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## A human touch to India's mineral ecosystem

(The Hindu, 16-09-24)

### What is the District Mineral Foundation (DMF)?

- The District Mineral Foundation (DMF) is a trust set up in India to work for the interest and benefit of persons and areas affected by mining-related operations.
- Created in 2015 through an amendment to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act
- Licensees and leaseholders pay a certain amount of royalty to the DMF. The rates vary based on the type of mining lease.
- Each mining district in India has its own DMF, administered by the respective state government.
- Aimed at community-centric development in mining-affected districts
- The funds are used for education, healthcare, environmental preservation, water resource development, and infrastructure in mining-affected areas.
- It is based on the Principle that local communities are key stakeholders in natural resource-led development.

### What are the key achievements of DMFs over the past decade?

- Accumulated a corpus of almost ₹1 lakh crore
- Sanctioned three lakh projects across 645 districts in 23 States
- Implemented developmental and welfare projects in mining-affected areas
- Complemented existing schemes of State and central governments

### How do DMFs operate and what innovations have they introduced?

- District Collector heads the DMF, ensuring funds flow to areas of greatest need
- National DMF Portal digitizes administration for transparency and efficiency
- Some DMFs include elected representatives and non-elected gram sabha members in governing bodies
- Many are adopting three-year plans for targeted goal achievement

### What are the challenges faced by DMFs?

- Many states have been **slow to spend** the collected funds, leading to large unspent balances.
- Despite being intended for local development, there's often **insufficient involvement** of affected communities in decision-making processes.
- **Lack of capacity** (Human resources & institutional capacity) at the district level hinder effective implementation of projects.
- There are concerns about the **lack of transparency** in fund allocation and utilization in some areas.
- There's often **poor coordination** between various government departments and agencies involved in DMF implementation.
- Inadequate **monitoring mechanisms** make it difficult to assess the impact of DMF-funded projects.

### What are the future plans and goals for DMFs?

- Standardize best practices across all DMFs while maintaining local context

- Integrate DMF operations with ongoing central and State schemes
- Focus on augmenting livelihoods of forest dwellers
- Identify and nurture rural athletes while developing sports infrastructure

*Can you answer the following question?*

*Evaluate the role of District Mineral Foundations in promoting inclusive development in mining-affected regions. Discuss the challenges in their implementation and suggest measures to enhance their effectiveness in achieving sustainable development goals.*

## Unrealistic outlook

(The Hindu, 16-09-24)

### **What were the key outcomes of National Security Adviser Ajit Doval's visit to Russia?**

- Attended BRICS grouping of high-level security officials
- One-on-one meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi
- Decision with Wang Yi to "redouble efforts" to complete disengagement along the LAC
- Rare protocol exception meeting with Putin, potentially indicating India's mediatory role in Ukraine conflict

### **What are the upcoming diplomatic events mentioned in the article?**

- BRICS summit in October, bringing together leaders of expanded BRICS grouping
- Possible Modi-Xi meet at the BRICS summit
- Modi's travel to the U.S. for UN meetings, Quad Summit, and potential meeting with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy .
- Modi's visit to Russia for the BRICS summit

### **What challenges does India face regarding its peacemaking role?**

- Need for considerable expenditure of goodwill, time, and patience
- Multiple existing peace proposals from various countries and leaders
- Unstable conflict situation with signs of escalation
- Competing interests and demands from involved parties
- India's role, while potentially important, has limited potential for immediate resolution
- There is a possibility of overburdening India's efforts with unrealistic expectations
- It emphasizes the need for clarity about what a mediatory role entails

*Can you answer the following question?*

*Evaluate India's potential role as a mediator in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, considering its diplomatic relations with both countries and its position in global politics.*