India’s Deep Ocean Exploration

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

Recently, the Union Minister of State for Earth Sciences noted India’s deep ocean exploration activities in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha.

- **Ministry** – Ministry of Earth Science.
- Indias exploration activities conducted under the ***Deep Ocean Mission***.
- **Allocation for exploration** – As a part of ISA, India has been allotted a 75,000 square km area in the Central Indian Ocean Basin.
- 10,000 square km area in the Central Indian Ridge and Southwest Indian Ridge of the Southern Indian Ocean.
- **Exploration activities** – Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (Kochi), attached to Ministry of Earth Sciences, has conducted biodiversity surveys across 19 seamounts in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal,
- From the survey, *1300 deep-sea organisms have been collected*, studied and vouchered, *including genomic analysis* for select organisms and the discovery of nearly 23 species that are new to science.
- **Collaborative research** – Projects are undertaken and funded to various government and private laboratories, universities and institutions.
- **Data dissemination** – The Marine biodiversity data is collected through research publications and shared with the UN Ocean Biodiversity Information System.
- The *Marine Microbial Information Portal*, developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (Chennai), provides genomic sequence data of deep-sea microbes collected in the public domain.
- India is a member of the ***International Seabed Authority.***

Quick Facts

International Seabed Authority (ISA)
• It is an intergovernmental organization established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (**UNCLOS**). • Its primary role is *to organize, regulate, and control all mineral-related activities* in the international seabed area, which lies beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, for the benefit of humankind.

Reference

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