# Collegium System for the Appointment of Judges

## Why in News

Recently, the **Supreme Court** (SC) **Collegium**, led by **Chief Justice of India (CJI)** has recommended to the government nine names for appointment as SC judges.

- The Collegium has for the **first time, in one single resolution, recommended three women judges.**
- It has thus sent a **strong signal in favour of representation of women** in the highest judiciary.

## Key Points

- **Collegium System:**

  - It is the **system of appointment and transfer of judges** that has **evolved through judgments** of the SC, and not by an Act of **Parliament** or by a provision of the Constitution.
  - **Evolution of the System:**
    - **First Judges Case (1981):**
      - It declared that the **"primacy" of the CJIs recommendation** on judicial appointments and transfers can be refused for "cogent reasons."
      - The ruling gave the **Executive primacy over the Judiciary in judicial appointments** for the next 12 years.
    - **Second Judges Case (1993):**
      - SC **introduced the Collegium system,** holding that "consultation" really meant "concurrence".
      - It **added that it was not the CJI's individual opinion,** but an institutional opinion formed in consultation with the two senior-most judges in the SC.
    - **Third Judges Case (1998):**
      - SC on **President's reference (Article 143) expanded the Collegium to a five-member body,** comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.
  - The SC **collegium is headed by the CJI** and comprises **four other senior most judges of the court.**
  - A **HC collegium is led by its Chief Justice** and four other senior most judges of that court.
    - Names recommended for appointment by a HC collegium reaches the government only after **approval by the CJI and the SC collegium.**
  - Judges of the **higher judiciary are appointed only through the collegium system** and the government has a role only after names have been decided by the collegium.
  - The **government's role is limited to getting an inquiry conducted by the Intelligence Bureau (IB)** if a lawyer is to be elevated as a judge in a High Court or the Supreme Court.
    - **Intelligence Bureau (IB):** It is a reputed and established intelligence agency. It is authoritatively controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
  - It can also raise objections and seek clarifications regarding the collegium's choices, but if the collegium reiterates the same names, the government is bound, under Constitution

Bench judgments, to appoint them as judges.
- **Procedure for Various Judicial Appointments:**

    - **For CJI:**
        - The **President of India appoints the CJI** and the other SC judges.
        - As far as the CJI is concerned, the **outgoing CJI recommends his successor.**
        - In practice, **it has been strictly by seniority** ever since the supersession controversy of the 1970s.
    - **For SC Judges:**
        - For other judges of the SC, the **proposal is initiated by the CJI.**
        - The CJI **consults the rest of the Collegium members,** as well as the senior-most judge of the court hailing from the High Court to which the recommended person belongs.
        - The **consultees must record their opinions in writing** and it should form part of the file.
        - The Collegium **sends the recommendation to the Law Minister,** who forwards it to the Prime Minister to advise the President.
    - **For Chief Justice of High Courts:**
        - The **Chief Justice of the High Court** is appointed as per the policy of having Chief Justices from **outside the respective States.**
        - The Collegium takes the call on the elevation.
        - High Court **judges are recommended by a Collegium comprising the CJI and two senior-most judges.**
        - The proposal, however, is **initiated by the outgoing Chief Justice of the High Court concerned** in consultation with two senior-most colleagues.
        - The **recommendation is sent to the Chief Minister,** who advises the Governor to send the proposal to the Union Law Minister.
- **Criticism of the Collegium System:**

    - Opaqueness and a **lack of transparency.**
    - Scope for **nepotism.**
    - Embroilment in public **controversies.**
    - **Overlooks** several **talented** junior judges and advocates.
- **Attempts to reform the Appointment System:**

    - The attempt made to replace it by a **'National Judicial Appointments Commission'** (through Ninety-ninth Amendment Act, 2014) was struck down by the court in 2015 on the ground that it posed a threat to the independence of the judiciary.

## Related Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 124(2)** of the Indian Constitution provides that the **Judges of the SC are appointed by the President after consultation** with such a number of the Judges of the SC and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose.
- **Article 217** of the Indian Constitution states that the **Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the CJI, the Governor of the State,** and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court.

# Way Forward

- Filling up of vacancies is a continuous and collaborative process involving the executive and the judiciary, and there cannot be a time frame for it. However, **it is time to think of a permanent, independent body to institutionalize the process with adequate safeguards** to preserve the judiciary's independence guaranteeing judicial primacy but not judicial exclusivity.
- It should **ensure independence, reflect diversity, demonstrate professional competence**

**and integrity.**
- Instead of selecting the number of judges required against a certain number of vacancies, the **collegium must provide a panel of possible names to the President** to appoint in order of preference and other valid criteria.

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# Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021

## Why in News

Recently, the **Supreme Court of India** (SC) has challenged the government to produce material showing its reasons for introducing the **Tribunal Reforms Bill of 2021.**

- The Bill replaces the **Tribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021** which was quashed by the Supreme Court.

## Key Points

- **Issues Raised by SC:**

    - **Unconstitutional Legislative Overriding:** There was **lack of discussion** over the bill, and the government has re-enacted the very same provisions struck down by the Court in the **Madras Bar Association case (2021).**
        - It amounts to **"unconstitutional legislative overriding"** of the judgement passed by the SC.
    - **Repeated Violation of SC Orders:** The Centre is not following the repeated directions issued by the Court to ensure the **proper functioning of the Tribunals.**
        - The provisions in the ordinance regarding **conditions of service** and **tenure of Tribunal Members** and **Chairpersons** were struck down by the Supreme Court.
    - **Security of Tenure:** The Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021 bars appointments to tribunals of persons below 50 years of age. It **undermines the length/security of tenure.**
    - **Undermines the Separation of Powers:** The bill allows the **Central Government to take a decision** on the recommendations made by the selection Committee, preferably within three months from the date of such recommendation.
        - **Section 3(7)** of the bill mandates the recommendation of a panel of two names by the search-cum selection committee to the Central Government, violating the principles of separation of powers **and judicial independence.**
    - **Vacant Positions in Tribunals:** India now has 16 tribunals including the National Green Tribunal, the Armed Forces Appellate Tribunal, the Debt Recovery Tribunal among others which also suffer from **crippling vacancies.**
        - Existence of large number of vacancies of Members and Chairpersons and the inordinate delay caused in filling them up has resulted in weakening of the tribunals.
    - **Detrimental to the Decision-making Process:** These cases will be transferred to High Courts or commercial civil courts immediately.
        - The lack of specialisation in regular courts could be detrimental to the decision-making process.
        - For example, the **Film Certification Appellate Tribunal (FCAT)** exclusively heard decisions appealing against decisions of the censor board, which requires expertise in art and cinema.
        - Further, the **dissolution of certain tribunals** and appellate bodies, and the transfer of their functions to High Courts can be criticized on the grounds that

Indian courts are **already overburdened** with their existing caseload.

- **About the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021:**

  - **Dissolution of Existing Bodies:** The Bill seeks to dissolve certain appellate bodies and transfer their functions to other existing judicial bodies. For example, the disputes heard by the **Film Certification Appellate Tribunal** will be addressed by the **High Court.**
  - **Merging of Existing Bodies:** The Finance Act, 2017 merged **tribunals** based on domain. For example, the **Competition Appellate Tribunal** has been merged with the **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal.**
  - **Search-cum-selection Committees:** The Chairperson and Members of the Tribunals will be appointed by the central government on the recommendation of a Search-cum-Selection Committee. The Committee will consist of:
    - The **Chief Justice of India, or a Supreme Court Judge** nominated by him, as the **Chairperson** (with casting vote).
    - **Two Secretaries** nominated by the central governments.
    - The **sitting or outgoing Chairperson,** or a retired Supreme Court Judge, or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court, and
    - The **Secretary of the Ministry** under which the Tribunal is constituted (with no voting right).
  - **State Administrative Tribunals:** It will have separate search-cum-selection committees with the **Chief Justice of the High Court** of the concerned state, as the Chairman (with a casting vote).
  - **Eligibility and Term of Office:** The Bill provides for a four-year term of office (subject to the upper age limit of 70 years for the Chairperson, and 67 years for members).
    - Further, it specifies a minimum age requirement of 50 years for appointment of a chairperson or a member.
  - **Removal of Tribunal Members:** It states that the central government shall, on the recommendation of the Search-cum-Selection Committee, remove from office any Chairperson or a Member.

## Tribunals

- The term **'Tribunal'** is derived from the word **'Tribunes',** which means **'Magistrates of the Classical Roman Republic'.**
- Tribunal is a **quasi-judicial institution** that is set up to deal with problems such as resolving **administrative or tax-related disputes.**

  - It performs a number of functions like adjudicating disputes, determining rights between contesting parties, making an administrative decision, reviewing an existing administrative decision and so forth.
- The objective may be to reduce the caseload of the judiciary or to bring in subject expertise for technical matters.
- **Constitutional Provisions:**

  - Tribunals were not part of the original constitution, it was incorporated in the Indian Constitution by **42$^{nd}$ Amendment Act, 1976.**

    - Article 323-A**:** It deals with Administrative Tribunals.
    - Article 323-B**:** It deals with tribunals for other matters.
    - Article 262**:** The Indian Constitution provides a role for the Central government in adjudicating conflicts surrounding inter-state rivers that arise among the state/regional governments.

# United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress

## Why in News

Recently, it was announced that the **second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC)** will be held **in Hyderabad, India, in 2022.** The event would show a glimpse of **India's evolving geospatial ecosystem.**

## Key Points

- **About UNWGIC:**

  - **Organised By:** United Nation Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)
  - **Objective:** To enhance international collaboration among the Member States and relevant stakeholders in Geospatial information management and capacities.
  - **Timeframe:** It is conducted every four years. The **first UNWGIC was organized by China in October 2018.**
  - **Theme of Second UNWGIC:** Geo-enabling the Global Village.

- **About UN-GGIM:**

  - The UN-GGIM aims at playing a leading role in setting the **agenda for the development of global geospatial information** and to promote its use to address key global challenges.

    - It works towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for **Sustainable Development** and to keep the promise to leave no one behind.
  - In 2009, the **United Nations Statistics Division**, convened in New York, an informal consultative meeting with geospatial information experts from different regions of the world.
  - In 2010, the United Nations Secretariat was requested to initiate discussion and prepare a report for the approval of the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** on global coordination of geospatial information management, including the consideration of the possible creation of a United Nations Forum on GGIM.
  - In **2011**, the ECOSOC forum concluded with the acceptance of the **Seoul Declaration** on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM).

- **Geospatial Technologies:**

  - Geospatial technologies is a term used to describe the range of modern tools contributing to the geographic mapping and analysis of the Earth and human societies.
  - These technologies have been evolving in some form since the first maps were drawn in prehistoric times.
  - The science and art of photographic interpretation and map making was accelerated during the Second World War **(1939-45)** and during the Cold War **(1945-1989)** it took on new dimensions with the advent of satellites and computers.
  - Broadly speaking, it consists of the following technologies:

    - **Remote Sensing**: It is imagery and data collected from space- or airborne camera and sensor platforms.
    - **GIS (Geographic Information System)**; A GIS is a computer system for capturing, storing, checking, and displaying data related to positions on Earth's surface.
    - **GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System)**: It is a general term describing any satellite constellation that provides positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) services on a global or regional basis.

- **3D Scanning:** It is the process of analyzing a real-world object or environment to collect data on its shape and possibly its appearance.
  - **Geospatial Policy of India:**

    - The Ministry of Science and Technology has recently [released new guidelines for the Geo-Spatial Sector in India](#)**.**
    - The news policy liberalises the sector to a more competitive field. Following are the objectives of new policy:

      - **Open Access:**

        - Open access to its geospatial data and services, including maps, for all Indian entities, with the exception of sensitive defence or security-related data.
        - It envisages the benefits of geospatial technologies to reach urban as well as rural areas, and make geospatial information accessible to all.
        - For example, **SVAMITA scheme** seeks to empower rural population through which a digital certificate of landholding is being given to rural landowners.
      - **Restrictions Removed:**

        - Indian corporations and innovators are no longer subject to restrictions nor do they require prior approvals before they collect, generate, prepare, disseminate, store, publish, update digital geospatial data and maps within the territory of India.
  - **Other Recent Initiatives:** The Union government has also launched web portals to offer geospatial data.

    - **Sarthi**: The **Survey of India** has developed a web Geographic Information System (GIS) called Sarthi. It will help users in creating applications for geospatial data visualisation, manipulation, and analysis without a lot of resources at their end.
    - **Online Maps Portal:** The online maps portal of Survey of India has over 4,000 maps with national, state, district, and tehsil level data that have been indexed for end users.
    - **Manchitran: National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organization (NATMO)** has released thematic maps such as the cultural map of India, the climactic map, or the economic map, on this portal.

      - NATMO, functioning as a subordinate department under the Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology, with its headquarters at Kolkata.
    - **Bhuvan**, is the national Geo-portal **developed and hosted by ISRO** comprising Geo Spatial Data, Services and Tools for Analysis.
    - The Association of Geospatial Industries has released a report titled **"Potential of Geospatial Technologies for the Water Sector in India**''.

**Source: PIB**

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# New Development Bank

## Why in News

Recently, during **BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) meet, India proposed that **NDB's (New Development Bank) scope be expanded** to strengthen **Social Infrastructure** besides promoting industry.

- **Social Infrastructure** includes the construction and maintenance of facilities that support social services such as healthcare, education, and housing.
- India is the **chair of the BRICS grouping** for 2021.

## Key Points

- **About:**

  - It is **a multilateral development bank** jointly **founded by the BRICS countries** at the 6th BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil **in 2014.**
  - It was formed to s**upport infrastructure and sustainable development efforts in BRICS and other underserved, emerging economies** for faster development through innovation and cutting-edge technology.
  - It is **headquartered at Shanghai, China.**
  - In 2018, the NDB received observer status in the **United Nations** General Assembly, establishing a firm basis for active and fruitful cooperation with the UN.
  - **Objectives:**

    - Fostering development of member countries.
    - Supporting economic growth.
    - Promoting competitiveness and facilitating job creation.
    - Building a knowledge sharing platform among developing countries.
  - To fulfill its purpose, the Bank **supports public or private projects** through loans, guarantees, equity participation and other financial instruments.
- **Major Projects funded by NDB in India:**

  - It has committed funding to a number of **major infrastructure projects in India, including the Mumbai Metro rail,** **Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System and many** Renewable Energy **projects.**
  - The NDB has so far approved 14 Indian projects for an amount of nearly USD 4.2 billion.
  - In 2020, India announced a **1 billion USD loan pact with NDB** to boost rural employment and infrastructure.
- **Achievements:**

  - **Innovations:**

    - The NDB has managed to innovate in some areas, **such as lending in local currencies to protect borrowing countries from a stronger dollar**, which was one of its founding features.
    - Another innovation is that the **bank accepts parameters for compliance with environmental and social standards designed by borrowers**, respecting its members' own policies.
  - **Partnership with other Development Banks:**

    - It has established partnerships with important development banks, such as Latin American regional development bank CAF, the China-led **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank**, and the **World Bank group**.
  - **AA+ Credit rating:**

    - The NDB's **credit rating** is AA+, one short of the maximum, which other development banks such as AIIB have. This is despite many of its members, notably Brazil and South Africa, facing tough economic times domestically.
  - **Emission of Various bonds:**

    - The bank has successfully emitted a number of bonds — including **'**green bonds**'** in 2016 — and has now approved 42 projects in member countries for a total of over USD 12 billion, more than the AIIB's roughly USD 8 billion portfolio.
- **Issues:**

- **Less disbursal of Loans:**

    - Though the bank has approved over USD 12 billion in loans, it has disbursed less than USD 1 billion so far, that is a very low figure.
- **Political Turmoil:**

    - **[Relations between China and India soured](#)**, sanctions against Russia made it difficult to lend to Russian companies, and then there was political instability and economic crises in both South Africa and Brazil.
    - Continuing to advance the interests of the developing world in a rough political climate proved to be a hard task at which member countries don't seem to have excelled.
- **Issue of Sustainability:**

    - Though the NDB has recently approved loans for climate change mitigation and adaptation in Brazil and renewable energy in India, it has labelled a number of projects that are **environmentally questionable as sustainable, without explaining the criteria it uses.**

        - One of its sustainable projects is the paving of the **Trans-**Amazonian **highway in Brazil**, a highly controversial road that many environmentalists blame for exacerbating deforestation in the world's largest tropical rainforest.

## Way Forward

- **In the immediate future, there should be an emphasis on building healthcare capacities and national health preparedness for its member nations** and other vulnerable countries, with special support towards containment of the spread of Covid-19 and assistance for social and economic recoveries in terms of incomes and jobs.
- **From a medium-term perspective, investments for reinforcing urban resilience** in mega-cities and densely populated agglomerations for mitigation of adverse impacts of air pollution and adaptation to climate change needs to be the focus.
- In keeping with its current emphasis, **a medium to longer-run priority should be on lending support for renewable energy technologies** (solar, wind and biomass) to help improve their dissemination in the overall energy mix of the member nations of BRICS and elsewhere. In all of these endeavours, the Bank **could attempt to devise mechanisms to elicit public-private partnerships** for long-run financial sustainability.

**[Source: IE](#)**

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# RoDTEP Scheme

## Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** has announced **rates of tax refunds** under the **Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme** for 8,555 products for the FY 2021-22.

## Key Points

- **About:**
    - The RoDTEP scheme would **refund to exporters the embedded central, state and**

**local duties or taxes that were so far not being rebated or refunded** and were, therefore, placing India's exports at a disadvantage.

- The rebate under the scheme **would not be available** in respect of duties and taxes already exempted or remitted or credited.

- **Launch:**
  - It was **started in January 2021** as a replacement for the **Merchandise Export from India Scheme (MEIS)**, which was not compliant with the rules of the **World Trade Organisation.**
    - The MEIS scheme provided additional benefits of **2% to 7% on the Freight On Board (FOB) value** of eligible exports.
    - As per the WTO norms, a country can't give export subsidies like MEIS if Per capita income is above 1000 USD and India's Per Capita Income crossed above 1000 USD in 2017. India subsequently lost the case at WTO and had to come up with a new WTO compliant scheme to help Indian exporters.
  - For garment exporters, the **Rebate of State and Central Levies and Taxes (RoSCTL) Scheme** has been notified separately.

- **Rates:**
  - The tax refund rates **range from 0.5% to 4.3%** for various sectors.
  - The rebate will have to be claimed as **a percentage of the Freight On Board value of exports.**

- **Issuance:**
  - Rebates will be issued in the form of a transferable duty credit/electronic scrip (e-scrip) which will be maintained in an electronic ledger by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

- **Significance:**
  - **Enhance India's Competitiveness:**
    - The reimbursement of taxes such as duty on power charges, **Value-Added Tax** on fuel in transportation, **Farm Sector** etc. will make Indian products competitive in global markets.
    - It is expected to significantly impact India's competitiveness, trade flows and export numbers over the next 5-10 years.
  - **Par with International Standards:**
    - Indian exporters will be able to meet the international standards for exports **as affordable testing and certification will be made available to exporters** within the country instead of relying on international organizations.
    - This would increase the economy for the country and working capital for the enterprise.
  - **Automated Tax Assessment:**
    - Also under it, **tax assessment is set to become fully automatic for exporters.** Businesses will get access to their refunds for **GST (Goods and Services Tax)** via an automatic refund-route.

- **Concerns:**
  - **Lower Rates:**
    - The scheme disappointed many exporters as the **rates are much lower than MEIS rates** with lesser budget allocation.
    - The rates have not taken into account the **taxes embedded in their raw material like steel in the engineering products** in a large number of cases.
  - **Deprive Large Sectors:**
    - The benefit appears not to be available to major exports such as steel, pharma, etc. and exports made under Advance Authorisation, EOU (Export oriented unit), **SEZ (Special Economic Zone)**, etc.
    - It will have an adverse impact **on competitiveness of Indian exports** and will send negative sentiment amongst the exporters.

## Freight on Board

- Also called Free on Board (FOB) is a term used to **indicate who is liable for goods damaged or destroyed during shipping.**
  - **"FOB origin"** means the buyer is at risk and takes ownership of goods once the seller

ships the product.
- **"FOB destination"** means the seller retains the risk of loss until the goods reach the buyer.
- The terms of FOB **affect the buyer's inventory cost;** adding liability for shipped goods increases inventory costs and reduces net income.

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# Sea Erosion in India

## Why in News

Recently, the **National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) under the Ministry of Earth Science** has published a report that said **one-third of India's coastline underwent sea erosion in 28 years.**

- As much as **32% of India's coastline underwent sea erosion** and **27% of it expanded between 1990 and 2018.**

## Key Points

- **Findings of the Report:**

    - **India's Coastline:**

        - The country's coastline is **6,631.53 kilometres long** which is surrounded by the Arabian Sea in the west, Bay of Bengal in the east, and the Indian Ocean in the south.

            - **2,135.65 kilometres** was subject to **varying degrees of erosion** and **1,760.06 km expanded** during this period.
            - Nearly **2,700 km** of the coastline is **stable.**
        - The long coastline of India is **dotted with several major ports** such as Kandla, Mumbai, Nhava Sheva, Mangalore, Cochin, Chennai, Tuticorin, Visakhapatnam, and Paradip.
    - **Coastal Erosion:**

        - 60% of the coastline of West Bengal underwent erosion during the period followed by Puducherry (56%), Kerala and Tamil Nadu at 41% and 41%, respectively.
        - **More erosion in Eastern Coast** than the Western coast:

            - The **eastern coast sees a lot of rain** which keeps the seas rough through most of the year. Besides the **Southwest Monsoon** (June to September), the **eastern coast also witnesses the** Northeast Monsoon from October to December and brings rain to coastal Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
            - The eastern coast **underwent more erosion due to frequent** Cyclonic Activities **from Bay of Bengal in the past three** decades, compared to the western coast, which remained largely stable.
    - **Land Accretion:**

        - Odisha on the eastern coast is the only state where the coast witnessed an

expansion of more than 50%.
- This was followed by the coast of Andhra Pradesh, which expanded 48%; Karnataka (26%) etc.
- **Coastal Erosion:**

  - **Meaning**: Coastal erosion is the **process by which local sea level rise, strong wave action, and coastal flooding wear down or carry away rocks, soils, and/or sands along the coast.**
  - **Erosion and Accretion:** Erosion and accretion **are complementary** to each other. If the sand and sediments have drifted from one side, it must accumulate somewhere else.

    - Soil erosion **is the loss of land and human habitation as sea water washes off** regions of soil along the coastline.
    - Soil accretion, on the other hand, **results in an increase in the land area.**
    - However, if **accretion happens in** Deltas**,** Estuaries**, and creeks, the soil will block the inflow of seawater into these areas** which are breeding ground for several species of aquatic flora and fauna.
  - **Impact:** Recreational activities (sun bathing, picnicking, swimming, surfing, fishing, boating, diving, etc.) may be affected if existing beaches are reduced in width or disappear altogether. Also, there can be an impact on livelihoods of coastal communities.
  - **Measures: Coastal habitats such as** Mangroves**,** Coral Reefs **and lagoons** are recognized as the best defence against sea storms and erosion, deflecting and absorbing much of the energy of sea storms. Therefore, it is important to maintain these natural habitats for shore protection as well as for environmental conservation.

# // What features does coastal erosion cause?
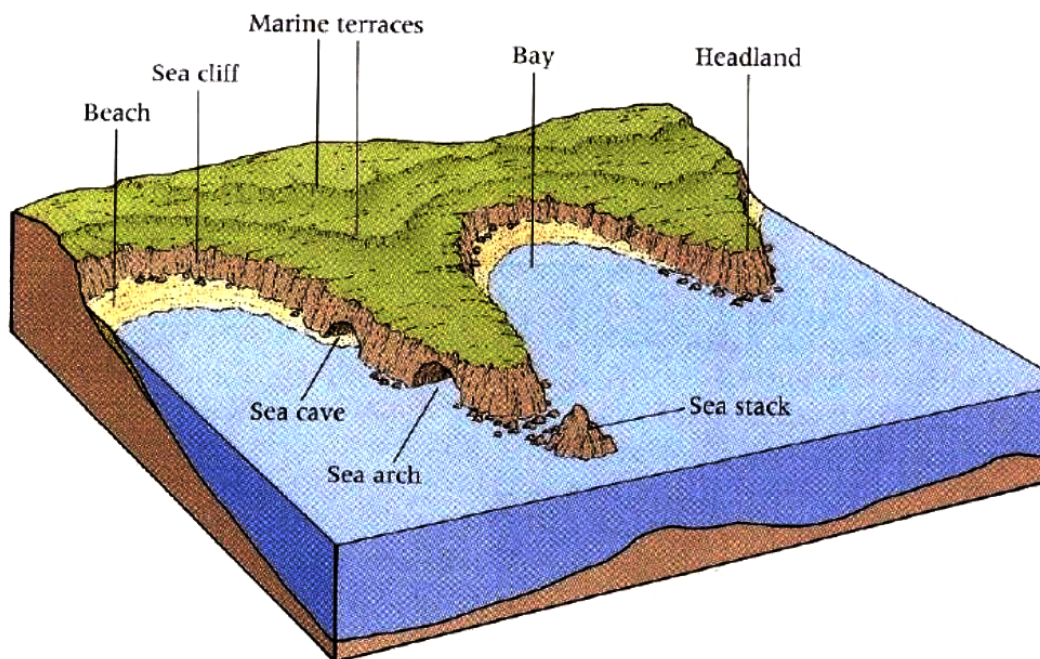


- **Factors causing Coastal Erosion:**

  - **Natural Phenomena:**

    - Wave energy is considered to be the primary reason for coastal erosion.
    - Natural hazards like cyclones, thermal expansion of seawater, storm surges, tsunami etc due to the melting of continental glaciers and ice sheets as a result of

climate change hamper the natural rhythm and precipitate erosion.

- ○ **Littoral Drift:**

    - Strong littoral drift resulting in sand movement can also be considered as one of the major reasons for coastal erosion.

        - Littoral drift means the natural movement of sediment along marine or lake shorelines by wave action in response to prevailing winds.

- ○ **Anthropogenic Activities:**

    - Dredging, sand mining and coral mining have contributed to coastal erosion causing sediment deficit, modification of water depth leading to longshore drift and altered wave refraction.

        - Coastal erosion has been sparked by fishing harbours and dams constructed in the catchment area of rivers and ports reducing the flow of sediments from river estuaries.

- ○ **Heavy Rainfall:**

    - Heavy rainfall can enhance the saturation of soils, with high saturation leading to a reduction in the soil's shear strength, and a corresponding increase in the chance of **Slope Failure (landslides)**.

- ▪ **Indian Initiatives for Coastal Management:**

    - ○ National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management**:**

        - It aims to promote **integrated and sustainable management of the coastal and marine areas** in India for the benefit and wellbeing of the traditional coastal and island communities.

    - ○ Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan**:**

        - It is a process for the management of the coast using an integrated approach, regarding all aspects of the coastal zone, including geographical and political boundaries, in an attempt to achieve sustainability.

    - ○ Coastal Regulation Zone**:**

        - The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification was issued in 1991 under the Environmental Protection Act, 1986, by the Ministry of Environment and Forest to regulate activities in coastal areas of India.

**Source: DTE**

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# Non-Transparent Pollution Control Boards

## Why in News

Recently, a new report by the **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)** has revealed that most of the **State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) and Pollution Control Committees (PCCs)** in India remain **non-transparent entities** when it comes to sharing information with the public.

- ▪ CSE is a public interest research and advocacy NGO based in New Delhi.

## Key Points

- **About the Report:**

  - The report is titled, Transparency Index: Rating of pollution control boards on public disclosure.
  - It has assessed the **data disclosure performance of 29 State Pollution Control Boards And Six Pollution Control Committees** from across the country. Of these, only **17 boards and committees scored 50% or above.**
  - Pollution control agencies under **Air Act 1981** and **Water Act 1974** is to **collect and disseminate information related to air and water pollution** and also about its prevention, control or abatement.

    - The law also asks the **boards to share the data in the public domain.**
    - However, this is rarely done in practice.
  - The pollution control boards of **Odisha and Telangana were the top performers** and had scored 67% in transparency.
  - Putting in the public domain crucial pollution-related information, data and details of actions taken is critical. It **can help policy-makers** take the discussions to the next level of pollution management.

    - It can also **reassure the people** about the efficiency of these boards and committees.
- **Other Issues Pertaining to SPCBs:**

  - **More Responsibilities, Limited Institutional Capacity:** Over the last two decades, SPCBs have seen an expansion in the scope and scale of their work but not in their budgets and workforce.

    - Remuneration is meagre, making it hard for the board to retain talent.
  - **Shortage of Technical Experts:** Further, an acute shortage of technical experts and other staff has reduced central and state pollution regulators to mere advisory bodies, leaving them unable to enforce air quality standards.
  - **Top Administrators Have No Domain Expertise:** Leadership positions in SPCBs are usually held by civil servants with no expertise in science or environmental studies--necessary for comprehending issues relating to pollution and climate change.

    - For example, the CPCB is dominated by government representatives and is constituted by the central government "which conflicts with the expectation of it acting as a watchdog".
  - **Low Motivation and Accountability:** State board officials often have a diminished view of their own role and responsibility.

    - Also, the process of framing standards was not inclusionary and state officials were simply asked to implement these.
  - **Poor Multi-Sectoral Coordination:** The lack of convergence and coordination between various state and central departments often means that other departments do not implement SPCB directives.
  - **Little Expertise in Monitoring:** While the capacity for real-time monitoring increases every year, gaps in data collection and erroneous readings due to poor calibration remain.

## Pollution Control Boards in India

- **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB):**

  - CPCB is a statutory organisation which was constituted in September, 1974 under the **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.**
  - It was also entrusted with the powers and functions under the **Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.**
  - It serves as a field formation and also provides technical services to the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** of the provisions of the **Environment**

  - **Principal Functions** of the CPCB:

      - To promote cleanliness of streams and wells in different areas of the States by prevention, control and abatement of water pollution.
      - To improve the quality of air and to prevent, control or abate air pollution in the country.
- **State Pollution Control Board (SPCB):**

    - They **supplement the CPCB** as they are a statutory organization entrusted to implement Environmental Laws and rules within the jurisdiction of a state.
- **Pollution control committees (PCC):**

    - They perform similar functions to SPCB. The difference between the two is that **PCC belongs to Union territories.**

## Way Forward

- **Uniform Standards:** There should be a uniform format for presenting annual reports and sharing information on websites.

    - The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) should come up with a website format for the SPCBs/PCCs and guidelines for framing annual reports.
- **Specialised Recruitment:** There is a need for clear qualifications to be laid down for the recruitment of various members to the pollution control boards.

    - Having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of matters relating to environmental protection can be one of the criteria.
- **Strengthening Institutional capacity:** Regulatory bodies that enable their implementation are strengthened with the technical and financial resources needed.

**Source: DTE**

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# Community Policing

## Why in News

Recently, the **Delhi Police** Commissioner inaugurated a [Community Policing](#) **Programme 'Ummeed'.**

## Key Points

- **About:**

    - The Basic Principle Underlying Community Policing is that **'A Policeman is a Citizen with Uniform and a Citizen is a Policeman without Uniform'.**

        - The essence of Community Policing is to **minimize the gap between policemen and citizens** to such an extent that the policemen become an integrated part of the community they serve.
    - It is defined as a **law enforcement philosophy that allows police to continuously**

**operate in the same area** in order to create a stronger bond with the citizens living and working in that area.
  - It **helps in reducing the trust deficit between police and public** as it requires the police to work with the community for prevention and detection of crime, maintenance of public order, and resolving local conflicts, with the objective of providing a better quality of life and sense of security.
- **Benefits:**

❑ No government funds are required

❑ Enhances immunity against crime and disorder

❑ Assists traditional policing

❑ Bridges the gap of trust

❑ Encourages social interactions

❑ Police and public share credit and discredit

❑ Police officer feels safe in his area of responsibility

❑ Reliable and workable information is available

❑ Inculcates sense of responsibility in the public

❑ Police and the public are accountable to each other

❑ Promotes democratic values in the society

- **Challenges:**
  - **Poor** public **image of the police** force.
  - **Poor customer service** procedures within the police force.
  - It might **lead to vigilantism and mob justice.**
  - Belief by the residents that **crime is a source of livelihood for some people.**
- **Other Examples:**
  - **Janamaithri Suraksha Project:** Kerala
  - **Joint Patrolling Committees:** Rajasthan
  - **Meira Paibi:** Manipur
  - **Community Policing Project:** West Bengal
  - **Maithri:** Andhra Pradesh
  - **Mohalla Committees:** Maharashtra
  - **Friends of Police:** Tamil Nadu

## Way Forward

- Any **volunteers** under the Community Policing **should be allowed to help police, but not to take the role of police.** The criminal background of the volunteers must be checked before their deployment.
- Community policing **is a philosophy, not a program.** If the philosophy of community policing is not understood by all of those that are involved, then the programs will not succeed.
- The biggest obstacle that community policing and the community-based programs have to face is the idea of change. **Officers have to change the concept of policing and citizens** have to be willing to accept that change.

**Source: TH**

# UNITE Aware Platform

## Why in News

India, in collaboration with the **United Nations (UN)**, has launched a technology platform to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers who are operating across the world.

- The launch of the UNITE AWARE platform came as India assumed the **Presidency of the 15-nation UN Security Council** for the month of August.

## Key Points

- **About the UNITE Aware:**

    - **Aim:** This project aims to demonstrate the impact of **modern surveillance technology** on the **detection of asymmetric threats.**
    - **Situational Awareness Software Programme:** It utilises modern surveillance technology for real time threat assessments to peacekeepers in maintaining security.

        - This will access live video and satellite imagery, and in very volatile circumstances can also deliver early warnings to peacekeepers.
        - It can also record data on critical incidents and events and follow daily operational activities.
        - Using the platform, the entire peacekeeping operation can be visualised, coordinated, and monitored on a real time basis.
    - **Partnership:** India has developed the technology platform in partnership with the **UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations** and the **Department of Operational Support.**
    - **Deployment:** The platform will be deployed initially in four UN Peacekeeping Missions: **MINUSMA (Mali), UNMISS (South Sudan), UNFICYP (Cyprus)** and **AMISOM (Somalia).**
    - **India's Contribution:** India has contributed USD 1.64 million for this project.
- **UN Peacekeeping:**

    - **Joint Effort:** It is a joint effort between the **Department of Peace Operations** and the **Department of Operational Support.**

        - It deploys troops and police from around the world, integrating them with civilian peacekeepers to address a range of mandates set by the **UN Security Council (UNSC)** and the **General Assembly.**
        - It helps countries navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace.
    - **Financial Contribution:** The **financial resources of UN Peacekeeping operations** are the collective responsibility of UN Member States.
    - **Legal Obligation:** According to the UN Charter, every **Member State is legally obligated** to pay their respective share for peacekeeping.
    - **India's Contribution:**

        - India is a major contributing nation to UN peacekeeping activities.

            - Currently, there are 5506 troops and police from India who have been deployed to nine different UN peacekeeping missions, the second highest amongst troop-contributing countries.
        - More than 200,000 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948.
        - India has a long tradition of sending **women on UN peacekeeping missions.**

            - In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN peacekeeping mission.

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