

**If you do what you always did, you will get what you always got. ~Anonymous**

**NGT GAVE NOTICE TO 4 STATES OVER BIOMEDICAL WASTE DISPOSAL**

- The National Green Tribunal issued notice to Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana and Punjab governments over improper collection, segregation and disposal of biomedical and solid waste in the States.
- A Bench headed by **NGT Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar** sought the response from the States and restrained them from handing over any biomedical waste to ragpickers.
- It also directed them to provide data as to how many hospitals, private and government, have been inspected for violation of the **Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules, 2016**, along with the reports.
- Each of the State pollution control boards will also provide information on how many waste processing facilities exist in these States with their complete detail," the Bench said.

Indiscriminate disposal of bio-medical waste and exposure to such waste poses serious threat to the environment and human health that requires specific treatment and management prior to its final disposal.

**NGT:**

National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 (NGT) is an Act of the Parliament of India which enables creation of a special tribunal to handle the expeditious disposal of the cases pertaining to environmental issues.

It draws inspiration from the India's constitutional provision of Article 21, which assures the citizens of India the right to a healthy environment.

The Tribunal's dedicated jurisdiction in environmental matters shall provide speedy environmental justice and help reduce the burden of litigation in the higher courts.

The Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil

Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice. The tribunal is mandated to make and Endeavour for disposal of applications or appeals finally within 6 months of filing of the same.

**Members:**

The tribunal shall consist of a full time chairperson, judicial members and expert members. **The minimum number of judicial and expert member prescribed is ten in each category and maximum number is twenty** in each category. Another important provision included in the law is that the chairperson, if find necessary, may invite any person or more person having specialized knowledge and experience in a particular case before the tribunal to assist the same in that case.

**A judge of the Supreme Court of India or Chief Justice of High Court** is eligible to be Chairperson or judicial member of the Tribunal. Even existing or retired judge of High Court is qualified to be appointed as a Judicial Member.

A person is qualified to be an expert member if he has Master of Science with a Doctorate degree or Master of Engineering or Master of Technology and has an experience of fifteen years in the relevant field including five years practical experiences in the field of environment and forests in a reputed National level institutions.

Anyone who has administrative experience of fifteen years including experience of five years in dealing with environment matters in the Central Government or a State Government or in National or State level institution is also eligible to be an expert member.

**Jurisdiction:** The jurisdiction of NGT emanates from following Acts

1. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974;
2. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977;
3. The Forest (Conservation) Act,
4. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981;

5. The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;
6. The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991;
7. The Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

#### **FUTURISTIC COMBAT VEHICLE PLAN A GAME CHANGER: ARMY**

The two ambitious projects to equip the Army with futuristic combat vehicles are a game changer for the Indian industry.

The Army has a requirement for more than 2,600 vehicles.

The **Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV)** and **Future Ready Combat Vehicle (FRCV)** programmes are going to be the biggest game changers for the Indian Army as well as defense industry

#### **What are FICV and FRCV?**

The FICV is an ambitious effort to indigenously design and manufacture a futuristic infantry vehicle by the private industry by roping in foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers

FRCV is a tender for the procurement of futuristic tanks through the Strategic Partnership model

FRCV would replace the **Russian T-72** tanks presently in service.

FRCV programme would not “scuttle” the indigenous Arjun tanks as the service had already inducted the **Arjun Mk-1 tanks**.

#### **FRANCE WANTS TO WORK WITH INDIA IN INDOPACIFIC**

France will like to deepen cooperation with India in the Indo-Pacific bilaterally and not as a part of a multilateral arrangement like the recently convened “quadrilateral” between India, U.S., Japan and Australia.

France’s Ambassador said, “We have a growing cooperation in the Indian Ocean, where both India and France have focal positions, and we are in the process of forming a defence and security partnership in the Indo-Pacific”

This new cooperation would be discussed as part of the strategic partnership along with cooperation in counter-terrorism, defence hardware, nuclear energy, and space

cooperation during the upcoming visit of Foreign Minister to India. However, senior diplomats clarified that France and India have a “special and specific” interest in the Indian Ocean, and would prefer to conduct their exchanges across the Indo-Pacific bilaterally.

- France is the only western country with large territory in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) including the Reunion Islands, that spans about two million square kilometers of an Exclusive Economic Zone (FEZ), and it has a population of one million French Citizens in the region, including about 30% of Indian origin.

- The French navy maintains bases in the UAE, Djibouti as well as in Reunion, with a total of 20,000 forces permanently based in the IOR. In addition, said the official, France is India’s oldest strategic partner, and has conducted India’s first international ‘Varuna’ joint naval exercises since 1983.

On the question about whether France would consider joining the quadrilateral, He said, the idea would not be for France to join some other formation, but for others to join what India and France are already doing.

- France’s President Emmanuel Macron is scheduled to visit India in “early 2018.”

#### **HIGHWAYS TO BE RATED ON SAFETY FEATURES**

In a bid to make Indian roads safer and curb fatalities, a global charity unveiled an India Road Assessment Programme (IndiaRAP) that will rate highways’ safety levels, and seek to eliminate the most unsafe roads.

- As India invests in large-scale road upgrades across the country, maximizing the safety of this investment will deliver strong transport, health and economic benefits.

- Since 2010, teams from the global organization have already undertaken star rating assessments on more than 10,000 km of roads across several states in India.

- The ratings are assigned on the basis of the level of safety which is ‘built-in’ to a road for vehicle occupants, motorcyclists, bicyclists

and pedestrians. Five-star roads are the safest while one-star roads are the least safe.

The IndiaRAP programme is being supported by FedEx Express and will be hosted by the “Asian Institute of Transport Development, and will work with government agencies as well as investors, researchers and NGOs to assess existing highways and promote the use of better design to make roads safer.

#### DELHI TO MOVE FROM BS-IV TO BS -VI

Taking into account the serious pollution levels in Delhi and adjoining areas, Petroleum Ministry in consultation with Public Oil Marketing Companies has decided for preponement of BS-VI grade auto fuels in NCT of Delhi w.e.f 01.04.2018 instead of 01.04.2020. This measure is expected to help mitigate the problem of air pollution in NCT of Delhi and surrounding areas.

#### What needs to be done to upgrade from BS-IV

BS-V requires a key fitment in the engine; BS-VI needs one more, but each comes with its set of problems

##### FOR BS V: DIESEL PARTICULATE FILTER

**WHAT:** DPF is a cylinder mounted vertically inside the engine compartment. Its function is to remove particulate matter or soot, from the diesel exhaust. It needs temperatures of 600°C – difficult in Indian conditions

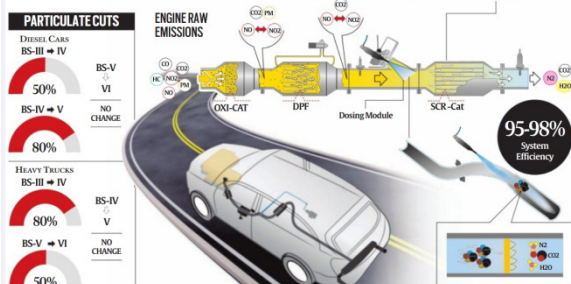
##### WHY A PROBLEM:

Small cars (popular in India) with limited bonnet space would need major re-design to accommodate DPF. Making bonnet bigger may lead to car breaching the sub-4m mark, losing excise benefits

##### FOR BS VI: SELECTIVE CATALYTIC REDUCTION TECHNOLOGY

**WHAT:** SCR, or selective catalytic reduction module reduces oxides of nitrogen by injecting an aqueous solution (AUS 32) into the system. AUS 32 contains ammonia, for which a separate container needs to be put

**WHY A PROBLEM:** An anti-defect mechanism is needed to put the vehicle into limp mode if AUS 32 is not re-filled. Separately, infrastructure is needed for countrywide supply of AUS 32.



Introduced in the year 2000, the Bharat norms are emission control standards put in place by the government to keep a check on air pollution. Based on the European regulations (Euro norms), these standards set specifications/limits for the release of air pollutants from equipment using internal combustion engines, including vehicles. Typically, the higher the stage, the more stringent will be the norms.

The **particulate matter emission in BS-V and BS-VI is same for diesel cars though it is 80% less than BS IV.**

The nitrogen oxide (NOx) level is, however, 55% less in BS-VI over BS-V which in itself is 28% lower than BS IV.

The sulphur content in fuel norms for diesel and petrol under both BS-V and -VI standards does not change at 10 ppm, though it is substantially less than 50 mandated for both the fuels under BS-IV.

Rolling out the BS VI standard nationally, skipping BS V, has significant cost implications for fuel producers and the auto-mobile industry, but its positive impact on public health would more than compensate for the investment.

#### INDIA'S FIRST CEZ AT JNPT, MAHARASHTRA

The Union Government has given go-ahead for setting up India's first mega coastal economic zone (CEZ) at **Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT)** in Maharashtra.

The first of its kind mega CEZ will stretch along north Konkan region spread across Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Nashik and Raigarh. About 45 companies across auto, telecom and IT sectors will soon bid for 200 hectares of land to set up manufacturing units in zone.

#### Coastal Economic Zone (CEZ):

CEZs are spatial economic regions comprising group of coastal districts or districts with strong linkage to ports in region to tap into synergies with planned industrial corridor projects.

These zones are expected to provide business-friendly ecosystem including ease of exporting and importing, swift decisions on applications for environmental clearances and speedy water and electricity connections.

The plan envisages a total investment of Rs 15,000 crore in the first phase and creation of more than 1.5 lakh jobs.

The idea is to attract large firms interested in serving the export markets as they would bring with them technology, capital, good management and links to the world markets. This in turn would help create an ecosystem around them in which productive small and medium firms would emerge and flourish.

The Union Cabinet had last year approved setting up of **14 mega CEZs** under the National Perspective Plan of the **Sagarmala Programme**, with an aim to promote development of industrial clusters around ports, **encourage port led development, reduce logistics cost and time for movement of cargo, enhance global competitiveness of India's manufacturing sector and create hubs of job creation.**

**INDIA RANKED 14<sup>TH</sup> IN CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE INDEX**

Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2018 has been released by environmental organisation Germanwatch. The report was made public on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change negotiations (COP23) in Bonn.

#### **Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI):**

The Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) is an annual publication by Germanwatch and Climate Action Network Europe.

It evaluates the climate protection performance of 58 countries, responsible for over 90% of global energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. CCPI 2013 publication covers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the fossil fuels, except emissions from the shipping industry.

50% of the evaluation is based on emissions trend, 30% on emissions level and 20% on national and international climate policy assessments made by more than 200 experts.

India is ranked 14th, an improvement from its 20th position last year. China, with its high emissions and growing energy use over the past five years, still ranks 41st.

The bottom three of the index is formed by Korea (58), Iran (59) and Saudi Arabia (rank 60), all of which are showing hardly any progress or ambition in reducing its emissions and energy use.

**UDAN-RCS II PHASE: BOOST IN J&K, NORTH EAST**

Moving to step up air connectivity to remote and strategic locations in the North-East and Jammu & Kashmir, the government has identified 24 airports and helipads for the

second phase of the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)

Of the 24 airports and helipads identified by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, nine are in Arunachal Pradesh, five each in Assam and Manipur, two in Jammu & Kashmir and one each in Meghalaya, Tripura, and Sikkim

#### **Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS):**

##### **Objectivity:**

1. The primary objective of RCS is to facilitate / stimulate regional air connectivity by making it cheap and affordable.
2. Promoting affordability of regional air connectivity is envisioned under RCS by supporting airline operators through:
3. Concessions by Central Government, State Governments (reference deemed to include Union Territories as well, unless explicitly specified otherwise) and airport operators to reduce the cost of airline operations on regional routes / other support measures and
4. Financial (viability gap funding or VGF) support to meet the gap, if any, between the cost of airline operations and expected revenues on such routes.

##### **Significance:**

- Un-served and underserved airports will have better connectivity.
- Promotes cheap, convenient and affordable flying.
- It will boost tourism, employment opportunities and balanced regional growth.
- It will give impetus to India's ambition of becoming third largest aviation market by 2020

The success of the scheme requires Centre-State cooperation. States are required to provide free land and operational infrastructure. Similarly, the centre has to forego excise on aviation fuel and service tax on tickets. So, the success of this scheme ultimately rests upon the commitments of governments both at the Union and the state levels.

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