

17th July 2023

EXERCISE NOMADIC ELEPHANT: BILATERAL JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE BETWEEN INDIA AND MONGOLIA

GS II: IR

Source [PIB](#)

The 15th Edition of Exercise Nomadic Elephant:

- This is the 15th edition of the bilateral joint military exercise between India and Mongolia.
- The exercise is conducted annually, with each country hosting it alternatively in Mongolia and India.

Participating Forces:

- The exercise involves soldiers from the Mongolian Armed Forces Unit 084 and Indian Army soldiers from the JAMMU AND KASHMIR LIGHT INFANTRY Regiment.

Objectives:

- The exercise aims to build positive military relations between India and Mongolia.
- It facilitates the exchange of best practices and the development of interoperability, bonhomie, camaraderie, and friendship between the two armies.

Focus on Counter-Terrorism Operations:

- The primary theme of the exercise revolves around counter-terrorism operations in mountainous terrain.
- The training is conducted under the United Nations mandate, emphasizing the importance of combating terrorism effectively.

Scope and Training Activities:

- The exercise involves a Platoon level Field Training Exercise (FTX), providing hands-on training in realistic scenarios.
- Training activities include endurance training, reflex firing, room intervention, small team tactics, and rock craft training.
- Through these activities, soldiers from both sides have the opportunity to learn from each other's operational experiences and enhance their skills and capabilities.

Key Facts about Mongolia:

Location & Borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mongolia is a landlocked country situated in East and Central Asia.• It shares borders with Russia to the north and China to the south, east, and west.
Land & Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mongolia is the world's second-largest landlocked country.• It is known as the most sparsely populated country globally.
Traditional Nomadic Herding & Ethnic Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The majority of the population still follows the traditional practice of nomadic herding.• Mongolia is home to diverse ethnic groups, including Mongols, Kazakhs, and <u>Tuvans</u>.
Nicknames & Landmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mongolia is commonly referred to as the "Land of the Eternal Blue Sky" due to its vast open skies.• It is also known as the "Land of the Horse" because of its historical and cultural association with horses.
Landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The country's landscape is characterized by the vast Gobi Desert in the south.• In the west, the towering Altai Mountains dominate the scenery.
Ulaanbaatar & Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Despite rapid modernization, the capital city of Ulaanbaatar still maintains a strong traditional Mongolian identity.• It features numerous historical temples, monasteries, and cultural landmarks that provide insights into Mongolia's rich heritage.
Historical Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mongolia was once the center of the Mongol Empire, which held the distinction of being the largest contiguous empire in history.• The Mongol Empire spanned from Europe to Asia and left a lasting impact on world history.

UPSC FACTS ABOUT NOMADIC ELEPHANTS

India and Mongolia are participating in a combined military exercise.

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The 14th iteration of Nomadic Elephant took held in Bakloh Cantonment, Himachal Pradesh, in October 2019.

The 084 Airborne-Special Task Battalion represented the Mongolian Army at the most recent Nomadic Elephant event (Nomadic Elephant XIV), while the battalion of the RAJPUTANA RIFLES Regiment represented the Indian Army.

Under a United Nations (UN) mandate, the Nomadic Elephant exercise aims to instruct army personnel in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations.

One of the goals of the Nomadic Elephant exercise is to advance defense cooperation and improve military ties between the two armies of the two nations.

The Nomadic Elephant exercise includes the following tactical drills:

Exercises for Convoy Protection Drill Room Intervention

Attack/Defense Against Attack



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The collegium system is the system of appointment and transfer of judges in India. It was not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution of India, but was evolved through a series of Supreme Court judgments.

Positive aspects of Collegium system

- **Independence of Judiciary:** The Collegium system enhances the independence of the judiciary from executive interference.
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- **Collective Wisdom:** The Collegium system allows for collective decision-making, which can lead to more balanced and informed judgments.
- **Merit-based Selection:** The system aims to select judges based on their merit, seniority, and proven track record.

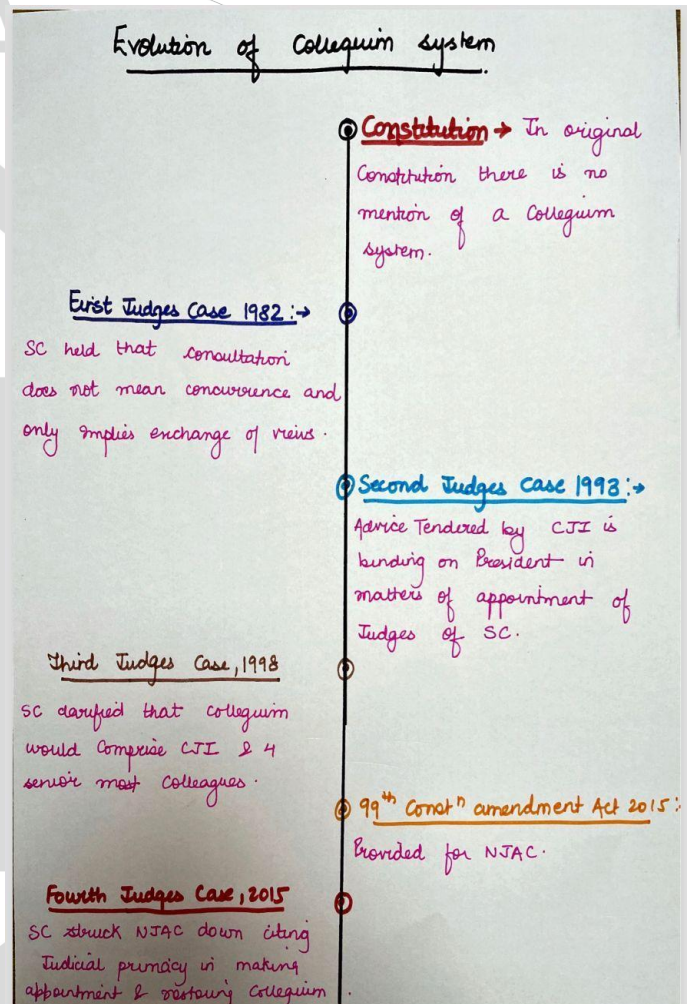
NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

Lack of Transparency: Critics argue that the Collegium system lacks transparency as the decision-making process occurs behind closed doors.

Limited Diversity: Concerns have been raised about underrepresentation of marginalised communities, women, and individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Delayed Appointments and Pendency: The Collegium system has been blamed for causing delays in appointments, resulting in a high number of vacancies in the judiciary.

Due to the lack of objective selection standards and the absence of any outside members, judicial dynasties have perpetuated the **uncle syndrome of Judiciary**.



Way Forward

Recommendation of committees should be followed for better results :

- **The Sarkaria Commission(1983):** The commission made recommendations for reform of the collegium system, **including the establishment of an independent appointments commission.**
- **The Law Commission:** In its 224th report, the commission recommended that the collegium system be replaced by an independent appointments commission.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC

According to Article 124(2), "After consulting with such Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as he may consider necessary, the President shall appoint each Judge of the Supreme Court by warrant under his hand and seal."

Article 217, "Every Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal after consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the State, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of High Court."

SUPREME COURT CASE:

S.P GUPTA VS UOI: The Supreme Court's Bhagwati Judge emphasized the need for an Indian collegium structure.

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CORAL BLEACHING

GS III: ENVIRONMENT

WHY IN NEWS: The Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) reported that the coral reef cover in Australia's northern and central Great Barrier Reef has experienced substantial growth over a 36-year period.

Key Highlights of the Report:

1. Quick Recovery:

- Reef systems show resilience and can recover after disturbances like heat stress, cyclones, and predatory attacks.

2. Record Coral Cover:

- Northern and central Great Barrier Reef areas exhibit the highest-ever recorded levels of coral cover since the first AIMS survey.
- Coral cover measured by assessing the increase in hard corals.

3. Growth in Central & Northern Regions:

- Hard coral cover in the northern GBR reached 36%, and in the central region, it reached 33%.
- However, the southern region experienced a decline, from 38% in 2021 to 34% in 2022.

4. Dominance of Acropora Corals:

- The recovery is driven by an increase in fast-growing Acropora corals, which are dominant in the Great Barrier Reef.
- Acropora corals are susceptible to environmental pressures, such as rising temperatures, cyclones, pollution, and crown-of-thorn starfish attacks.

5. Fewer Natural Calamities:

- The recent recovery in some reef areas is attributed to lower levels of acute stressors in the past 12 months.
- Factors include the absence of tropical cyclones, reduced heat stress in 2020 and 2022 compared to 2016 and 2017, and fewer crown-of-thorn starfish outbreaks.

Issues Highlighted by the Report:

1. Climate Change Threat:


- The main concern for the reef's health is climate change-induced heat stress, leading to coral bleaching.
- Despite global initiatives, sea temperatures are expected to rise by 1.5°C to 2°C by the end of the century.

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- The United Nations' 2021 assessment warns that the world is approaching 1.5°C heating in the next decade, leading to more frequent bleaching with reduced recovery.

2. Frequent Mass Bleaching:

- Mass bleaching events have become more common in recent times.
- The first event occurred in 1998 due to the El Niño weather pattern, causing 8% of the world's coral to die.
- The second event happened in 2002, but the most damaging event occurred from 2014 to 2017.
- AIMS aerial surveys revealed that 45 out of 47 surveyed reefs experienced coral bleaching, leading to reduced growth and reproduction though not causing immediate coral death.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC

CRYOMESH TECHNOLOGY

Cryomesh is an innovative mesh designed specifically for cryopreservation purposes. It is lightweight and cost-effective, making it an ideal substrate for preserving coral. This technology mimics the properties of cryoplates and enables the storage of coral larvae at an incredibly low temperature of -196°C (-320.8°F).

BIOROCK TECHNOLOGY

Biorock Technology' is a technique that utilizes gentle, low voltage electrical currents passed through seawater to trigger the crystallization of dissolved minerals on structures, leading to the growth of a white limestone (CaCO₃) similar to the natural composition of coral reefs and tropical white sand beaches.



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