

CONFLICT MINERALS

Posted at: 03/05/2024

Context:

Recently, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has accused Apple of using conflict minerals.

Background:

The DRC accuses Apple of purchasing minerals that have been smuggled out of the country into neighbouring Rwanda. These minerals are then integrated into Apple's global technology supply chain, where their origin is allegedly obscured.

About CONFLICT MINERALS:

1. Conflict minerals, also known as "blood minerals," are extracted from regions affected by armed conflict or human rights abuses.
2. These minerals play a significant role in funding violence and wars.
3. These minerals play a crucial role in various industries, including electronics, automotive, and renewable energy.
4. The DRC is rich in untapped reserves of precious metals and minerals.
5. The primary conflict minerals include: Tin, Tantalum, Tungsten, Gold.
6. These minerals are extracted from ores such as cassiterite (tin), columbite-tantalite (tantalum), and wolframite (tungsten).

Impact of Conflict Minerals: In politically unstable regions, the trade in these minerals can:

1. Finance armed groups: The proceeds from mineral sales may directly fund armed conflict.
2. Fuel forced labour: Miners, including children, may be subjected to exploitative working conditions.
3. Support corruption and money laundering: Illicit trade can perpetuate corruption and criminal activities.