



JSA Newsletter Environmental Disputes and ESG Regulatory

August 2024

Supreme Court judgements/orders

Supreme Court of India directs the Government of Rajasthan to consider proposals for renewal of mining leases and statutory permissions for mining in Aravalli hills

The Supreme Court of India (“**Supreme Court**”) in the case of *T.N. Godavarman Thirumulpad vs. Union of India and Ors.*¹ directed the Government of Rajasthan to consider the proposals for renewal of mining leases granted for operations in the Aravalli hills/ranges, as identified in the Forest Survey of India Report dated August 25, 2010 (“**FSI Report**”). The Supreme Court clarified that the final permission for undertaking such activity will not be granted without obtaining its prior approval. The applicants approached the Supreme Court in view of its earlier Order dated May 9, 2024, wherein the State Government was allowed to consider and process the applications for grant/renewal of mining leases and other statutory clearances.

Supreme Court directs Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Government of Uttar Pradesh to constitute a committee to verify allegations of disappearance of ponds/lakes/water bodies in Tehsil Nagina, Bijnor

The Supreme Court in the case of *Mirza Abid Beg vs. State of U.P. and Ors.*² has directed the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Government of Uttar Pradesh to constitute a committee comprising of officials from the Revenue Department, Environment Department and State Pollution Control Board (“**SPCB**”) to inspect old revenue records of ponds/lakes/water bodies in Tehsil Nagina, Bijnor, U.P. and ascertain whether any new entries regarding the existence of ponds/lakes/water bodies have been made to these records. Further, the committee has been directed to suggest measures for restoration of the said ponds/lakes/water bodies. The Supreme Court emphasised the constitutional duty of the State to protect the ponds/lakes/water bodies and to ensure its restoration. The Supreme Court passed these directions while considering an appeal filed against the order of the National Green Tribunal (“**NGT**”) which disposed of the application before it on the basis of a report stating that the garbage dumped in the pond had been removed.

Supreme Court delivers a split verdict on petitions challenging government approval granted for environmental release of genetically engineered mustard

The Supreme Court in the case of *Gene Campaign and Anr. vs. Union of India and Ors.*³ comprising of Justice B.V. Nagarathna and Justice Sanjay Karol have delivered a split decision in a batch of petitions challenging the trials and environmental release of genetically modified mustard and the rules governing them. The petitions were filed seeking

¹ I.A. No. 130612 of 2024 and I.A. No. 134904 of 2024 in W.P.(C) 202 of 1995. Order dated July 23, 2024.

² C.A. No. 1904 of 2020. Order dated July 16, 2024

³ W.P. (C) No. 115 of 2004 etc.; Order dated July 23, 2024

directions to the Central Government to ensure that the Rules for Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Micro-organisms, Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells, 1989 (“**GEO Rules**”) should be brought in consonance with the Constitution of India. The petitioners also sought directions to restraint the use of gene modification technology without having requisite safeguards and regulatory regimes in place. Another petition challenged the procedure adopted by the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (“**GEAC**”) for appraisal of Dhara Mustard Hybrid - 11 (“**DMH-11**”). It also alleged that the Assessment of Food/Feed and Environmental Safety (“**AFES**”) Report considered by GEAC was inadequate, had discrepancy in its findings and lacked application of mind and comprehensive scientific scrutiny.

The judgement by Justice B.V. Nagarathna held that approval for environmental release of transgenic DMH - 11 was liable to be quashed and directed the GEAC to undertake a consultation with relevant stakeholders to decide whether transgenic mustard hybrid DMH-11 is a Herbicide Tolerant (“**HT**”) crop or not. Thereafter, a policy decision should be taken afresh on environmental release of the same. She also passed a general direction that the GEAC should be reformed to include experts in the field of agriculture, biotechnology, ethics, sociology, health and environment.

Justice Karol in his judgement opined that the ban on HT crops would be unwarranted as it should be a policy decision. The challenge to the constitutionality of the GEO Rules was also rejected. The judgment held that the decision of GEAC to grant conditional approval is not vitiated by non-application of mind or any other principle of law.

The bench passed the common judgement that the judicial review of decision taken by bodies concerned in the matter of genetically modified organisms is permissible and directed the Central Government to consult stakeholders in the field of agriculture, biotechnology, state governments, representatives of farmers, etc. for evolving a National Policy on genetically modified crops. In view of the difference of opinion on the decision of GEAC granting conditional approval for environmental release of DMH – 11, the matter will be referred to the Chief Justice of India for consideration of the matter before an appropriate bench.

High Court judgements/orders

Delhi High Court directs inspection of private nursing homes for fire safety

The High Court of Delhi (“**Delhi HC**”) in the matter of *Delhi Medical Association and Anr. vs. Government NCT of Delhi and Ors.*⁴ directed the Directorate General of Health Services, Delhi Fire Services and Delhi Development Authority to constitute a Joint Committee for inspection of all nursing homes that are members of the Delhi Medical Association. The direction was passed by the Delhi HC while considering a writ petition filed by the Delhi Medical Association challenging the communication dated August 2, 2019, to all private hospitals and nursing homes to undertake audit of fire safety measures employed by it. The petition claimed that the nursing homes are erroneously considered ‘institutional buildings’ and being asked to take fire safety clearance. The Delhi HC observed that its immediate priority is to safeguard public safety and ensure that basic fire safety equipment is installed at the premises of private nursing homes. The Delhi HC passed directions to the Joint Committee to ascertain the prevailing provisions of fire safety and formulate a comprehensive report delineating all non-compliances with fire safety norms by nursing homes, except for structural defect.

High Court of Kerala directs Railways and Municipal Corporation of Thiruvananthapuram to undertake immediate steps to remove legacy waste accumulated in Aamayizhanjan canal

The High Court of Kerala (“**Kerala HC**”) in the case of *Suo motu vs. State of Kerala*⁵ has directed the Railways, Municipal Corporation of Thiruvananthapuram, and District Collector to provide reasons for flow of plastic waste into Aamayizhanjan canal. The directions were passed in a special sitting of the court based on reports of the death of a worker engaged in the cleaning of Aamayizhanjan canal near the Thiruvananthapuram Central Railway Station. The

⁴ W.P. (C) No. 6952 of 2022; Order dated July 3, 2024

⁵ W.P. (C) No. 7844 of 2024; Order dated July 15, 2025

Kerala HC, while considering the submissions made by different departments observed that the canal has become a cesspool of plastic which is clogging near the metal gratings and preventing the flow of drain water. It also observed that there are large quantities of legacy waste in the area. The Kerala HC directed the authorities to submit a plan of action to be adopted for clearing the legacy waste from within and outside the railway premises along with the timelines for completion of the plan.

National Green Tribunal judgements/orders

NGT takes suo-motu cognizance based on study highlighting presence of cancer-causing chemicals in cars

NGT has registered a suo-motu original application in response to a news article titled '*People Are Breathing In Cancer-Causing Chemicals in their cars study find*'⁶ appearing in NDTV.com dated May 8, 2024. This article pertains to a research study published in the Environmental Science and Technology journal. The study stated that the researchers analysed 101 (one hundred and one) electric, gas and hybrid cars with model year between 2015 and 2022 and found that the cabin air in 99% of these cars contained a flame retardant called Tris (1-chloro-2-propyl) phosphate ("TCIPP"). The news article stated that TCIPP is being investigated by the United States National Toxicology Program as a potential carcinogen. The research further showed that most cars have 2 (two) more flame retardants namely, tris (1,3-dichloro-2-propyl) phosphate ("TDCIPP") and tris(2-chloroethyl) phosphate ("TCEP") which are also considered carcinogenic. The news item alleged that the source of these compounds is seat foam which is added with chemicals to meet an 'outdated' flammability standard with no proven fire safety benefit. Upon observing that the issue indicated violation of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 ("Air Act") and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 ("EPA"), the NGT impleaded the Central Pollution Control Board ("CPCB"), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change ("MoEFCC"), Indian Council of Medical Research and Ministry of Heavy Industries to file their responses on the issue.

NGT directs state authorities to look into allegations of extensive pollution in Kanjia and Kaikani lakes

The NGT in the matter of *Smt. Haripriya Patel vs. State of Odisha and Ors.*⁷ has registered a letter petition alleging pollution of Kanjia and Kaikani lakes located between Nandankanan Zoological Park and Nandankanan Botanical Garden. The letter stated that Kanjia lake is the principal source of water and spread over 66 (sixty-six) hectares. It has been declared as 'Wetland of National Importance' in 2006. The floral diversity of the site consists of 10 (ten) species of submerged macrophytes, 14 (fourteen) species of floating macrophytes and 25 (twenty-five) species of emerged macrophytes. The letter alleged that the purchase of land around the periphery of Nandankanan Wildlife Sanctuary for urbanisation and construction of buildings is causing gradual shrinking and depletion of forest land. Upon consideration of the allegations made in the letter, the NGT directed the Odisha SPCB and Divisional Forest Officer to undertake site inspection and submit an inspection report.

NGT to consider plea against large scale felling of trees in urban areas of Gurugram

The NGT in the case of *Vaishali Rana and Ors. vs. State of Haryana and Ors.*⁸ is considering an application alleging illegal felling of trees in urban areas of Gurugram. The application alleged that even the permissions granted for felling of trees were arbitrary. It stated that some of the Tehsils in district Gurugram were not covered under any regulation for preventing indiscriminate felling of trees. The applicants highlighted that the imposition of a meagre fine of INR 500 (Indian Rupees five hundred) did not consider the ecological value of the trees felled and the compensatory plantation to be undertaken was not ensured. The applicants raised the contention that there is no central legislation

⁶ OA No. 717 of 2024 (PB); Order dated July 2, 2024

⁷ OA No. 109 of 2024 (EZ); Order dated July 4, 2024

⁸ OA No. 680 of 2024 (PB); Order dated July 4, 2024

or regulation for prevention of tree felling in urban areas and such laws have been enacted only in certain states such as Karnataka, Delhi and Goa. The applicants relied on the information obtained through right to information, to claim that there was no record of the number of trees cut from the year 2017 to 2021 and 5,494 (five thousand four hundred and ninety-four) trees had been cut between 2021 and 2022. NGT has directed the state respondents to file their responses to the allegations made in the original application (“OA”).

NGT disposes of complaints alleging illegal cutting and pruning of trees by office bearers of Delhi Development Authority (“DDA”) Market Association, directs the Tree Officer cum Deputy Conservator of Forest to consider the allegations

The NGT in the case of *Jabar Singh vs. DDA*⁹ has disposed of an application alleging inaction by the Municipal Corporation Delhi, DDA and Commissioner of Police against alleged cutting and pruning of trees and destruction of green cover and natural space in DDA market area. NGT while considering the application observed that under the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994 (“DPT Act”), and the notifications issued thereunder, the Tree Officer cum Deputy Conservator of Forest (North) is empowered and required to enquire into complaints made through the application and pass appropriate orders under the DPT Act. NGT disposed of the application and directed the Tree Officer cum Deputy Conservator of Forest (North) to treat the application as a complaint filed under the DPT Act for inquiry of the allegations and taking appropriate action.

NGT disposes of letter petition challenging e-tender process for sand mining in Ayodhya

The NGT in the case of *Makarandhuj vs. State of U.P.*¹⁰ has disposed of an application raising grievance against the e-tender process initiated by Executive Engineer, 3rd Division, Ayodhya for sand mining. The NGT had registered the application based on a letter submitted by the applicant. The NGT observed that the allegations raised in the letter petition were not related to violation of environmental laws and the petitioner was instead challenging the tender process undertaken in pursuance of rules enacted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. Therefore, it dismissed the OA on the ground that no cause of action has arisen under the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010.

NGT calls for report on allegations against indiscriminate cutting of trees on Delhi-Saharanpur-Dehradun Expressway

The NGT in *Pt. Girdhari Lal vs. Govt. of NCT of Delhi*¹¹ has registered an application on the basis of a letter petition alleging large scale illegal cutting of trees on Delhi-Saharanpur-Dehradun Expressway. The NGT observed that the letter *ex-facie* raises substantial question relating to environment and constituted a Joint Committee comprising of representative of Secretary, Department of Environment and Forest, U.P., Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, U.P., Regional Officer, MoEFCC, Lucknow and Uttar Pradesh SPCB to submit a factual report.

NGT refuses to entertain letter petition filed by letter petitioner represented by Counsel

The NGT recently disposed of an application in the case of *Captain (Retd.) C Krishnanan vs. State of Tamil Nadu*¹², which was registered based on a letter petition on the ground that the complainant was represented by a counsel. It observed that the complainant had the resources to approach the NGT by filing an application as per the rules and procedures prescribed under the NGT (Practice and Procedure) Rules, 2011. NGT noted that the complainant claimed

⁹ OA No. 366 of 2024 (PB); Order dated July 19, 2024

¹⁰ OA No. 682 of 2024 (PB); Order dated July 19, 2024

¹¹ OA No. 686 of 2024 (PB); Order dated July 22, 2024

¹² OA No. 688 of 2024 (PB); Order dated July 22, 2024

to be a Captain and was represented through a counsel and therefore had the resources to approach the NGT in the proper way.

Regulatory updates

MoEFCC publishes the draft notification to seek comments on Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2024

MoEFCC published a draft [notification](#) for seeking public comments on the proposed Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2024. The rules are proposed to come into force from April 1, 2025. ‘Producer’ under the proposed rules is defined as a waste generator registered on a portal for a building and building complex project having built-up area of 20,000 (twenty thousand) square meters and above. The proposed rules define a ‘waste generator’ as an occupier of the project having full control over the construction or reconstruction or demolition activity resulting in generation of waste. The proposed rules prescribe separate obligation on producer and waste generator. The waste generator is required to collect and segregate waste to facilitate reuse and recycling of materials while taking measures for recycling, prevention of air pollution, littering etc. In respect of waste generators which are categorised as producers, the proposed rules provide that in addition to the obligation of a waste generator, such producers will register on the portal developed by CPCB. The rules propose to have Extended Producer Responsibility (“EPR”) on a producer to manage Construction and Demolition Waste (“C&D Waste”). The proposed rules prescribe the recycling targets to be fulfilled by the producer for compliance of its EPR.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (“SEBI”) issues consultation paper on proposed amendments to the SEBI (Prohibition of Insider Trading) Regulations, 2015 (“Insider Trading Norms”) inviting comments

SEBI, *vide* [notification](#) dated July 29, 2024, has issued a consultation paper on the proposed amendments to the Insider Trading Norms. The key goals are to refine the definition of “connected person” to align with the Companies Act, 2013 and harmonise the definition of “relative” to match the Income Tax Act, 1961, while retaining the term “immediate relative” but removing its explanatory note. SEBI also proposes including new categories of “deemed connected persons” who may have access to Unpublished Price Sensitive Information due to their proximity with the connected person.

The public consultation seeks comments on these changes to expand the regulatory scope without increasing compliance burdens.

The G20 Labour and Employment Ministers congregate in Fortaleza, under the Brazil presidency and endorse the Labour and Employment Ministerial declaration

The G20 Labour and Employment Ministers assembled in Fortaleza, Brazil approved the Labour and Employment Ministerial [declaration](#) on July 26, 2024. The declaration calls for governments to implement active inclusion policies to promote sustainable and balanced economic growth. It highlights the importance of creating formal jobs and decent work as key tools for equitable income distribution. Additionally, it advocates for measures to formalise jobs, address platform work, ensure adequate wage floors, provide social protection and encourage social dialogue and collective bargaining.

Leading the India delegation was Minister of State for Labour and Employment Smt. Karandlaje. In her remarks, she stressed the importance of skilling and reskilling for a just transition to greener alternatives, noting the need for robust social protection and retraining programs. She highlighted India’s achievements in job creation over the years, with an increased youth participation in the labour force and welfare initiatives such as ‘One Nation, One Ration Card’ and ‘Ayushman Bharat’. Smt. Karandlaje also emphasised the need for G20 countries to address ethical issues in technology, such as data privacy and artificial intelligence, through robust regulations and international collaboration.

MoEFCC circulates drafts proposing amendments to certain environmental laws

MoEFCC has released:

1. draft notifications dated July 19, 2024, for the amendment of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Rules, 1975, Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Rules, 1982, Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, Public Liability Insurance Rules, 1991 and Environment Relief Fund Scheme, 2008; and
2. draft guidelines dated July 19, 2024, for devising a uniform mechanism for the grant of consent along with the regulations for exempting certain categories of industries have also been notified.

These amendments have been proposed for public consultation granting time for submission of comments. The changes are in consonance with the recent amendments to various environmental statutes. For a detailed analysis, please refer to the [JSA Prism of July 31, 2024](#).

SEBI issues a circular enabling Environmental, Social and Governance (“ESG”) Rating Providers (“ERPs”) to undertake ESG rating activities under IFSCA

Under the SEBI (Credit Rating Agencies) Regulations, 1999 and the Master circular of ERPs, an ERP may undertake or offer ESG rating of any product or issuer, as may be required by another financial sector regulator or authority, under the guidelines of such regulator or authority. In furtherance of the same, the capital markets regulator added the International Financial Services Centres Authority (“IFSCA”) which will now enable ERPs to undertake ESG rating activities in the International Financial Services Centre, Gujarat International Finance Tech-city. The SEBI [circular](#), however, categorically mentions that the ESG ratings undertaken by an ERP under the guidelines of IFSCA will be under the purview of IFSCA only. Therefore, IFSCA has been empowered to oversee ERPs operating within the IFSC-GIFT City.

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (“MCA”) notifies the Companies (Appointment and Qualification of Directors) (Amendment) Rules, 2024

MCA has introduced [amendments](#) to the Companies (Appointment and Qualification of Directors) Rules, 2014, which have come into effect on August 1, 2024. These changes aim to enhance transparency and simplify the procedures for appointing directors. Notably, the amendment to rule 12A now mandates that updates made to personal information of directors must be done in specified form by September 30th of each financial year. Additionally, a new provision has been introduced allowing directors to update their mobile numbers and email addresses in real time, replacing the previous annual update process. Previously, directors had to file their KYC annually, with contact information updates only possible in the following April, often leading to outdated details during organisational changes or restructuring.

This new approach ensures continuous and accurate communication, facilitating seamless transitions and reducing disruptions.

MCA notifies the Companies (Significant Beneficial Owners) Amendment Rules, 2024

The Companies (Significant Beneficial Owners) Rules, 2018 is a framework established for identifying persons holding beneficial ownership of a company i.e. persons holding a significant stake in the company either directly or indirectly, to ensure transparency and prevent fraudulent activities.

A company is required to report information pertaining to its Significant Beneficial Owners (“SBOs”) in Form BEN-2. The [amended](#) rules have revised the existing format of Form BEN-2 and replaced it with a newer form which highlights the importance of thorough documentation and requires digital signatures from authorised personnel. This form ensures that the information provided is accurate and verified by a professional such as a chartered accountant, cost accountant or company secretary.

SEBI notifies amendments to SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015

SEBI, *vide* [notification](#) dated July 10, 2024, notified the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Regulations) (Second Amendment) Regulations, 2024. Regulation 52(8) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 mandates listed entities to publish its financial results in at least 1 (one) English national daily newspaper circulating in the whole or substantially whole of India, within 2 (two) working days of the meeting of the board of directors. The amendment adds a new proviso to this requirement which will now allow listed entities to publish only a window advertisement in the newspaper that refers to a Quick Response Code and the link of the website of the listed entity and stock exchange(s), where such financial results are available and capable of being accessed by the investors subject to the following conditions:

1. for non-convertible securities outstanding as on the date of notification of this proviso, the listed entity has obtained the prior approval from the debenture trustee; and
2. in case of any issuances after the date of notification of this proviso, the listed entity will either make a disclosure in the offer document regarding the window advertisement in the newspapers or obtain prior approval from the debenture trustee.

Centre releases scheme guidelines for funding testing facilities, infrastructure and institutional support as part of the National Green Hydrogen Mission

On July 4, 2024, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (“MNRE”) issued [guidelines](#) for funding under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. The scheme aims to address gaps in testing facilities and infrastructure for green hydrogen and its derivatives, supporting both the creation of new facilities and the upgradation of existing ones. With a total budget of INR 200,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees two hundred crore) until FY 2025-26, the National Institute of Solar Energy (“NISE”) will implement the scheme. This initiative will enhance quality, safety, and sustainability in green hydrogen production and trade. Launched on January 4, 2023, with a budget of INR 19,744 crore (Indian Rupees nineteen thousand seven hundred and forty-four crore) until FY 2029-30, the National Green Hydrogen Mission seeks to boost India’s self-reliance in clean energy, reduce fossil fuel dependence and position India as a leader in green hydrogen technology.

Bureau of Energy Efficiency (“BEE”) releases compliance mechanism for the Indian Carbon Market (“ICM”)

BEE has released a detailed [procedure](#) for the Compliance Mechanism of the ICM, aiming to implement the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme, 2023 (“CCTS”). It aims to assist in achieving India’s Nationally Determined Contributions (“NDC”) targets by pricing Greenhouse Gas (“GHG”) emissions through Carbon Credit Certificates (“CCCs”). Obligated entities will be required to achieve GHG emission intensity targets as notified by MoEFCC. If reductions are more than the target levels the entity will earn CCCs and if it fails in achieving targeted reductions, it will be required to either surrender its CCCs or purchase new CCCs. The Central Government, based on recommendations from the National Steering Committee, will identify obligated entities and set out sector-specific GHG emission intensity trajectories in collaboration with BEE. Emissions will be calculated from all energy sources used, monitored within a fixed boundary, and reported to BEE.

Within 4 (four) months after the compliance year ends, each obligated entity will be required to submit a performance assessment document, detailing their adherence to GHG emission intensity targets, to the BEE and State Designated Agency. The entity should also appoint an accredited carbon verification agency to verify this performance according to the defined accreditation criteria and procedures.

CCCs will be issued following verification and committee recommendations. Further, trading of CCCs will require registration of the entities on the ICM Registry as per the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission procedures. Non-

obligated entities can also register on ICM to trade CCCs. The CCCs remaining at the end of a compliance year can be banked for future use or sold within the ICM.

The Finance Minister of India presented the Union Budget of 2024 - 25

The Union Budget 2024-25 was presented in the Parliament on July 23, 2024 which focused on promoting clean energy, employment and skill development, securing critical mineral supply chains and creation of clean energy finance taxonomy among other changes. Following are some of the highlights:

1. the **budget** highlighted 5 (five) key schemes for employment and upskilling:
 - a) **first timers scheme**: under this subsidy scheme 1 (one) month wage will be provided to all persons newly entering the workforce in all formal sectors. First-time employees registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation ("EPFO") will receive up to INR 15,000 (Indian Rupees fifteen thousand) through direct benefit transfer in 3 (three) instalments;
 - b) **job creation in manufacturing**: this scheme is aimed at incentivising additional employment in manufacturing sector, linked to employment of first timers. Incentive will be given to both employee and employer for EPFO contributions in the specified scales for the first 4 (four) years;
 - c) **support to employers**: employers who increase employment as per the threshold prescribed will be eligible for reimbursement up to INR 3,000 (Indian Rupees three thousand) per month for 2 (two) years towards EPFO contribution of employers, for each additional employee hired in the previous year;
 - d) **skilling programme**: a centrally sponsored initiative in collaboration with state governments and industry for skilling 20,00,000 (twenty lakh) youth over 5 (five) years. This programme includes upgrading existing industrial training institutes and establishing additional ones; and
 - e) **internship in top companies**: the Government plans to launch a comprehensive scheme for providing internship opportunities in top companies to 1,00,00,000 (one crore) youth over 5 (five) years;
2. in a consistent effort to tackle climate change, the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, which aims to install rooftop solar panels in 1,00,00,000 (one crore) homes and provide up to 300 (three hundred) units of free electricity per month, stands out as a significant initiative. This initiative is instrumental in the significant increase of allocation for the solar energy sector which has translated to a 110% rise from the previous year's budget;
3. the Government will also develop a 'taxonomy for climate finance' to improve access to capital for climate adaptation and mitigation, supporting India's climate goals and green transition. To boost climate action, funding from public, private and international sources is necessary and a home-grown taxonomy will ensure that only genuine climate finance is categorised as such;
4. a total of 109 (one hundred and nine) new high-yield and climate-resilient varieties of 32 (thirty-two) field and horticulture crops will soon be available for farmers to cultivate. Over the next 2 (two) years, 10,000,000 (ten million) farmers will be introduced to natural farming, with support including certification and branding. These government initiatives represent a broad strategy to revolutionise agriculture by emphasising climate resilience, increasing productivity and improving efficiency;
5. to bolster domestic manufacturing and decrease dependence on imports, the budget removes basic customs duties on 25 (twenty-five) essential minerals crucial for renewable energy, nuclear energy, and high-tech industries. This measure aims to strengthen the domestic supply chain and expand manufacturing capabilities;
6. the budget envisages to provide financial support to help micro and small industries transition to cleaner energy and improve their energy efficiency. The government will also conduct investment-grade energy audits for these industries in 60 (sixty) clusters, including brass and ceramic. The scheme will expand to 100 (hundred) more clusters in the next phase; and

7. to enhance electricity storage and facilitate seamless integration of increasing share of renewable energy in the overall energy mix, a pumped storage policy will be introduced. Highlighting the importance of energy transition in combating climate change, the budget also expanded the list of exempted capital goods for manufacturing solar panels and cells. However, the budget proposed ending customs duty exemptions for solar glass and tinted copper interconnects, citing adequate domestic manufacturing capability.

Environment, ESG and Climate Change Practice

The Firm advises and represents clients in environmental disputes before the National Green Tribunal, High Court(s) and the Supreme Court of India. We also advise clients on environment, social and governance (ESG) issues and assist them in ensuring compliance with the relevant laws. The firm has been regularly advising clients in matters relating to climate change and energy transition.

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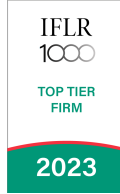
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