



**TATHASTU**  
Institute of Civil Services

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS



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S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	ESTABLISHING REGIONAL BENCHES OF THE SUPREME COURT
2.	PRELIMS POINTERS

## ESTABLISHING REGIONAL BENCHES OF THE SUPREME COURT

**SOURCE:** [THE HINDU](#)

**TAG:** GS Paper II- *Indian Constitution, Judiciary, Supreme Court.*

### **PRACTICE QUESTIONS**

#### Mains

Q. Critically evaluate the proposal to establish regional benches of the Supreme Court in India.

(150 words)

#### INTRODUCTION:

- ❖ The *Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice* recently informed the Lok Sabha about the acceptance of the recommendation to establish regional benches of the Supreme Court.
- ❖ However, the apex court has consistently rejected this idea, and the matter remains subjudice.

#### ARGUMENTS FOR SETTING REGIONAL BENCHES:

- ❖ **Pendency Problem:**
  - ☛ **Jurisdictional Scope:** The court adjudicates matters between the Centre and states, civil and criminal appeals, and fundamental rights violations, among others, leading to an unprecedented backlog, surpassing **80,000 cases in 2023 as per the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)**.
  - ☛ **Heavy Workload:** India's Supreme Court, with its **wide jurisdiction**, hears a plethora of cases ranging from constitutional matters to relatively petty issues, contributing to a massive backlog. The Supreme Court disposed of 52,220 cases, reflecting a 31 percent increase compared to 2022. Furthermore, **NJDC data** indicates a significant rise in the number of cases instituted in 2023, with 53,770 new cases compared to 36,565 in 2022, representing a **47 percent increase**.
- ❖ **Constitutional Provisions:**
  - ☛ **Article 130:** This article empowers the Chief Justice of India, with the approval of the President, to determine the location of Supreme Court sittings.
  - ☛ **Article 39A:** Article 39A of the Constitution emphasizes the state's obligation to ensure equal access to justice for all citizens, regardless of economic or other disabilities.
  - ☛ **Article 145(3):** Article 145(3) grants the Supreme Court the authority to form Constitution Benches comprising five or more judges to adjudicate matters involving substantial questions of law pertaining to the interpretation of the Constitution.
- ❖ **Reducing Geographic Bias:**
  - ☛ Regional benches would decentralize the judicial process, reducing the dominance of cases originating from High Courts near Delhi. This would promote **equitable access to justice** for citizens residing in different parts of the country.
- ❖ **Increasing accessibility of justice:**



- **Article 39A** emphasizes equal access to justice, indicating the necessity of making legal proceedings more accessible to all citizens.
- ❖ **Efficient Case Management:**
  - With regional benches, cases can be managed more efficiently based on their geographical origin. This could lead to specialized handling of cases, thereby improving the quality and speed of justice delivery.
- ❖ **Encouraging Legal Talent:**
  - Regional benches **would create opportunities for legal professionals** in various parts of the country, encouraging the growth of legal talent beyond metropolitan areas. This would contribute to a more diverse and robust legal community.
- ❖ **Enhancing Public Trust:**
  - Making justice more accessible to citizens across different regions would enhance public trust in the judiciary. It would **demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity and fairness** in the legal system.

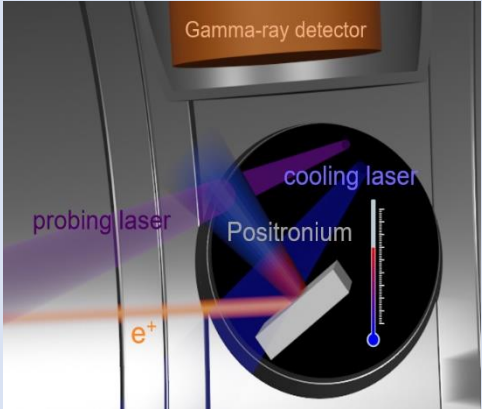
#### ARGUMENTS FOR SETTING REGIONAL BENCHES:

- ❖ **Risk of Fragmentation:**
  - Regional benches may lead to **inconsistent judicial decisions**, creating confusion and legal uncertainty. This could undermine the principle of uniformity in law across the country.
- ❖ **Potential for Jurisdictional Conflicts:**
  - Establishing regional benches may raise jurisdictional issues between different benches and the principal bench in Delhi. Resolving such conflicts could further complicate the legal process.
- ❖ **Financial Burden:**
  - Setting up and maintaining regional benches would entail significant financial costs. This includes infrastructure development, staffing, and other operational expenses, which may strain already limited resources.
- ❖ **Threat to Judicial Independence:**
  - There are concerns that regional benches could be susceptible to political influence or local pressures, **jeopardizing the independence and impartiality of the judiciary**.
- ❖ **Alternative Solutions:**
  - Instead of regional benches, alternative solutions such as **leveraging technology for virtual hearings** or implementing reforms within existing High Courts could address the pendency crisis more effectively without diluting the authority of the Supreme Court.

#### WAY FORWARD:

- ❖ **Balancing Prestige and Access:**
  - The Supreme Court needs to balance its prestige with the imperative of ensuring justice for all citizens.
- ❖ **Implementing Recommendations:**
  - Considering the persistent backlog and the principles of equal access to justice, there is a growing need to implement the **recommendations of the Law Commission and parliamentary committees**.
- ❖ **Ensuring Justice for All:**
  - By making legal proceedings more accessible and expediting case disposal, regional benches can uphold the fundamental principle of justice for all citizens.



TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
<b>FIRST EVER LASER COOLING OF POSITRONIUM</b>	<p><b>WHY IN NEWS?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ In a <b>groundbreaking feat</b>, CERN scientists, collaborating internationally, have achieved <b>laser cooling of Positronium atoms</b>, marking a <b>pivotal step in fundamental physics research</b>.</li></ul> <p><b>ABOUT THE POSITRONIUM ATOM:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ <b>Composition:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ Positronium is a <b>short-lived atom</b> made up of an <b>electron and a positron</b>, similar to <b>hydrogen</b> but with a positron instead of a proton.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Two Forms:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ It exists in two forms – <b>para-positronium and ortho-positronium</b>, distinguished by the <b>alignment of their spins</b>.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Decay:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ <b>Para-positronium</b> decays into <b>two photons</b> within about <b>one-tenth of a nanosecond</b>, while <b>ortho-positronium</b> decays into three photons in <b>approximately 100 nanoseconds</b>.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Confirmation of Theory:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ Positronium's properties <b>validate the predictions of quantum electrodynamics for two-particle systems</b>, contributing to our understanding of fundamental physics.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>RECENT ACHIEVEMENT OF CERN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ <b>First-Ever Laser Cooling:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ Scientists at CERN successfully cooled positronium atoms using lasers for the first time.</li><li>☛ Laser cooling of positronium offers opportunities to test fundamental theories in <b>physics due to its unique properties</b>, including <b>halved excitation frequencies compared to hydrogen-like systems</b>.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Global Collaboration:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ Physicists from <b>19 European countries</b> and one Indian research group worked together on this achievement.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Key Breakthrough Experiment:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ Conducted at CERN, this experiment is crucial for <b>understanding basic atomic systems and exploring new physics</b>.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Positronium Atom Significance:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ Positronium, with its <b>short half-life and unique properties</b>, offers insights into fundamental theories, aided by laser cooling.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Advanced Setup:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ <b>Complex particle traps and innovative laser systems</b> were used to cool positronium atoms effectively.</li></ul></li><li>❖ <b>Future Possibilities:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☛ This achievement opens avenues for <b>precise measurements and potential new physics discoveries</b>, including the <b>production of a positronium Bose–Einstein condensate for various research applications</b>.</li></ul></li></ul> 



## KIRU HYDEL POWER PROJECT

### WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *CBI raids connected to alleged corruption in Kiru Hydel Power Project contracts, involving former J&K Governor Satya Pal Malik, spotlight irregularities in tendering.*

### ABOUT KIRU HYDEL POWER PROJECT:

#### ❖ Location and Cost:

- ☛ Situated near **Patharnakki and Kiru villages in Kishtwar district**, Jammu and Kashmir, between Kirthai II and Kwar hydroelectric projects.
- ☛ It costs around Rs 4,287 crore, aiming for operation by July 2025.

#### ❖ Key Features:

- ☛ Features a **123-m tall dam**, a reservoir with a **41.5 million m<sup>3</sup> capacity**.
- ☛ An underground **powerhouse with four turbines**, totaling **624 MW capacity**.

#### ❖ Development and Impact:

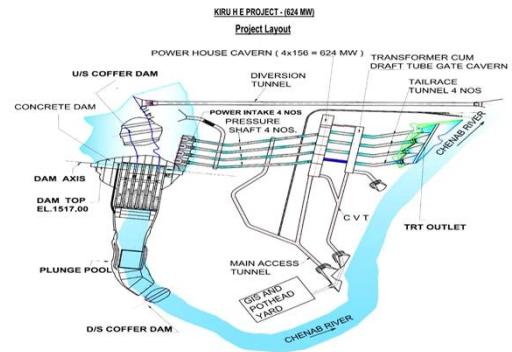
- ☛ Chenab Valley Power Projects (CVPP), a joint venture of NHPC (49%), JKSPDC (49%), and PTC (2%)., it aims to meet energy demands and foster rural industries.

#### ❖ Environmental Clearance:

- ☛ Received scoping clearance in 2008, revalidated in 2015, and **environmental approval in 2016**, with completion expected by 2023.

#### ❖ Beneficiary States:

- ☛ Supplies power to J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, and Union territories of Chandigarh & Delhi.



## WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT, 1972

### WHY IN NEWS?

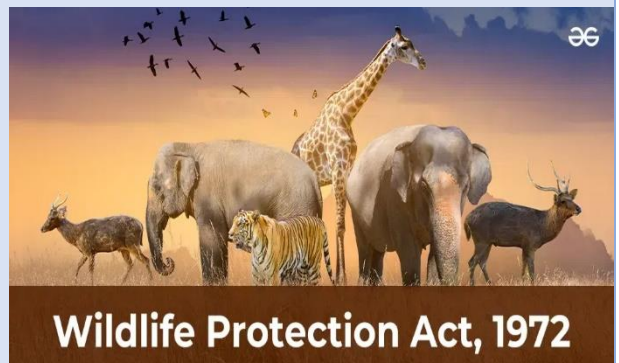
- ❖ *Union Minister Bhupender Yadav addresses human-wildlife conflict, opposes amendments to Wildlife Protection Act, citing powers of chief wildlife warden.*

### RECENT DECISION OVER HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

- ❖ **Union Minister for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change**, Bhupender Yadav, addressed the issue of human-wildlife conflict.
- ❖ He stated that there is **no need for any amendment in the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**, to address this conflict.
- ❖ Mr. Yadav emphasized the **role of the chief wildlife warden** empowered under **Section 11 of the Act** to deal with such situations

### ABOUT WILDLIFE (PROTECTION) ACT, 1972:

- ❖ Provides **legal framework** for protecting wild animals, managing habitats, and regulating trade.
- ❖ **India's CITES** entry facilitated by the Act.
- ❖ **Protects endangered species**, conservation provisions.





## SURROGACY RULES ALLOW DONOR GAMETES

- ❖ **Section 11** empowers **chief wildlife warden** for wildlife control.
- ❖ Crucial for managing India's diverse wildlife and addressing human-wildlife conflicts.

### CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS:

- ❖ **42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment** transferred **wildlife protection to Concurrent List**.
- ❖ Constitution mandates citizen duty **to protect environment and wildlife**.

### SCHEDULES:

- ❖ **Schedule I:** Strict protection for endangered species.
- ❖ **Schedule II:** High protection, trade prohibition.
- ❖ **Schedules III & IV:** Less endangered species, regulated trade.
- ❖ **Schedule V:** Vermin species, can be hunted.
- ❖ **Schedule VI:** Regulates specified plant cultivation and trade.

### PROTECTED AREAS:

- ❖ Sanctuaries, National Parks, Conservation Reserves, Community Reserves, Tiger Reserves.

### KEY AMENDMENTS:

- ❖ **1991:** Strengthened **penalties, protected endangered species**.
- ❖ **2002:** Introduced community and **conservation reserves**.
- ❖ **2006:** Addressed **human-wildlife conflict**, created NTCA.
- ❖ **2022:** Increased species protection, **aligned with CITES, increased penalties**.

### BODIES UNDER THE ACT:

- ❖ **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL):** Reviews wildlife matters.
- ❖ **State Board for Wildlife (SBWL):** State-level wildlife management.
- ❖ **Central Zoo Authority:** Regulates zoos.
- ❖ **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA):** Tiger conservation management.
- ❖ **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB):** Combats wildlife crime.

### WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ **Surrogacy rule change permits donor gametes for medically affected couples, addressing infertility complexities.**

### SURROGACY:

- ❖ **Definition:**
  - ☞ A woman (surrogate) carries and births a child for **another person/couple (intended parent/s)**.
- ❖ **Types:**
  - ☞ **Altruistic** (no monetary compensation) and **commercial** (monetary reward).



### SURROGACY (REGULATION) ACT, 2021:

- ❖ **Provisions:**
  - ☞ **Allows surrogacy for married couples** with medical need, bans commercial surrogacy.



❖ **Criteria:**

- ☛ **Age restrictions for couples, bans commercial surrogacy, allows only altruistic surrogacy.**

**PREVIOUS AMENDMENTS BY SUPREME COURT:**

❖ **Amendment:**

- ☛ **Bans use of donor gametes, mandates use of own gametes.**

❖ **Interpretation:**

- ☛ **Clarifies genetic relation requirement, allows gestational surrogacy for specific medical conditions.**

❖ **Stay:**

- ☛ **Stays operation of Rule 7 for women with MRKH Syndrome, allows use of donor egg.**

**RECENT CHANGES:**

- ❖ Notification **allows surrogacy using donor gametes** if District Medical Board certifies a medical condition.
- ❖ Previously, **only eggs could be donated, not sperm.**
- ❖ Prior rule **required both egg and sperm** to be from intending couple.
- ❖ Supreme Court's ruling on surrogacy for women with **Mayer-Rokitansky-Kuster-Hauser (MRKH) Syndrome**, highlighting a significant shift in reproductive healthcare policy.

**PLACES IN NEWS**  
– ‘ALBANIA’

**WHY IN NEWS?**

*Albania's Foreign Minister's announcement regarding **plans to open an embassy in New Delhi**, reciprocating India's intention to establish a **diplomatic mission in Tirana**, highlights growing diplomatic relations and emphasizes **Albania's strategic location bridging Europe and Asia.***

**ABOUT THE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF ALBANIA**

❖ **Strategic Location:**

- ☛ Albania is positioned as a **crucial point on the corridor connecting Europe and Asia.**

❖ **Geographical Boundaries:**

- ☛ Albania is bordered by **Montenegro to the northwest, Kosovo to the northeast, North Macedonia to the east, and Greece to the southeast and south.**

❖ **Coastal Borders:**

- ☛ Albania has coastlines **along the Adriatic Sea to the west and the Ionian Sea to the southwest.**

❖ **Proximity to Italy:**

- ☛ **Italy, Albania's western neighbour, is approximately 50 miles (80 km) away across the Adriatic Sea.**

**Crossroads Between EU and East:**

- ☛ **Albania serves as a junction between the European Union and Eastern regions, playing a significant role in various corridors linking India with the EU.**

❖ **Growing Economy:**





☛ As one of the **fastest-growing economies in Europe**, Albania seeks to strengthen economic ties with India, emphasizing its strategic position and potential for collaboration.

❖ **Cultural and Linguistic Ties:**

☛ **Albania's Honorary Consul General in India, Dikshu Kukreja**, highlights the cultural, linguistic, and historical connections between Albania and India, **noting similarities between the Albanian language and Sanskrit.**

