STUDY NOTES · BASIC CONCEPT

What is Pax Silica? Why is it in news?

International Relations

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Pax Silica is a US-led strategic initiative to build a “secure, prosperous, and innovation-driven silicon supply chain” — from critical minerals and energy inputs to advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, AI infrastructure, and logistics. India was not part of the founding group when It was launched in December 2025.

According to the official statement, “Pax Silica” draws from the Latin pax—meaning peace, stability, and long-term prosperity, as seen in terms like Pax Americana and Pax Romana. Silica refers to the compound that is refined into silicon, one of the chemical elements foundational to the computer chips that enable artificial intelligence.

India had joined the initiative in February this year on the sidelines of the AI Impact Summit held in New Delhi. Argentina, Germany, the Netherlands, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Kazakhstan, Panama, and the European Union joined the Pax Silica initiative during the Second summit.

Measures under Pax Silica include pursuing new joint ventures and strategic co-investment opportunities, protecting sensitive technologies and critical infrastructure from undue access or control by countries of concern and building trusted technology ecosystems, including ICT systems, fibre-optic cables, data centres, foundational models and applications.

It is aimed at building trusted, resilient, and innovation-driven supply chains for silicon and critical minerals that underpin semiconductors, artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure, and advanced manufacturing.

In a written reply to Lok Sabha unstarred question, Minister of External Affairs highlighted that joining the initiative is expected to facilitate investments in critical mineral processing, support domestic value addition, reduce import dependence in strategic sectors, and promote secure supply chains through collaboration with trusted partners.

Why in the news?

India, along with 35 other countries, signed a US-led initiative to build trusted and resilient supply chains to power artificial intelligence (AI) technologies at the second Pax Silica Summit in Washington on 25th June, 2026. India was represented at the summit by Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology S. Krishnan, along with representatives from Indian industry.

What is the significance of Pax Silica for India?

• Pax Silica aims to build secure supply chains — ranging from critical minerals and energy inputs to advanced manufacturing and semiconductors. All of these are areas of concern for India.

• It is significant because it signals the manner in which the next global tech order could take shape as countries regroup in strategic sectors involving a Chinese presence. Groupings such as Pax Silica could cohesively work to address supply chain chokepoints next.

• India, too has been trying to position itself as a spoke in the global supply chain realignment as American and European companies look to diversify away from China.

• India's presence in Pax Silica could help New Delhi's growth in technology-heavy sectors, which it currently lacks, deepening its import dependency. Experts said that the countries that are part of the US-led initiative are among the leaders in AI and the semiconductor supply chain.

• India currently lacks a global-scale AI infrastructure and stands to gain from the likely investments and partnerships under the initiative.

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Related Concepts

Critical minerals: Critical minerals are a subset of minerals considered crucial for the manufacturing and technological needs of companies, industries, nations, or even the world. In 2023, the Centre identified 30 critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt, nickel, graphite, tin and copper, which are essential for the country's economic development and national security.

Rare Earth Elements (REEs): REEs or Rare Earth Metals are a set of 17 chemical elements in the periodic table — the 15 lanthanides, plus scandium and yttrium, which tend to occur in the same ore deposits as the lanthanides, and have similar chemical properties.

Despite the name – rare earth elements – these elements are not so rare. They are found in abundance in the Earth's crust. However, they're rarely found in concentrations that are economically viable for mining. Therefore, extracting and processing REEs is complex and expensive, requiring high-end techniques and specialised labour to isolate and purify them.

Rare Earth Permanent Magnets: They are amongst the strongest types of permanent magnets and are used extensively in technologies requiring compact and high-performance magnetic components. Rare earth metals (REMs) are indispensable for producing these high-performance permanent magnets.

The government has announced the 'Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets', with the aim to support 6,000 metric tonnes per annum (MTPA) of integrated REPM manufacturing

capacity. The scheme specifically focuses on “sintered rare-earth permanent magnets”, which are primarily neodymium, iron and boron (NdFeB) magnets, considered the strongest and most commercially demanded.

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