



News Analysis (07 Apr, 2021)

 drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/07-04-2021/print

Central Vigilance Commission

Why in News

Recently, the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)** has modified the guidelines pertaining to the transfer and posting of officials in the vigilance units of government organisations, restricting their tenure to three years at one place.

There are 3 principal actors at the national level in the fight against corruption: the **Lokpal**, the CVC and the **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)**.

Key Points

- **The Guidelines:**

- The **tenure of personnel in a vigilance unit at one place** including lower level functionaries, should be **limited to three years only**.
The **tenure may be extended to three more years**, although at a different place of posting.
- The personnel, who have **completed more than five years** in vigilance units at the same place, should be **shifted on top priority basis**.
- After transfer from the vigilance unit, **a compulsory cooling off period of three years should be observed** before a person can be considered again for posting in the vigilance unit of the organisation concerned.

- **Reason:**

- It has been observed that undue long stay of an official in such a sensitive post at one place, has the **potential of developing vested interests, apart from giving rise to unnecessary complaints/allegations etc.**
- To **ensure transparency, objectivity, and uniformity in approach.**

Central Vigilance Commission

- **About:**
 - Central Vigilance Commission is conceived to be the **apex vigilance institution, free of control from any executive authority**, monitoring all vigilance activity under the Central Government.
 - It **advises various authorities** in Central Government organizations in planning, executing, reviewing and reforming their vigilance work.
- **Background:**
 - The CVC was set up by the Government in February, 1964 on the recommendations of the **Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by K. Santhanam**.
 - The Parliament enacted **Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003 (CVC Act)** conferring statutory status on the CVC.
 - It is an **independent body** which is **only responsible to the Parliament**. It submits its report to the **President of India**.
- **Functions:**
 - Exercise superintendence over the functioning of the **Delhi Special Police Establishment (CBI)** insofar as it relates to the investigation of offences under the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**.
 - The CVC receives complaints on corruption or misuse of office and recommends appropriate action.
 - Following institutions, bodies, or a person can approach CVC: **Central government, Lokpal and Whistle blowers**.
 - CVC has **no investigation wing of its own as it depends on the CBI and the Chief Vigilance Officers (CVO)** of central organizations, while CBI has its own investigation wing drawing its powers from **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**.
- **Composition:**

It is a **multi-member Commission** consisting of a **Central Vigilance Commissioner (Chairperson)** and not more than **2 Vigilance Commissioners (Member)**.
- **Appointment of Commissioners:**

They are **appointed by the President of India** on the recommendations of a committee consisting of Prime Minister, Union Home Minister and Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha (if there is no Leader of Opposition then the leader of the single largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha).
- **Term:**

Their term is **4 years or 65 years**, whichever is earlier.

- **Removal:**

- Removal is **done by the President** on grounds of bankruptcy, unsound mind, infirmity of body or mind, sentenced to imprisonment for a crime, or engages in paid employment or has acquired financial or other interest that might affect his judgment.
- He can also be removed for **proved misbehaviour** or incapacity if the **Supreme Court** inquiry finds him guilty.
- They can also resign by writing to the President.

Source:TH

The Tribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021

Why in News

Recently, the President promulgated **Tribunal Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance 2021** through which the **Appellate authorities under nine laws have been replaced with High Courts.**

The Ordinance has amended the **Finance Act 2017** to include provisions related to the composition of search-cum-selection committees, and term of office of members in the Act itself.

The Finance Act 2017

It **empowered the central government** to notify rules on qualifications of members, terms and conditions of their service, and composition of search-cum-selection committees for 19 tribunals (such as Customs, Excise, and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal).

Key Points

- **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:
 - Chief Justice of India, or a Supreme Court Judge nominated by him, as the Chairperson (with casting vote),
 - Secretaries nominated by the central government,
 - The sitting or outgoing Chairperson, or a retired Supreme Court Judge, or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court.
 - The Secretary of the Ministry under which the Tribunal is constituted (with no voting right).
- **Term of Office:**
 - The term of office for the **Chairperson** of the tribunals will be of **four years or till the attainment of the age of seventy years**, whichever is earlier.
 - For **other members** of the tribunals, the term will be of **four years or till the age of sixty-seven years**, whichever is earlier.
- **The Nine Laws (Replacement of Appellate Authorities/Tribunals):**
 - The Cinematograph Act, 1952.
 - The Trade Marks Act, 1999.
 - The Copyright Act, 1957.
 - The Customs Act, 1962.
 - The Patents Act, 1970.
 - The Airports Authority of India Act, 1994.
 - The Control of National Highways (Land and Traffic) Act, 2002.
 - The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
- **Reason for Replacing Tribunals:**
 - **Poor Adjudication & Delay:**

The **quality of adjudication has been underwhelming** in most cases, the **delays have been substantial** because the **government has struggled to find competent persons willing to accept positions on these tribunals**, and **litigation has actually become more expensive**, as these tribunals added another layer to it.
 - **Litigations Against Them:**

There has been **incessant litigation since 1985 by advocate bar associations** against the tribunals over serious questions of their independence from the executive.
- **Related Concern:**

The **cases with High courts could increase**.

Tribunals

- **About:**

- It 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 term ‘**Tribunal**’ is derived from the word ‘**Tribunes**’, which means ‘Magistrates of the Classical Roman Republic’.

Tribunal is referred to as the office of the ‘Tribunes’ i.e., a Roman official under the monarchy and the republic with the function of protecting the citizen from arbitrary action by the aristocrat magistrates.
 - A Tribunal, generally, is any person or **institution having an authority to judge, adjudicate on, or to determine claims or disputes** – whether or not it is called a tribunal in its title.

- **Constitutional Provisions:**

- Tribunals were not originally a part of the Constitution.
- The **42nd Amendment Act** 1976 introduced provision for tribunals in accordance with the recommendations of the **Swaran Singh Committee**.
- The Amendment introduced **Part XIV-A to the Constitution**, which deals with ‘Tribunals’ and contains two articles:
 - **Article 323A:**

It deals with **Administrative Tribunals**. These are quasi-judicial institutions that resolve disputes related to the recruitment and service conditions of persons engaged in public service.
 - **Article 323B:**

It deals with **tribunals for other subjects** such as Taxation, Industrial and labour, Foreign exchange, import and export, Land reforms, Food, Ceiling on urban property, Elections to Parliament and state legislatures, Rent and tenancy rights.

Source:TH

Interim Appointments for CBI Director

Why in News

Recently, the **Supreme Court** told the government that **interim appointments to the post of CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) Director cannot go on.**

A **petition** was filed in the Court, objecting to the appointment of interim CBI Director following the retirement of the regular CBI director.

Key Points

- **Arguments of the Petitioner:**
 - The **government had failed to appoint a regular Director** through the high-power **selection committee of the Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India and Leader of Opposition.**
 - An interim appointment through an executive order was **not envisaged in the statutory scheme of the 1946 Act (Delhi Special Police Establishment Act of 1946).**
 - Urged the court to direct the introduction of a mechanism to ensure that the **process of selection of CBI Director is completed one or two months in advance** of the retirement of the incumbent.
 - In this context, the petitioner referred to the case of *Anjali Bhardwaj v. Union of India (2019)* - related to **vacancies at Central Information Commission and State Information Commissions.**
 - In this case, the Supreme Court held that “it would be apposite that the process for filling up of a particular vacancy is initiated 1 to 2 months before the date on which the vacancy is likely to occur so that **there is not much time-lag between the occurrence of vacancy and filling up of the said vacancy.**”
- **About the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI):**
 - The CBI was **set up in 1963** by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Now, the CBI comes under the administrative control of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) of the **Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.**
 - The establishment of the CBI was **recommended by the Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption (1962–1964).**
 - The CBI is **not a statutory body.** It derives its powers from the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.**
 - The CBI is the **main investigating agency of the Central Government.**
 - It also provides **assistance to the Central Vigilance Commission and Lokpal.**
 - It is also the **nodal police agency in India which coordinates investigation on behalf of Interpol Member countries.**

- **Issues in the functioning of CBI:**

- **Legal Ambiguity:** Lack of clearly demarcated spheres of functioning and overlapping areas of influence severely comprises both the integrity and efficacy of the institution.

Under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act 1946, for conduct or continuance of investigation into offences committed within the territory of a state, **consent of the state is crucial.**

- **Weak Human Resource:** Massive shortage of officers at the CBI may hamper quality of investigations and increase pendency, a Parliamentary panel said in the year 2020.

The panel observed that **789 posts in executive ranks, 77 posts of law officers and 415 posts of technical officers and staff** were lying vacant.

- **Lack of Adequate Investment:**

- Inadequate investment in personnel, training, equipment or other support structures, adversely hampers professional discharge of duties.
- High quality research and training are crucial for maintaining an effective modern police force imparting it with the operational ability to meaningfully respond to ever changing societal needs.

- **Accountability:**

- In the past few decades massive strides have been made in imbibing traits of transparency and accountability into public life and institutions.
- Of equal importance is the need to maintain morale of the force by enforcing stringent internal accountability.

- **Political and Administrative Interference:**

Given that the superintendence and control of the agency continues to, in large measure, lie with the executive by virtue of Section 4 of the Delhi **Special Police Establishment Act 1946**, the possibility of it being used as a political instrument remains ever present.

Way Forward

- There is a need to ensure that CBI operates under a formal, modern legal framework that has been written for a contemporary investigative agency. A new CBI Act should be promulgated that ensures the autonomy of CBI while at the same time improving the quality of supervision.
- There is a need to administratively protect CBI from political interference. For this to happen, the new Act must specify criminal culpability for government interference.

Source: TH

Direct Payment of Minimum Support Price

Why in News

After the recent orders from the **Food Corporation of India (FCI)**, the farm unions warned that the Centre's insistence on **direct payment of Minimum Support Price (MSP)** could derail the **crop procurement process**.

Key Points

- **Orders from FCI:**

- **Direct Payment of Minimum Support Price (MSP):**

- The Centre wants to **make direct online MSP payment to farmers' bank accounts**, to remove middlemen from the process.

MSP is the price that government agencies pay whenever they procure the particular crop.

- Currently, **arhtiyas (commission agents)** get the payments in their accounts, which they in turn pay to farmers through cheques.
- The **Centre has to pay 2.5% commission to arhtiyas** who facilitate procurement of the crop from farmers to government agencies and take commission for that from the government.

- **Jamabandhi System:**

- FCI order stipulates that tenant farmers and sharecroppers must produce a jamabandhi.
- Jamabandhi is a **legal agreement** proving that they have the right to till leased land, in order to get paid for procured crops.

- The FCI's also proposed to **tighten quality requirements for wheat and paddy procurement**.

- **Significance:**

- **Transparency and Accountability:** The FCI has insisted that direct payment to farmers' bank accounts, bypassing the powerful arhatiyas or commission agents, will lead to greater **transparency and accountability**.
- **Non-Discriminatory in Nature:** There is no selection bias in choosing the beneficiaries based on attributes like caste and land size.

- **Challenges to the FCI Order:**

- Since arhtiyas play a key role in the Punjab and Haryana farm ecosystem by providing farm loans, the move has been **opposed by a large section of farmers, as well as the Punjab government.**
- According to farm unions, implementing direct payment in haste can lead to many complex problems that will exclude so many farmers from getting their price of the crop.
- Thousands of sharecroppers do not have Jamabandhi or legal agreements and will be hit hard.
- The FCI's proposals to **tighten quality requirements for wheat and paddy procurement** are also being opposed.
- At a broader level, farmers connected their issues with the FCI with their existing demands to repeal the **farm laws** and enact a legal guarantee for procurement of all crops and minimum support prices.

Food Corporation of India

- FCI is a **statutory body** set up in 1965 by the **Food Corporations Act 1964 under Department of Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.**
- It was established against the backdrop of a major shortage of grains, especially wheat. Simultaneously, the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)** was created in 1965 to **recommend remunerative prices (MSP) to farmers.** CACP is an attached office of the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.**
- It has primary duty to undertake purchase, store, move/transport, distribute and sell food grains and other foodstuffs.
- **Objectives of FCI:**
 - To provide **remunerative prices** to farmers.
 - Ensuring **food security** of the nation by maintaining satisfactory levels of **operational buffer stocks** of food grains.
 - Distribution of food grains throughout the country for the **Public Distribution System.**
 - Effective **Price Support Operations** for safeguarding the interest of farmers.

Source: TH

World Economic Outlook: IMF

Why in News

The latest edition of the **International Monetary Fund's (IMF) World Economic Outlook** has raised its **Financial Year (FY)** 2021 growth forecast for India to 12.5% from **11.5% estimated earlier in January 2021**.

Key Points

- **Indian Economy:**
 - Indian economy is expected to grow by **12.5% in 2021 and 6.9% in 2022**.
In **2020**, India's economy witnessed **an estimated contraction of 8%**.
 - Growth rate for India in 2021 is **stronger than that of China**.
China was the **only major economy to have a positive growth rate of 2.3% in 2020**, and is expected to grow by 8.6% in 2021 and 5.6% in 2022.
- **Global Economy:**
 - The IMF predicted stronger recovery in 2021 and 2022 with growth projected to be **6% in 2021 and 4.4% in 2022**.
In **2020**, the global economy **contracted by 3.3%**
 - The contraction for 2020 is 1.1% points smaller than previous projection, **reflecting:**
 - **Higher-than-expected growth outturns in the second half of the year** for most regions after **lockdowns** were eased and as economies adapted to new ways of working.
 - **Additional fiscal support in a few large economies** and the anticipated vaccine-powered recovery in the second half of the year.

- **Suggestions:**
 - **Health Care:**

The emphasis should be on escaping the health crisis by **prioritising health care spending, on vaccinations, treatments, and health care infrastructure**. Fiscal support should be well targeted to affected households and firms.
 - **Accommodative Monetary Policy:**

Monetary policy should remain **accommodative** (where **inflation** is well behaved), while proactively addressing financial stability risks using macroprudential tools.
 - **Tailored Approach:**
 - **Policymakers will need to continue supporting their economies** while dealing with more limited policy space and higher debt levels than prior to the pandemic.
 - This requires better **targeted measures to leave space for prolonged support if needed. With multi-speed recoveries, a tailored approach is necessary, with policies well-calibrated to the stage of the pandemic**, the strength of the economic recovery, and the structural characteristics of individual countries.
 - **Priorities:**

The priorities should include **green infrastructure investment** to help mitigate **climate change**, digital infrastructure investment to boost productive capacity and strengthening social assistance to arrest **rising inequality**.

International Monetary Fund

- The IMF was set up along with the **World Bank** after the **Second World War** to assist in the **reconstruction of war-ravaged countries**.

The two organisations were agreed to be set up at a conference in Bretton Woods in the US. Hence, they are known as the **Bretton Woods twins**.
- Created in 1945, the IMF is governed by and accountable to the 189 countries that make up its near-global membership. **India joined on 27th December, 1945**.
- The IMF's primary **purpose is to ensure the stability of the international monetary system** – the system of exchange rates and international payments that enables countries (and their citizens) to transact with each other.

The Fund's mandate was updated in 2012 to include all macroeconomic and financial sector issues that bear on global stability.
- **Reports by IMF:**
 - **Global Financial Stability Report**
 - World Economic Outlook

World Economic Outlook

- It is a survey by the IMF that is usually **published twice a year** in the months of April and October.
- It **analyzes and predicts global economic developments** during the near and medium term.
- In response to the growing demand for more frequent forecast updates, the WEO Update is published in January and July between the two main WEO publications released usually in April and October.

Source:IE

Integrated Health Information Platform

Why in News

The **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** has launched the **Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP)**, that is the next generation highly **refined version of the presently used Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP)**.

IHHP is an **advanced disease surveillance system**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - It will **track 33 diseases (as compared to the earlier 18 diseases)** and will ensure near-real-time data in digital mode.
 - It will **provide a health information system** developed for real time, case-based information, integrated analytics, advanced visualization capability.
 - Data will be provided in real time through:
 - **Grassroots healthcare workers** through their gadgets (tablets);
 - **Doctors at the PHC (Primary Healthcare Centre)/CHC (Community Health Centre)/DH (District Hospital)** when the citizens seek healthcare; and
 - **Diagnostic labs** which will provide data on the tests carried out.
 - **Key Features:**
 - **Real time data reporting** (along through mobile application); **accessible at all levels** (from villages, states and central level).
 - Advanced data modelling & analytical tools.
 - **Geographic Information System (GIS) enabled Graphical representation of data** into integrated dashboard.
 - Role & hierarchy-based feedback & alert mechanisms.
 - **Geo-tagging** of reporting health facilities.
 - Scope for data integration with other health programs.

- **Significance:**

- The **collection of authentic data will become easy** as it comes directly from the village/block level; the last mile from the country.
- This digital platform for scouting the earliest signs of disease spread in the smallest of villages and blocks in the country will **immensely help in nipping in the bud any potential outbreak or epidemic.**
- It is in sync with the **National Digital Health Mission (NDHM).**
NDHM aims to develop the backbone necessary to support the integrated digital health infrastructure of the country.
- India's **information system for precision public health** is essential for delivering 'the right intervention at the right time, every time to the right population.'
In recent years, the use of technology to enhance precision in public health, including the use of pathogen genomics, enhanced surveillance and informatics, and targeted interventions has steadily gone up.
- With its implementation, India is marching towards **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in healthcare through use of technology.
- This refined digital surveillance platform will help to provide and connect data and move towards '**One Health**' approach.
One Health is an approach to designing and implementing programmes, policies, legislation and research in which multiple sectors communicate and work together to achieve better public health outcomes.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme

- The Integrated Disease Surveillance Project (IDSP) was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in assistance with the **World Bank**, in 2004.
- It **continued as the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP)** during 12th Plan (2012–17) under the **National Health Mission** with a domestic budget.
- Under it, a Central Surveillance Unit (CSU) at Delhi, State Surveillance Units (SSU) at all State/Union Territories (UTs) head quarters and District Surveillance Units (DSU) at all Districts have been established.
- **Objectives:**
 - To strengthen/maintain decentralized laboratory based and IT enabled disease surveillance systems for epidemic prone diseases to monitor disease trends.
 - To detect and respond to outbreaks in the early rising phase through trained Rapid Response Teams (RRTs).

- **Programme Components:**

- Integration and decentralization of surveillance activities through **establishment of surveillance units** at Centre, State and District level.
- **Human Resource Development** – Training of State Surveillance Officers (SSOs), District Surveillance Officers (DSOs), RRT and other medical and paramedical staff on principles of disease surveillance.
- **Use of Information Communication Technology** for collection, collation, compilation, analysis and dissemination of data.
- Strengthening of public health laboratories.
- Inter sectoral Coordination for **zoonotic diseases**.

Source: PIB

AI Portal SUPACE

Why in News

Recently, the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)** launched an **Artificial Intelligence (AI) based portal ‘SUPACE’** in the judicial system aimed at assisting judges with legal research.

- **SUPACE** is short for **Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court’s Efficiency**.
- Earlier, the **E-Courts Project** was conceptualised on the basis of "**National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Indian Judiciary - 2005**" submitted by the **e-Committee of the Supreme Court**.

Key Points

- **About SUPACE:**
 - It is **a tool that collects relevant facts and laws and makes them available to a judge**.
 - It is **not designed to take decisions, but only to process facts and to make them available to judges** looking for an input for a decision.
 - Initially, it **will be used on an experimental basis by the judges of Bombay and Delhi High Courts** who deal with criminal matters.

- **Significance:**
 - It will **produce results customized to the need of the case** and the way the judge thinks.
 - This will be **time saving**. It will **help the judiciary and the court in reducing delays and pendency of cases**.
 - **AI** will present **a more streamlined, cost effective and time bound** means to the **fundamental right of access to justice**.
 - It will make the **service delivery mechanism transparent and cost-efficient**.
- **Challenge:**

Redundancy of certain posts after introduction of SUPACE.

Since it is intended to do what the human mind can do, but much more efficiently and methodically, there is apprehension in the generation of unemployment.

E-Courts Project

- **About:**
 - It was conceptualized with a vision **to transform the Indian Judiciary by ICT (Information and Communication Technology) enablement of Courts**.
 - It is a **pan-India Project**, monitored and **funded by the Department of Justice**, Ministry of Law and Justice, **for the District Courts** across the country.
- **Objectives of the Project:**
 - To provide efficient & time-bound citizen-centric services delivery.
 - To develop, install & implement decision support systems in courts.
 - To automate the processes to provide transparency and accessibility of information to its stakeholders.
 - To enhance judicial productivity, both qualitatively & quantitatively, to make the justice delivery system affordable, accessible, cost-effective, predictable, reliable and transparent.

Source:IE

Chenab Bridge

Why in News

Recently, **Indian Railways** completed the **arch closure of the iconic Chenab Bridge in Jammu & Kashmir**.

Key Points

About Chenab Bridge:

- It is the **world's highest railway bridge** and is part of the **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project (USBRL)**.
The Project was **declared as a Project of National Importance in March 2002**.
- This bridge is **1,315-metre long** and is the highest railway bridge in the world being **359 metres above the river bed level**.
- The completion of the steel arch is a major leap towards the completion of the **111 km long winding stretch from Katra to Banihal**.
It is arguably the **biggest civil-engineering challenge** faced by any railway project in India in recent history.



Unique Features of this Bridge:

- Bridge designed to **withstand high wind speed up to 266 Km/Hour**.
- Bridge designed for **blast load in consultation with DRDO** for the first time in India.
- Bridge designed to **bear earthquake forces of highest intensity zone-V** in India.
- First time on Indian Railways, **Phased Array Ultrasonic Testing machine** used for testing of welds.
- First time on Indian Railways, **National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)** accredited lab established at site **for weld testing**.
- Extensive **health monitoring and warning systems** planned through state of art instrumentation.

Chenab River

- **Source:** It rises in the upper Himalayas in the **Lahaul and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh** state.

The river is **formed by the confluence of two rivers, Chandra and Bhaga**, at Tandi, 8 km southwest of Keylong, in the Lahaul and Spiti district.

- The **Bhaga river originates from Surya taal lake**, which is situated a few kilometers west of the Bara-lacha la pass in Himachal Pradesh.
 - The **Chandra river originates from glaciers east of the same pass** (near Chandra Taal).
- **Flows Through:** It flows through the Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir into the plains of Punjab, Pakistan, before flowing into the Indus River.
 - Some of the **important projects/dams on Chenab:**
 - **Ratle Hydro Electric Project**
 - **Salal Dam- hydroelectric power project** near Reasi
 - **Dul Hasti Hydroelectric Plant-** power project in Kishtwar District
 - **Pakal Dul Dam (under construction)-** on a tributary **Marusadar River** in Kishtwar District.



Source:PIB