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1 Critical Minerals (Source: The Hindu)

Critical minerals are those minerals which are essential for economic development and national security of a country.

- Examples: Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel and Graphite etc.

Major Features

- High supply risk
- Limited substitutes
- Strategic importance

Applications

- **Green Energy**: Lithium, cobalt, and nickel form the core of lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles (EVs), and Graphite supports EV batteries and fuel cells.
- **Electronics and Tech**: Gallium and germanium are key to semiconductors, LEDs, integrated circuits, and optical fibers. Copper is fundamental for wiring, solar infrastructure, and consumer electronics.
- **Defense and Aerospace**: Rare earths and titanium enhance jet engines, missile guidance, fighter jets, and submarines. Hafnium aids nuclear reactors and superalloys for strategic tech. Beryllium supports satellites and space telescopes.
- **Healthcare and Other Uses**: Cadmium and bismuth are used in medical imaging, such as MRI systems, and in pharmaceuticals. Antimony provides flame retardants and alloys, while beryllium aids automotive and machinery manufacturing.

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2 Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) (Source: The Hindu)

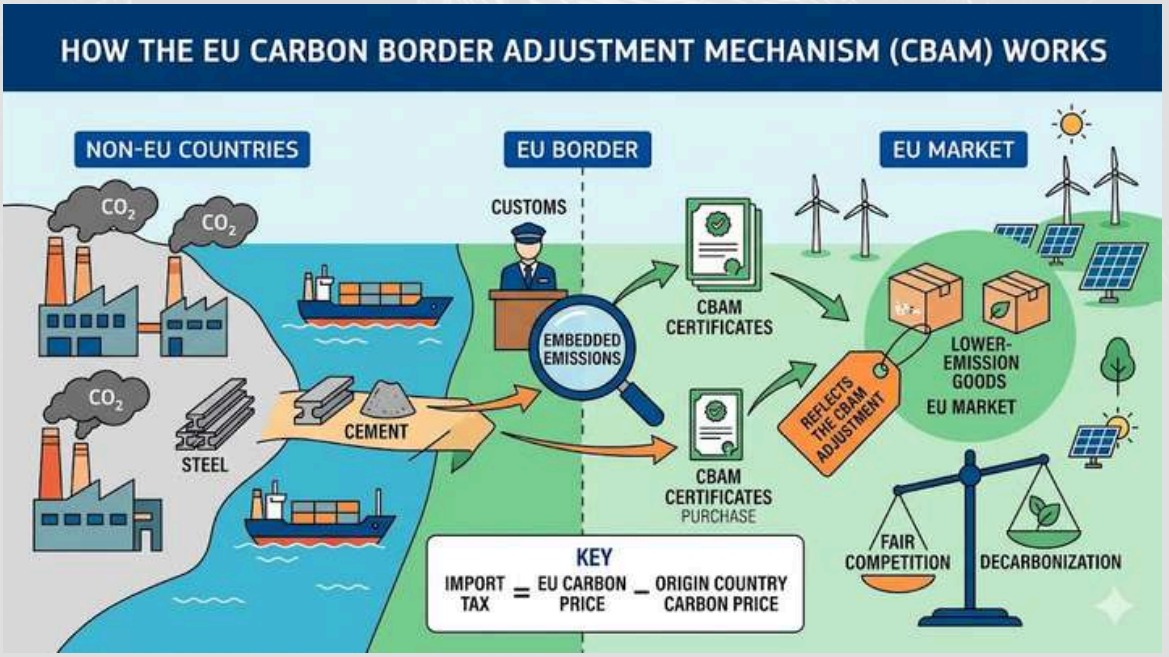
CBAM is part of the "Fit for 55 in 2030 package", which is the EU's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels in line with the European Climate Law.

Aim

- The CBAM is a policy tool aimed at reducing Carbon Emissions by ensuring that imported goods are subject to the same carbon costs as products produced within the EU.

Facts

- It applies first to carbon-intensive sectors such as cement, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilisers, electricity, and hydrogen.
- The CBAM will be implemented by requiring importers to declare the quantity of goods imported into the EU and their embedded Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions on an annual basis.
- It is linked to the EU Emissions Trading System and the gradual phase-out of free allowances.



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Impact on India

- India's exporters in steel, aluminium, and related sectors may face higher compliance costs.
- It may push Indian industry toward cleaner production and stronger MRV systems.
- It also raises concerns about climate equity, trade fairness, and CBDR-RC under UNFCCC

3 International Labour Organisation (ILO) *(Source: The Indian Express)*

It is a tripartite United Nations agency, bringing together governments, employers and workers representatives from its 187 member states to devise international labour standards.

Facts

- Established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League of Nations (LoN).
- The first specialized agency of the UN in 1946.
- Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland
- Received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969.

Objectives

- To promote and realize standards, fundamental principles, and rights at work.
- To create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment.
- To enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all.
- To strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

Functions

- Creation of coordinated policies and programs, directed at solving social and labour issues.
- Adoption of international labour standards in the form of conventions and recommendations, and control over their implementation.
- Assistance to member-states in solving social and labour problems.
- Human rights protection (the right to work, freedom of association, collective negotiations, protection against forced labour, protection against discrimination, etc.).
- Research and publication of works on social and labour issues.