1. International Energy Agency- International Relation

India seeks to join IEA- Why its request for membership is not a straightforward process. India's transition to full IEA membership requires bridging a significant gap in strategic oil reserves (currently ~70 days vs. required 90 days) and navigating the mandatory OECD membership hurdle. While the move would bolster India's energy security and global status, it demands a robust domestic framework for demand restraint and significant capital investment in storage infrastructure.

1. About the International Energy Agency (IEA)

Nature- An independent intergovernmental organization.
Headquarters- Paris, France.
Establishment- Founded in 1974 under the framework of the OECD, primarily as a response to the 1973 oil crisis.
Composition- Currently consists of 32 member countries, 13 association countries, and 5 accession countries.
Core Function- It serves as a global energy authority, providing policy recommendations, detailed analysis, and data to ensure reliable, affordable, and clean energy for its members.

2. Evolution of IEA's Scope

Initially conceived as a "watchdog" for oil supply, the IEA has significantly broadened its mandate over the decades.

Period	**Primary Focus Areas**
Initial Focus (1974)	Addressing oil supply disruptions, providing market data, and promoting energy conservation.
Modern Scope	Covers the entire global energy system, including renewables (solar, wind, biofuels), nuclear power, and hydrogen technologies.
Current Mission	Fostering international technical collaboration and leading the global transition to net-zero emissions.

3. Key Publications of the IEA

The IEA is the world's most authoritative source for energy statistics. Its major reports include-
World Energy Outlook (WEO) Report (The flagship publication).
World Energy Investment Report.
World Energy Statistics and Balances.
Energy Technology Perspectives.
India Energy Outlook Report (Specific to the Indian context).

4. Mandatory Requirements for Full Membership- For India to transition from an Associate to a Full Member, it must satisfy the following four rigorous criteria-

A. The OECD Link

Requirement- Historically, a country must be a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to join the IEA.
India's Challenge- India is not an OECD member and has characterized the group as a "rich nations' club," showing no immediate desire to join. This may require a special legal workaround or a "tailor-made" accession process.

B. Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR)

Requirement- Member countries must hold crude oil stocks equivalent to at least 90 days of their prior year's net imports.
India's Current Status- India's current total storage (Strategic Reserves + Oil Company stocks) covers approximately 66–70 days. Meeting the 90-day mark will require massive infrastructure investment in underground salt caverns or rock caverns.

C. Demand Restraint Measures

Requirement- Members must have ready-to-use programs to reduce national oil consumption by 7% to 10% during a major global supply disruption.
India's Stance- India must develop a legislative and administrative framework to enforce such "rationing" or demand-reduction measures during emergencies.

D. Legal Framework

Requirement- A country must have the legal measures in place to ensure that all oil companies under its jurisdiction can report data and participate in IEA's collective emergency actions.

5. Significance of India's Membership

Global Energy Governance- As the world's third-largest energy consumer, India's inclusion would make the IEA more representative of the current global reality.
Energy Security- Full membership grants India a seat at the table during global oil supply emergencies and access to collective stock-sharing mechanisms.
Technology Transfer- Enhanced cooperation in clean energy sectors like Green Hydrogen and Carbon Capture.
Source- https-//indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-climate/india-iea-membership-process-hurdles-10546236/