India’s membership in the International Energy Agency

Why in news?

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India joined the ranks of the IEA’s membership as a “Member by Associate".

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What is the history?

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- India had been engaging with the organisation long before the membership.
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- In 1998, India had signed the Declaration of Cooperation covering issues related to energy security and statistics.
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- Subsequently, it had signed three Joint Statements with the IEA covering various areas of mutual interest in the energy spectrum.
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- **The priority area for co-operation had been in oil and gas security.**
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- But before 2011, the Mo&PNG ministry had recommended that while India should collaborate with the IEA’s programmes through agreements and MoUs, it should not become a member of the organisation per se.
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- The rationale was that the cooperation with the IEA would allow India to maximise the strategic depth of its crude oil reserves, bring technical assistance but it would also **come with a lot of obligations entailed by membership.**
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Why did India formally join the organisation?

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- With IEA’s **growing role in combating climate change,** it allows the promotion of clean energy technologies in some of the world’s largest carbon

emitters.
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- It will provide India the geopolitical platform to take the lead in climate and energy issues.
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- It deepens the engagement with the IEA in achieving the **‘Power for All’ initiative.**
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- It would also give India an opportunity to **become the voice of the developing world.** e.g. International Solar Alliance (ISA) initiative.
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- ISA provides it with a platform to position itself as a leader on the world energy and environment stage.
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- However, the success of the initiative will depend largely on the number of countries coming on board, collaboration with other multilateral bodies, including the UN, IEA, **IRENA (International Renewable Energy Agency)** as well as corporates and industry, among others.
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- Over 70% of the world's energy consumption comes under the IEA umbrella, so the association with the IEA will substantially increase India’s relevance in global energy governance.
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- IEA can encourage financial institutions to support India’s energy, particularly, its solar energy programme.
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Source: IDSA

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