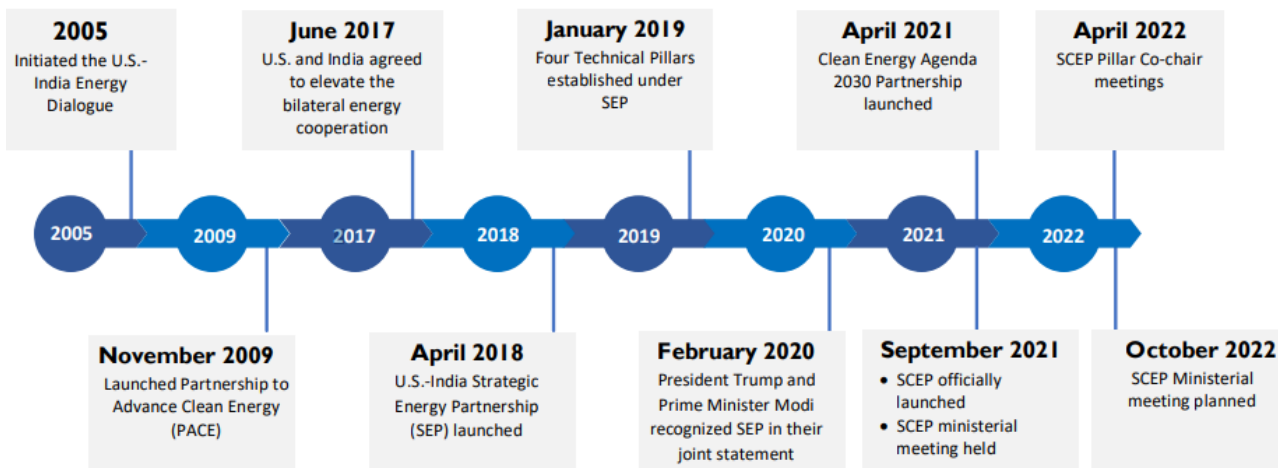
- The addition of Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage as a work stream under the **Emerging Fuels and Technology Pillar.**
- The collaboration of US Agency for International Development (**USAID**) with various **Indian agencies** including Indian Railways, NTPC Green National Skills Development Corporation, Skills Council for Green Jobs, and the Forum of Regulators.

What is Strategic Clean Energy Partnership?

- The SCEP was launched in **accordance with the US - India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership** announced by both countries at the Leaders’ Summit on Climate held in 2021.
- The SCEP advances energy security and innovation with greater emphasis **on electrification and decarbonization of processes and end uses**; scaling up emerging clean energy technologies; finding solutions for hard-to-decarbonize sectors; and deploying technical solutions.
- The SCEP was earlier established **as the Strategic Energy Partnership in 2018 and had replaced the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue**, the previous intergovernmental engagement for energy cooperation.

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THE JOURNEY SO FAR



STRATEGIC CLEAN ENERGY PARTNERSHIP PILLARS



UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Mains:

Q. What is the significance of Indo-US defence deals over Indo-Russian defence deals? Discuss with reference to stability in the Indo-Pacific region. **(2020)**

Q. 'What introduces friction into the ties between India and the United States is that Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India's National self-esteem and ambitions'. Explain with suitable examples. **(2019)**

India-Sri Lanka Relations

For Prelims: [India-Sri Lanka Relations](#), Tamil National Alliance, [Sri Lankan Tamils](#), [Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987](#), [Buddhism](#), Indian Ocean.

For Mains: India-Sri Lanka Relations.

Source: [TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Tamil National Alliance (TNA)**, the largest parliamentary grouping of Tamil parties in Sri Lanka has rejected the Sri Lankan President's offer to implement the **13th Amendment of the Sri Lankan Constitution without police powers**.

- This rejection by the TNA assumes significance before the President's scheduled visit to India, as India has consistently emphasized the "**full implementation**" of this legislation, which is vital for addressing the **historic demand of Sri Lankan Tamils** for self-determination.



What is the Background?

- **About:**

- The **13th Amendment** was enacted after the [Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987](#), and it remains the **only legislative guarantee** of power devolution to the provinces.
 - Indo-Lanka Accord 1987 was signed by the **then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President J.R. Jayawardene**, to resolve Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict that had aggravated into **a full-fledged civil war, between the armed forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam**, which led the struggle for Tamils' self-determination and sought a separate state.
- The 13th Amendment, which led to the creation of **Provincial Councils**, assured a **power sharing arrangement** to enable all nine provinces in the country, including Sinhala majority areas, to self-govern.
- Subjects such as **education, health, agriculture, housing, land and police** are devolved to the provincial administrations, but because of restrictions on financial powers and overriding powers given to the President, the provincial administrations have not made much headway.
- However, successive governments in **Sri Lanka have refused to grant land and police powers** to the provinces, leading to **unresolved issues since the civil war ended 14 years ago**.
- **President's Proposal and TNA's Response:**
 - The Sri Lankan President presented a **comprehensive dossier to Tamil political parties**, outlining plans for truth-seeking, reconciliation, accountability, development, and power devolution.
 - The proposal included implementing **the 13th Amendment, except for police powers**, and empowering provincial councils through various Bills.
 - However, the TNA rejected the proposal, calling it a **"hollow promise," citing a lack of political will** to genuinely devolve power, as provincial councils have been defuncting for five years without elections.
 - The Tamil National People's Front and civil society leaders expressed **concerns to the Indian Prime Minister**, urging a federal solution due to limitations of the 13th Amendment under a unitary constitution.

How are India's Relations with Sri Lanka?

- **About:**
 - India and Sri Lanka are two South Asian nations situated in the [Indian Ocean](#) region. Geographically, Sri Lanka is located just off the southern coast of India, separated by the [Palk Strait](#).
 - This proximity has **played a significant role in shaping the relationship** between the two countries.
 - The Indian Ocean is a **strategically important waterway** for trade and military operations, and Sri Lanka's location at the crossroads of major shipping lanes makes it a critical point of control for India.
- **Relations:**
 - **Historical Ties:** India and Sri Lanka have a long history of cultural, religious, and trade ties dating back to ancient times.
 - There are strong cultural ties between the two countries, with many Sri Lankans tracing their heritage to India. [Buddhism](#), which originated in India, is also an important religion in Sri Lanka.
 - **Economic ties:** India is **Sri Lanka's third largest export destination**, after the US and UK. More than 60% of Sri Lanka's exports enjoy the benefits of the [India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement](#). India is also a major investor in Sri Lanka.
 - Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from India amounted to around USD 1.7 billion over the years from 2005 to 2019.
 - **Defence:** India and Sri Lanka conduct **joint Military ([Mitra Shakti](#)) and Naval exercise ([SLINEX](#))**.
 - **Participation in Groupings:** Sri Lanka is also a member of groupings like [BIMSTEC \(Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation\)](#) and [SAARC](#) in which India plays a leading role.
- **Issues in India-Sri Lanka Relations:**
 - **Killing of Fishermen:** Killing of Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy is a lingering

issue between these two nations.

- In 2019 and 2020, a total of 284 Indian fishermen were arrested and a total of 53 Indian boats were confiscated by the Sri Lankan authorities.
- **Influence of China:** [China's rapidly growing economic footprint](#) (and political clout as a corollary) in Sri Lanka is straining India-Sri Lanka relations.
 - China is already the largest investor in Sri Lanka, accounting for 23.6% of the total [Foreign Direct Investment \(FDI\)](#) during 2010-2019 as against 10.4% from India.

Way Forward

- The rejection of the President's proposal by the Tamil National Alliance and the growing concerns among Tamil political parties and civil society members underscore the ongoing challenges in implementing the **13th Amendment and devolving power in Sri Lanka**.
- India's emphasis on "full implementation" and the push for a federal solution are crucial aspects to watch as President Wickremesinghe's visit to India approaches.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. Elephant Pass, sometimes seen in the news, is mentioned in the context of the affairs of which one of the following? (2009)

- (a) Bangladesh
- (b) India
- (c) Nepal
- (d) Sri Lanka

Ans: (d)

Mains

Q. In respect of India-Sri Lanka relations, discuss how domestic factors influence foreign policy. (2013)

Q. 'India is an age-old friend of Sri Lanka.' Discuss India's role in the recent crisis in Sri Lanka in the light of the preceding statement. (2022)

East Asia Summit

For Prelims: [East Asia Summit](#), [ASEAN](#), [Act East Policy](#)

For Mains: Role of the EAS in addressing regional issues of common interest and concern

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, India's External Affairs Minister attended the **13th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting** and utilized the opportunity to engage in discussions with China's top diplomat, on the sidelines

of the event.

- They discussed outstanding issues along the [Line of Actual Control \(LAC\)](#), emphasizing the **importance of peace and the disengagement of troops**.

What is the East Asia Summit?

▪ About:

- The EAS was established in **2005 as an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-led initiative**.
- The EAS is the **only leader-led forum in the Indo-Pacific** that brings together all key partners to discuss political, security and economic issues of strategic importance.
- The EAS operates on the principles of **openness, inclusiveness, respect for international law**, ASEAN centrality, and ASEAN's role as the driving force.
- The idea of an East Asia Grouping was first proposed by then **Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in 1991**.
 - The first summit was held in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 December 2005**.

▪ Members:

- The EAS comprises **18 members**: the **10 ASEAN countries** (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) and **eight dialogue partners** (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States).

▪ EAS Meetings and Processes:

- The EAS is usually held alongside **ASEAN Leaders' meetings in the fourth quarter of every year**.
- The EAS Leaders' Summit is supported by **various ministerial and senior officials' meetings**, such as the **Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the Economic Ministers' Meeting, the Defence Ministers' Meeting, and the Education Ministers' Meeting**.
- The EAS has **six priority areas of cooperation**: environment and energy; education; finance; global health issues and **pandemic diseases**; natural disaster management; and ASEAN connectivity.
- The EAS also covers other topics of common interest and concern, such as trade and investment, regional architecture, maritime security, non-proliferation, counterterrorism, and [cyber security](#).

▪ India and East Asia Summit:

- **India has been a founding member of the EAS since 2005** and has actively participated in all its meetings and activities.
- India views the EAS as a key platform for enhancing its [Act East Policy](#) and strengthening its strategic partnership with ASEAN and other regional countries.
- At the **East Asia Summit in Bangkok in November 2019**, India had unveiled India's [Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative \(IPOI\)](#), which is aimed at forging partnerships to create a secure and stable maritime domain.
- India has contributed to the EAS cooperation in various fields, such as disaster management, renewable energy, education, health, connectivity, maritime security and counterterrorism.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. India is a member of which among the following? (2015)

1. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
2. Association of South-East Asian Nations
3. East Asia Summit

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

- (b)** 3 only
- (c)** 1, 2 and 3
- (d)** India is a member of none of them

Ans: (b)

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