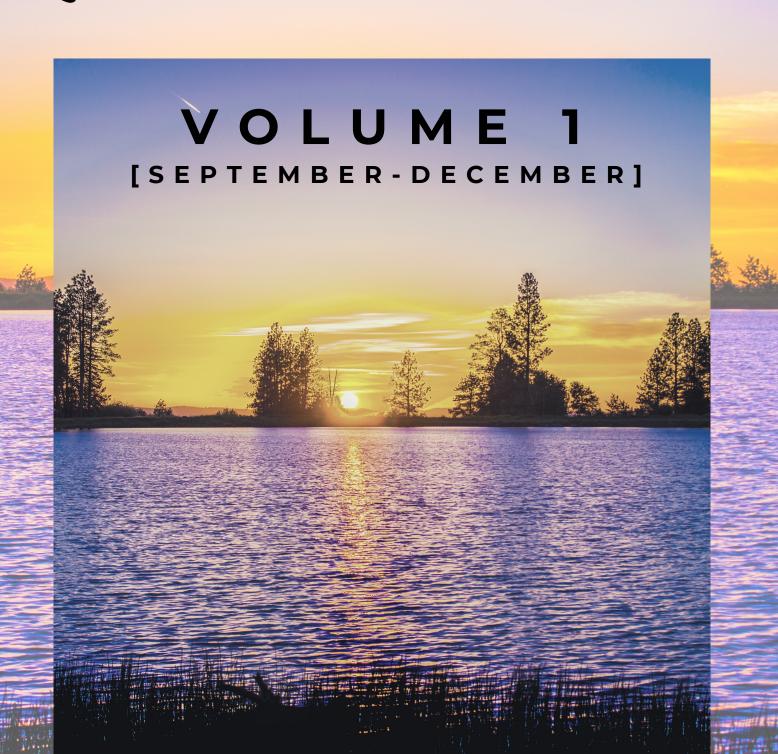
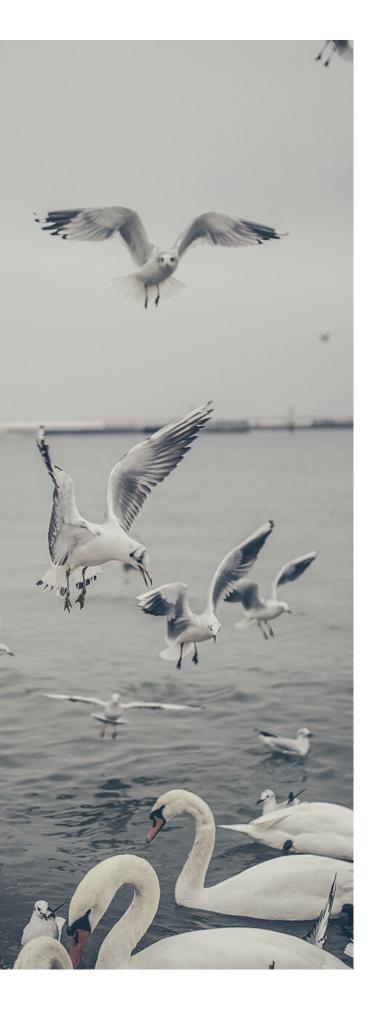


CELNU QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER





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NATIONAL NEWS



CASES OF ENVIRONMENT-RELATED OFFENCES ALMOST DOUBLED IN 2020

The number of cases enrolled for climate-related offenses expanded to 61,767 out of 2020 from 34,676 out of 2019 said Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change told the Lok Sabha December 6, 2021. He was referring to the Crime in India report 2020. India upheld a 'non-restricting' Zero-Emission Vehicles Transition Council (ZEVTC) revelation at the 26th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The revelation calls for working seriously towards sped up multiplication and reception of zero discharge vehicles.



INDIA IN TOP 10 IN CLIMATE PERFORMANCE RANKING: CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE INDEX

Major emanating economies that declared their Net Zero discharge targets fared ineffectively in their environmental change execution more than 2021, the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2022 report has found.

India, in any case, kept up with its tenth position like a year ago. It kept on being among the top-performing nations inside Group of 20.

The report, distributed by German-watch alongside Climate Action Network (CAN) and New Climate Institute, was delivered on November 10 at the 26th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).



CHANGES IN GREEN LAWS MIGHT WEAKEN SHIELDS: EXPERTS

The Biological Diversity Act (Amendment) Bill, 2021, postponed in Parliament on 9 December by MoEFCC Bhupender Yadav, gives exclusions to projects advancing Indian medication frameworks, otherwise called Ayush. It has been shipped off a joint parliamentary board of trustees for additional scrutiny. The draft laws are the most recent in a progression of changes completed the focal government to change processes connected with natural and woodland endorsements for foundation and formative activities.

The proposed adjustments would successfully address current biological and financial requirements of the country, the public authority has said, yet legitimate specialists are worried that such enormous scope changes would avoid ecological worries. Activists likewise said these alterations are looked for without requesting public remarks, similar to the standard when laws are up for corrections.

PAGE 08 NATIONAL NEWS



50 DEGREES CELSIUS TEMPERATURE IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE FREQUENT : SAYS BBC REPORT

According to a BBC research, the number of extremely hot days in a year - when the temperature exceeds 50 degrees Celsius - has doubled globally since the 1980s, highlighting the grim reality of the global climate catastrophe. Between 1980 and 2009, temperatures averaged 14 days per year when they exceeded 50°C. According to a BBC investigation, that amount increased to 26 days between 2010 and 2019. Aside from that, the temperature threshold of 45°C has seen a significant increase during the same time period, averaging an extra two weeks every year. In the West Asia region, temperatures as high as 50°C are normal, especially during the lengthy summers. However, when temperatures of nearly-50°C were recorded in more temperate places of the world this summer, such as Canada and Italy, climate experts sat up and took notice. The temperature in Italy reached a record high of 48.8°C, while the temperature in Canada reached 49.6°C.

Climate scientists believe that unfettered fossil-fuel burning has invariably resulted in the entire world warming faster than before, making high temperatures more likely in the near future. Experts warn that severe temperatures can be detrimental for both plant and animals, as the report points out, and that human civilisation would face unavoidable hurdles, such as infrastructure and power system problems.



SCIENTISTS AT IIT-BHU HAVE DISCOVERED A BACTERIAL STRAIN THAT CAN ELIMINATE HAZARDOUS AGENTS FROM GARBAGE

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology's Banaras Hindu University's School of Biochemical Engineering claim to have isolated a new bacterial strain from a contaminated site that can effectively and environmentally remove a potentially cancer-causing toxic agent known as hexavalent chromium from waste water. According to experts Dr Vishal Mishra and his Ph.D student Veer Singh, hexavalent chromium is a heavy metal ion utilised in several sectors that can cause cancer, infertility, renal and liver failure in humans. Microbacterium paraoxydans strain VSVM IIT (BHU), according to Dr. Mishra, was able to survive high levels of hexavalent chromium. "When compared to other traditional procedures for removing hexavalent chromium from wastewater, it is quite successful." "This bacterial strain grew quickly in aqueous medium containing Hexavalent chromium Cr (VI) and was easily isolated from the aqueous medium following treatment," he stated.

"The study found that when bacteria are cultivated in a hexavalent chromium-containing growth media, multiple heavy metal tolerance pathways are triggered," he said. Their study on cost-effective and environmentally friendly ways for removing harmful metal ions has already been published in the prestigious Journal of Environmental Chemical Engineering.



UTTARAKHAND WILL BEGIN A \$39 MILLION INITIATIVE TO LESSEN MAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

The Uttarakhand Forest Department has begun a \$39 million man-wildlife conflict mitigation initiative in the Himalayan state, which will implement a variety of strategies. According to forest officials, around 280 kilometres of fencing would be installed at a cost of over 18 crore in various regions of the state. At a cost of 4.4 crore, 1,393 km of elephant-proof trenches will be created in locations frequented by the pachyderms. Fencing and ditches will also serve as barriers, preventing wildlife from entering residential areas.

Rajiv Bhartari, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), said the ministry of environment, forests and climate change has provided the state forest department with Rs 39.7 crore under the CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) fund for man-wildlife conflict mitigation. "This is for the time being while the state's mitigating measures are being scaled up," he explained.

The programme will focus mainly on three types of conflicts - Man - Leopard conflict, Man - Elephant conflict and Man - Monkey conflict. Last year, the state government decided to build four open forest enclosures in Haridwar, Nainital, Almora, and Pithoragarh districts, each having a capacity to contain over 25,000 monkeys, to combat the state's expanding simian scourge.

PAGE 08 NATIONAL NEWS



INDIA TO PLAN ABOUT 400 CITY FORESTS, SAYS UNION MINISTER CHOUBEY

In recent news, union minister – Ashwin Kumar Choubey, disclosed that Centre is working on a project of developing 400 city forests across the country. This project is aimed at increasing the green cover in urban areas. Choubey further stated that a "nagar van" (city forest) would be constructed in the Ramban area of Jammu & Kashmir. Choubey made the remarks while speaking with members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and the general public. He went on to say that the government is also attempting to instill an environmentally conscious mindset in youngsters and that nurseries will be established in educational institutions to help with this. A more liberalized policy on the Forest Rights Act is also being developed in order to assure forest development and protection. According to global research released this week, India lost approximately 2 million hectares (Mha) of tree cover between 2001 and 2020, a drop of nearly 5% since 2000. It went on to say that the Northeastern states accounted for three-quarters of the total loss. The research was conducted by the University of Maryland in the United States. To reach their findings, the experts analysed over a million satellite pictures.



INDIA HAS PLEDGED TO ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A WORLDWIDE CONSERVATION PLAN

Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said on Tuesday during the high-level ministerial section of the United Nations Biodiversity Conference that India will guarantee that the benefits of biodiversity conservation pass to underprivileged people that rely on natural resources. He stated that measures to conserve nature and reverse biodiversity loss will be at the heart of India's post-Covid resurgence. According to the World Organisation for Animal Health, a "one health" strategy is one in which human and animal health are interrelated and linked to ecosystem health. "For thousands of years, we in India have adored and appreciated nature. With only 2.4 percent of the world's land area, we are home to 8% of all documented species and are considered one of the world's most biodiverse regions. "India is committed to working together to shape global conservation policy while also contributing to the enhancement of its own conservation estate," Yadav said. "I am glad to report that India has already set aside over 17.41% of its geographical area for conservation purposes, with further sites being identified to expand this coverage." "The present Covid-19 outbreak has demonstrated to the entire human race that care for nature is not only a moral or ethical factor, but also a necessity for our own safety, our health, and our economies," Yadav stated.



PRODUCERS ARE NOW
BEING URGED TO
MANAGE PLASTIC
PACKAGING WASTE IN A
DRAUGHT EPR
NOTIFICATION

Producers, importers, and brand owners will be required to follow strict guidelines to manage trash under extended producer responsibility (EPR) to limit the environmental impact of plastic packaging, according to a draught notification released for public comment by the environment ministry. Producers, importers, and brand owners must manage a certain amount of plastic trash, according to the proposal. It will be open for 60 days for public discussion. "People can send in their views to us," an official from the environment ministry stated on condition of anonymity. "On the EPR regulation, we also had consultations with industry organizations." Producers and brand owners are required to bear a substantial amount of responsibility for the treatment and disposal of plastic waste under the EPR. It includes rigid plastic packaging, flexible plastic packaging with single or multiple layers consisting of different types of plastic, and plastic sheets, carry bags (including compostable plastic bags), and plastic sachets or pouches. Through an online platform, all producers, importers, brands, recyclers, and others will be required to register with the Central Pollution Control Board. The federal pollution watchdog will provide rules for imposing and collecting environmental compensation, as well as fines on manufacturers, recyclers, and end-of-life processors who violate the regulations' requirements, as well as circumstances such as giving misleading information.



THE SUPREME COURT
OF INDIA HAS ISSUED
AN ORDER ALLOWING
IDOLS TO BE
IMMERSED IN
HUSSAIN SAGAR LAKE
IN HYDERABAD,
TELANGANA.

The matter cognate to the immersion of Ganesh idol for the purposes of the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi in Hussain Sagar Lake, Hyderabad, Telangana.

The Solicitor General has verbally expressed that immersion of POP idols would be vetoed from 2022 in the light of the guidelines issued by the State Pollution Control Board. However, he has asked that for 2021, the More preponderant Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) may be granted an exemption, as there is a paucity of time for preparing incipient plans, arrangements for the festival having been elongated back.

The Solicitor General has given assurance that all steps to minimize pollution to the Hussain Sagar lake would be taken and cranes utilized at the immersion sites and idols after being immersed would be hoisted anon after and conveyed to the solid waste dumping sites for recycling purposes.

The Supreme Court granted sanction for immersion of idols in Hussain Sagar lake for the year 2021.



THE GUJARAT HIGH
COURT HAS URGED
THE CENTRE TO
EXPLORE CREATING A
CIRCUIT BENCH OF
THE NATIONAL GREEN
TRIBUNAL IN
AHMEDABAD.

In the case Consumer Protection and Analytic Committee v. Union of India, the Gujarat High Court asked the Centre and the Chairperson of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to consider creating a Circuit Bench in Ahmedabad in the public interest.

"We may only comment that it will be in the fitness of things if a circuit court is created in Ahmedabad, State of Gujarat," Justice J B Pardiwala and Justice V D Nanavati wrote for the panel. The HC's decision came in response to a PIL filed six years ago by the Consumer Protection and Analytic Committee, which sought an injunction to overturn a 2011 notification allowing the Pune tribunal to accept cases from Gujarat. The PIL requested that the Centre mandate the establishment of an NGT bench at the Gujarat High Court in Ahmedabad to deal with the state's environmental challenges.

Advocate Shah referenced a Supreme Court decision in the Swiss Riibbons versus Union of India case to argue that permanent benches should be formed at every jurisdictional high court session and, if that is not practicable, at least a circuit bench within Gujarat, ideally in Ahmedabad. The High Court has asked the appropriate authorities to look into the possibility of establishing an NGT in Ahmedabad.



INDONESIA'S GREEN PORT INITIATIVE

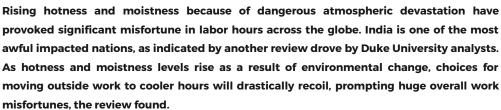
Indonesia is launching a program to make the country's ports more environmental friendly to reduce its carbon emissions and protect its marine ecosystem. The shipping activity in Indonesian waters contributes 19% of the country's annual greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonizing shipping would help in achieving its targets.

This initiative forms a part of Indonesia's plan to reduce 29% emissions by 2030. The initial efforts would include having port terminals for domestic and international vessels that use low-sulfur marine fuel oil and setting up solar panels at ports. Marine observers are happy with this government initiative saying that it is a crucial step towards achieving Indonesia's emissions reduction target while others say that it is a cover-up to the environmental degradation happening due to the indiscriminate construction of ports by the government. the only way for the Green port initiative to be truly environmentally friendly is to support the interests of traditional and small-time fishermen and tat of coastal communities, especially the indigenous coastal communities.

PAGE 13 NATIONAL NEWS



INDIA AMONG THE MOST AFFECTED LABOUR LOSSES DUE TO RISING HEAT



The review, distributed in Nature Communications December 14, 2021, projected that monetary misfortunes related to this lost efficiency could reach up to \$1.6 trillion (Rs 1.6 lakh crores) yearly assuming warming surpasses 2 extra degrees Celsius compared with the present. Assuming that occurs, work misfortunes in the coolest portion of the day will surpass current misfortunes in the most smoking half. Basic positions, for example, farming work and development work, will turn out to be exceedingly difficult to perform securely during evening hours in the mid-year in many spots, the review cautioned. Its high time to look into the aspect of climate change time to improve the situation and worsening conditions.



HIGH TIME CLIMATE JUSTICE REFLECTS IN INDIA'S FOREST POLICY

Community-led Forest landscape restoration has been a vital piece of conventional practices on normal assets the board by different woods-based networks in India stated.

Forest landscape restoration expands biodiversity, sequesters carbon, advances country occupations, and invigorates the rustic economy when applied on the scale. A few 96.4 million hectares or 29.32 percent of the all-out topographical area of India is debased. North of 250 million individuals relies upon timberlands for their food. Networks living inside and close to forested scenes play a significant part in accomplishing the environmental responsibilities made by India under 2015

Paris Agreement and the Bonn Challenge. It is clear from the many cases of community-led forest restoration practices in India that recognition of tenure rights not only supports the building of climate resilience among forested

communities but also co-benefits the forest landscape restoration and carbon sequestration goals set by India.



CLIMATE CRISIS HAS COST INDIA 5 MILLION HECTARES OF CROP IN 2021

In 2021, outrageous climate occasions created one more troubling year for Indian ranchers. Cyclone Tauktae and Cyclone Yaas unleashed devastation in a few states in the initial not many months, particularly in Odisha, West Bengal, and Karnataka where lives and occupations were impacted past reclamation. In July, floods in Maharashtra harmed standing harvests.

This was trailed by a 24 percent cross-country downpour shortfall in August and a 35 percent abundance downpour in September. In October, heavy downpours devastated yields in many locales of Kerala. The obliteration proceeded even towards the year's end. In November, exceptional precipitation caused an enormous death toll and property in the south Indian provinces of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka.

Generally speaking, India lost 5.04 million hectares (MHA) crop region to the cyclonic tempest, streak floods, floods, avalanches, and downpours till November 25, 2021, Narendra Singh Tomar, Union pastor of horticulture and ranchers' government assistance, told the Lok Sabha November 30. Even in India, tomato costs hit the rooftop towards November end, directly following wrecking downpours in southern India. Among different purposes behind such value climbs, the inconsistent climate has become one of the excellent causes lately. The need of great importance is zeroing in on creating and reinforcing versatile limits of particularly smallholder ranchers.



CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT: SC OBSERVATIONS ON AIR EMERGENCY UNDERSCORE THE TRAVESTY HAPPENING IN DELHI

Delhi-based non-benefit Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) said on November 13, 2021, that the Supreme Court (SC) of India's perception that Delhi should go into a lockdown for several days because of the continuous exhausting air pollution. A seat drove by Justice Chandrachud, the Chief Justice of India, was hearing an appeal on November 13 with regards to the demolishing air quality circumstance in the public capital. It was he who told the Centre that a two-day lockdown could be viewed as given the earnestness of the situation. "CSE said this was a wellbeing crisis and that the organization should act in like manner," Somvanshi said. He added the crisis activity plan for the public capital was at that point set down in the Graded Response Action Plan. It had to be put in place once the situation got worse, which was not done.

"They will come with a new plan to the SC November 15. But we are losing time which is really sad because people have to live through this bad air for another two days for the government to actually come up with the plan," Somvanshi said.



37 YEARS OF BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY: JUSTICE NOT DELIVERED

An extended dissent by a gathering of non-government organizations (NGOs) with the trademark - '37 years of Bhopal Gas Disaster: 37 questions' - reached a conclusion on Wednesday, which related the disappointments of the Centre in giving equity to the people in question, individuals of Bhopal. Considered among the world's most exceedingly awful modern fiascos, the Bhopal gas misfortune was a gas release occurrence the evening of December 2-3, 1984, at the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL), pesticide plant in Bhopal. "Equity for the casualties of Bhopal gas fiasco is anticipated even following 37 years, and numerous survivors are yet to get satisfactory remuneration. Yet, none of the fundamental guilty parties have been shipped off the prison, not in any event, for a minute. Meanwhile, the state government on Wednesday declared that a recognition and supplication meeting will be coordinated for the Bhopal gas misfortune casualties on the 37th commemoration of the catastrophe at the Barkatullah Bhawan here on December 3. Hope in future, proper justice will be rewarded to the victims.



INDUSTRIES BEING THE MAIN CONTRIBUTOR TO WIDENING DELHI POLLUTION

The significant wellsprings of air contamination in Delhi and the National Capital Region (Delhi-NCR), which disturb throughout the colder time of year because of troublesome meteorological conditions, incorporate modern and vehicular contamination; dust from development and destruction exercises; street dust; biomass, stubble and metropolitan strong waste consuming; fires in clean landfills, and so on, Ashwini Kr Choubey, minister of state in the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest And Climate Change (MoEF&CC) told the Lok Sabha November 29, 2021. Businesses contributed 27% and 30 percent to particulate matter (PM)10 and PM2.5 separately throughout the cold weather for a long time in Delhi. Dust (soil, street, and development) contributed 25% and 17 percent to PM10 and PM2.5 separately.



IN THE YEAR 2020, INDIA HAS ADDED AT LEAST 800 NEW PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES

Despite being a pandemic year, India added at least 800 new species of plants and animals in 2020, including some that were previously unknown to man. However, because to the Covid-19 epidemic, the number of discoveries made by the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in the last five years has decreased.

"Due to the epidemic, the surveys and exploration operations were put on hold. The scientists did the majority of their work from home. Despite the epidemic, India has seen the discovery of 267 new plant species. "Some of these were reported for the first time from the country," BSI director AA Mao said. In the last five years, the BSI has identified roughly 350 plant species on average. The BSI published its list of new plant species discoveries on Monday, while the ZSI published its list month ago. Both of them have their headquarters in Kolkata.

Scientists from the ZSI discovered 557 new species, 407 of which were new to the country, while the remainder were recorded for the first time. There are 28 reptiles, six amphibians, and 28 fish species among the new finds. 27 of the 28 reptiles were discovered for the first time. "All six amphibians have been discovered for the first time, and at least 23 fish species have been discovered for the first time," a ZSI scientist added. There are currently 102,718 animal species and 54,000 plant species in India, including flowering and non-flowering plants, ferns, mosses, liverworts, fungus, algae, lichens, and microorganisms.



IN DELHI, THE CENTRE SETS UP A PANEL TO ANALYSE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROJECTS.

The Union environment ministry has established a State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority to assess projects in the city, a step that Delhi authorities say will make it easier to deal with applications. Until the September 6 gazette order, the authority had been defunct for almost three years. Former Delhi Public Works Department engineer-inchief Sarvagya Srivastava, who also served as the agency's senior secretary for a short time, will lead the authority. The panel will be chaired by Reena Gupta, a Delhi government advisor, and member secretary will be the state's special secretary for the environment. Srivastava worked for the Delhi Public Works Department for 11 years, during which time he was involved in the development of major road infrastructure projects in the city. Each member of the authority will serve for three years.

All category 'A' projects (mega projects) must be approved by an Expert Appraisal Committee of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, according to the Environment Protection Rules. The SEIAA approves all projects in category 'B' (big projects). The authority, which will meet monthly, will have the right to require regular inspections of project sites that have received environmental clearance to ensure that all regulations are followed. Citizens can also contact the government to report infractions or raise concerns. "We are really glad that the Central Government has reconstituted Delhi SEIAA," stated Reena Gupta, Member, SEIAA. Decisions on approval and monitoring can now be made at the state level. We are excited about the prospect of making the EIA process more robust and transparent, as planned by the law.

PAGE 08 NATIONAL NEWS



SUPREME COURT
MODIFIES NGT SAND
MINING DIRECTIVES: A
TOTAL BAN ON LEGAL
MINING WILL LEAD TO
ILLEGAL MINING AND A
HUGE LOSS TO THE
PUBLIC TREASURY

The State of Bihar had petitioned the Supreme Court to overturn an NGT order that stated that the District Survey Report for the purpose of sand mining could not be carried out unless the State Expert Appraisal Committee ("SEAC") and the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority ("SEIAA") gave their approval. The bench, which included Justices L. Nageswara Rao, Sanjiv Khanna, and BR Gavai, stated that the directions need to be modified and that, until the DSRs are finalised and approved by SEAC and SEIAA, certain necessary arrangements should be allowed so that the State can continue with legal mining activities.

The Supreme Court, in overturning various orders made by the National Green Tribunal, stated that a complete prohibition on legal mining, in addition to encouraging illicit mining, results in a significant loss to the public purse. When legitimate mining is prohibited, illicit mining thrives, leading to fights between sand mafias, criminalization, and, in some cases, human life loss, according to the court.

As a result, the bench substituted the following instructions for those issued by the Tribunal: The practise of preparing DSR for the purpose of mining in the State of Bihar would be repeated

in all districts. Subdivisional committees comprised of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, officers from the Irrigation Department, the State Pollution Control Board or Committee, the Forest Department, and a geological or mining officer will produce the draught DSRs. Site visits and the use of contemporary technologies will be used to prepare the same. The aforementioned draught DSRs must be completed within 6 weeks after the date of this directive. The District Magistrate of the affected District should transmit the draught DSRs to the SEAC for scrutiny and assessment when they have been compiled. The SEAC must evaluate it within 6 weeks after receiving it, and its report must be delivered to the SEIAA within the same time frame. Following that, the SEIAA will consider granting permission to such DSRs within 6 weeks of receiving them:

While preparing DSRs and having them appraised by SEAC and SEIAA, rigorous adherence to the method and parameters outlined in the policy of January 2020 should be observed.

Until further instructions, we grant the State Government permission to conduct mining operations through the Bihar State Mining Corporation, which may hire contractors. However, the State Government must guarantee that all environmental issues are addressed and that no harm is done to the environment.



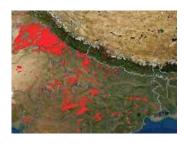
GLOBAL WARMING TO HIT INDIA THE WORST IN ASIA BY 2070

For more than 6,000 years, people limited their settlements to an environment specialty or set of temperatures between 11 degrees Celsius and 15 degrees Celsius mean yearly temperature. Be that as it may, an unnatural weather change could trigger the following influx of relocation - and something like 3 billion individuals would be impacted by it by 2070. India would be among the most awful hit in Asia

A review by a gathering of specialists - called Future of the Human Climate Niche - projected that north of 3 billion individuals, as of now residing in 0.8 percent of the Earth's surface that encounters normal yearly temperature of more than 29°C, would need to move to more places with reasonable conditions.

It added that one more 9 billion individuals would be presented to such yearly normal temperatures experienced distinctly in the most smoking deserts, for example, the Sahara. As the world encounters an unnatural weather change, work hours lost to outrageous temperatures could twofold and fourfold relying upon the number of individuals would be associated with rustic horticulture, influencing efficiency and food security.

PAGE 11 NATIONAL NEWS



NASA'S RED DOT' MAP SHOWS FARM FIRES IN PUNJAB AND HARYANA

Farm fires in north India are expected to be more intense this year than in recent years, according to scientists and environmentalists, because to the region's delayed monsoon retreat. They predicted that this would exacerbate the capital's poor air quality. On Tuesday, NASA's fire map revealed that'red dots,' which denote large-scale flames in an area, have begun to develop in areas of Pakistan, Punjab, and Haryana. By the evening, the numbers had dropped, which scientists ascribed to cloud cover and rain in the area. According to NASA data, the number of stubble burning counts in Punjab and Haryana increased steadily between September 1 and October 1. For example, between September 19 and 21, roughly 40-50 fire counts appeared in Punjab. On September 26, it climbed to 155, then to 220 on September 29, and ultimately to 255 on October 1. While the numbers were lower in Haryana, a similar pattern was observed. Between September 9 and 16, there were eight to nine stubble fires, increasing to 35 on October 1. Scientists cautioned that this was only the beginning of a season of intense stubble fires, which might have a significant impact on air quality in the region. Farmers have a narrow window to harvest and prepare their fields for the next sowing season due to the monsoon's late withdrawal from northwest India (monsoon withdrawal will commence from the region on October 6, according to forecasts from the India Meteorological Department). They believe that because residue burning is a faster way to prepare the land, more farmers will be forced to utilise it.



INDIA INVESTS \$3 BILLION ON AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION EACH YEAR, YET JUST 4% OF IT IS 'SUSTAINABLE.'

India spends around \$3 billion each year on agricultural innovation (\$25 billion from 2010 to 2018), which includes investments from the government, development partners, the private sector, and private equity and venture capital businesses. While this is significant, data shows that per capita agricultural innovation investment is less than \$2.5 per person per year. With a projected 1.6 billion people in India by 2050, the country will need to nearly double its food output to meet the expanding population as well as the need for higherquality food. According to a case study conducted by consulting firm Dalberg Advisors in collaboration with the Commission on Sustainable Agriculture Intensification, agriculture is already a major driver of water constraint, biodiversity loss, and carbon emissions in India. India will not be able to reach its food goals without causing serious environmental harm unless agriculture production methods change significantly, with a stronger emphasis on sustainable agriculture intensification (in terms of environmental, human, and social implications). "If we are to successfully address the key global concerns of food security, hunger, and climate action, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, the investment balance must change." In a world that is fast changing due to climate change, investments in innovation that do not include environmental implications will not change agriculture's trajectory quickly enough to meet sustainability and climate targets, according to PV Vara Prasad, CoSAI commissioner. Experts believe that a coordinated approach to investing in sustainable agriculture that establishes clear metrics and encourages collaboration among all types of funders would be very beneficial in the future.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS



IMPACT OF GLOBAL WARMING ON PERMAFROST: IPCC REPORT

According to the latest IPCC report, increasing global warming will result in reductions in Arctic permafrost and the thawing of the ground is expected to release greenhouse gases like methane and carbon dioxide. The reasons for concerns regarding melting permafrost because it will affect where roads and buildings that are constructed on permafrost and this melting of permafrost caused the freezing of original material in the ground and eventually if the ground becomes a thaw, this material will become available for microorganisms to break down. Permafrost is any ground that remains completely frozen - 32°F (0°C) or colder-for at least two years straight. These permanently frozen grounds are most common in regions with high mountains and in Earth's higher latitudes - near the North and South Poles. Permafrost covers about 15% of the land area of the globe. Although the ground is frozen, permafrost regions are not always covered in snow.



GLOBAL METHANE PLEDGE

Recently, the US President has announced the Global Methane Pledge, which is an US-EU led effort to cut methane emissions by a third by the end of this decade. The announcement has come ahead of 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Glasgow, UK. This will also help in abiding by the targets of the Paris climate deal. Recently, the US President has announced the Global Methane Pledge, which is an US-EU led effort to cut methane emissions by a third by the end of this decade. The announcement has come ahead of 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Glasgow, UK. This will also help in abiding by the targets of the Paris climate deal. Methane is nearly 80-85 times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of its global warming capacity. This makes it a critical target for reducing global warming more quickly while simultaneously working to reduce other greenhouse gases



WORLD'S FIRST 'FIVE COUNTRY BIOSPHERE RESERVE'

In September 2021, Mura-Drava-Danube (MDD) was declared as the world's first 'five-country biosphere reserve' by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The biosphere reserve covers 700 kilometers of the Mura, Drava, and Danube rivers and stretches across Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, and Serbia. The area is one of the richest in Europe in terms of species diversity. It is home to floodplain forests, gravel, sandbanks, river islands, oxbows, and meadows The total area of the reserve is a million hectares - in the so-called 'Amazon of Europe', which is now the largest riverine protected area in Europe. The reason behind this step is to revitalize 25,000 km of rivers and protect 30% of the European Union's land area by 2030.



ACCESS TO A
HEALTHY
ENVIRONMENT
DECLARED A HUMAN
RIGHT BY UN RIGHTS
COUNCIL

For the first time, the Human Rights Council recognized that having a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment as a human right on October 8, 2021. Costa Rica, the Maldives, Morocco, Slovenia, and Switzerland offered the proposal, which was approved with 43 votes in favour and four abstentions from Russia, India, China, and Japan. Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said she was "gratified" that the decision "clearly recognizes environmental degradation and climate change as interconnected human rights concerns," as she had long campaigned for. Last year, an unprecedented number of environmental human rights defenders were reported dead, prompting the High Commissioner to call on the Member States to take strong measures to safeguard and empower them and this resolution is the consequence of many more of such incidents.



CHINA HURRIES TO BURN MORE COAL, PUTTING CLIMATE GOALS AT RISK

Desperate to meet its electricity needs, China is opening up new coal production at a tremendous cost to the global effort to fight climate change. The campaign has unleashed a flurry of activity in China's coal country. Idled mines are restarting. Cottage-sized yellow backhoes are clearing and widening roads past terraced cornfields. Long columns of bright red freight trucks are converging on the region to haul the extra cargo. China's push will carry a high cost. Burning coal will increase China's emissions and toxic air pollution. It will endanger the lives of coal miners. And it could impose a long-term cost on the Chinese economy, even while helping short-term growth. China's extra coal by itself would increase humanity's output of planet-warming carbon dioxide by a full percentage point. Rapid expansion means extra risks for the country's 2.6 million coal miners.



RICH NATIONS TO ACKNOWLEDGE CLIMATE CHANGE THREAT AND TAKE URGENT STEPS

According to a draught communique revealed before of the COP26 conference, leaders of the world's 20 wealthiest countries will recognise the existential threat of climate change and will take urgent action to prevent global warming. Pope Francis joined a clamour demanding action, not just words, from the conference starting on Sunday in Glasgow, Scotland, as people around the world prepared to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with politicians. The leaders of the Group of 20 will meet in Rome ahead of the summit and promise to take immediate action to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit). While participants to the 2015 Paris Agreement pledged to keep global warming "well below" 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, preferably 1.5 degrees, carbon levels in the atmosphere have increased since then.



POLAR BEARS COULD VANISH BY THE END OF THIS CENTURY

A new study published in the journal Earths' Future has given us a timeline of an impending disaster: If carbon emissions continue at current levels, summer ice will disappear by 2100 – and, along with it, creatures such as seals and polar bears. This research, which covers 1 million sq. km region north of Greenland, pondered upon two scenarios, optimistic (if the emissions are bought down) and pessimistic (if emissions remain the way they are). Under the optimistic scenario, some summer ice could persist indefinitely. Under the pessimistic scenario, summer ice would disappear by the end of the century. The study forecasts that under the lower mission's scenario, at least some seals, bears and other creatures may survive. However, under the higher-emissions scenario, by 2100, even the locally formed ice will disappear in summer. With no summer ice anywhere, there will be no ice-dependent ecosystems.



DISAPPEARING AFRICAN RARE GLACIERS

Recently, a report from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) stated that Africa's rare glaciers will disappear in the next two decades due to climate change. Their current retreat rates are higher than the global average. If this continues, it will lead to total deglaciation by the 2040s. WMO is one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN). It produces annually the State of the Global Climate Report. One of the key points to be noted is that the African continent contributes least to the global warming, which is less than 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and yet it is going to suffer the most due to the consequences of climate change and global warming, like for example, parts of South Sudan are seeing the worst flooding in almost 60 years. Moreover, massive displacement, hunger and increasing climate shocks that are being witness is going to seriously affect the future of Africa.



A UNICEF SURVEY-HOW DOES THE YOUNGER GENERATION LOOK AT CLIMATE CHANGE

The survey titled <u>The Changing Childhood Project</u> was released November 18, 2021, ahead of World Children's Day (20 November). It is the first-of-its-kind poll wherein more than 21,000 people across two age groups — 15-24 years old and 40 years old and above — participated across 21 countries.

The survey aimed to compare the experiences and views of young people with those of adults to understand how childhood is changing in a world ravaged by changing climate among others. Nearly 80 per cent of young people surveyed said they had heard of climate change. Of them, however, only 56 per cent could identify climate change for what it is; the remaining looked at it as simply seasonal temperature changes.

Nearly 86 per cent of young people believe humans can still act to contain and reduce most of the devastating effects of changing climate; 73 per cent of young people said their government should take significant action on this front. Climate change education has to be included for students to at least know what is happening, for them to learn and act.



REPORT CARD OF COP 26

Can the Glasgow summit held in November of 2021 be called a success? Was it able to take and implement enough steps to keep the world temperature below 1.5 degrees celsius rise? No, said Centre for Science and Environment's (CSE) Director-General Sunita Narain. CSE researchers said that the summit simply acknowledged that a climate threat looms and the world together needs to take urgent steps. Instead, the summit highlighted the deep distrust between the rich and the emerging world and did little to acknowledge that combatting climate change requires cooperation at a scale never seen before.

The agenda of climate justice, acknowledging historical emissions and giving the developing world carbon space failed.

Coal, the fossil fuel which helped nations prosper, is a threat. No, actions were taken to consider the needs of the developing world and for rich nations to phase coal out completely. The agenda of climate finance did see some progress. Parties have committed to a process to agree on long-term climate finance beyond 2025. The CoP also decided to establish a dialogue between Parties, stakeholders and relevant organisations to support efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage associated with climate change.



WHY DID INDIA AND RUSSIA BLOCK THE MOVE TO TAKE CLIMATE CHANGE TO UNSC

A proposal to authorize the UN Security Council to discuss matters related to climate change was rejected after veto-wielding Russia and fellow member India voted against it. The draft resolution was spearheaded by Ireland and Niger which sought to create a formal space for discussions on climate change and its implications on international security.

The proposal called for UN Secretary-General to submit a report on security risks that climate change poses, in the next two years and for the appointment of a special envoy for climate security. It also asked the UN field missions to regularly report on climate change assessments from their areas of operation.

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change or UNFCCC is the specialized agency of the UN to discuss matters related to climate change. There are over 190 member countries to the UNFCCC. Discussions here have given us the Paris Agreement and its predecessor Kyoto Protocol, the instrument designed to respond to the climate change crisis. Opposing countries object that UNFCCC must remain the main forum to address all issues related to climate change (there is a consensus of all the parties) and not by a council of wealthy, veto-wielding nations.



SIGNIFICANCE OF TUVALU'S FOREIGN MINISTER COP 26 SPEECH

Simon Kofe, the foreign minister of Tuvalu, a tiny pacific island located halfway between Australia and Hawaii delivered a powerful message to the world. It was memorable for what he said and how he said it.

He was standing knee-deep in seawater dressed in a suit and tie and delivered his message. It was clear, many small pacific islands like his, were vulnerable to the effects of climate change. He was highlighting how his island nation, which many generations called home, is dying a slow death due to the rising sea levels caused by climate change and that if sea levels continue to rise, the place they called home would completely disappear.

In case the situation worsens and the country is completely submerged due to climate change, the foreign minister said that Tuvalu was exploring legal ways to keep its ownership of its maritime zones and recognition as a state, Reuters reported. The leaders of the Pacific Islands have been calling for immediate action of deeper carbon cuts from big polluters.



GIANT PANDAS ARE NO LONGER ENDANGERED

Giant Pandas are no longer endangered in the wild but are still vulnerable. The announcement by China's environmental ministry is the first time the animal's status was changed on its endangered species list, which uses similar standards as the Swiss-based IUCN.

The decision by China's authority comes five years after the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) removed Giant Pandas from the endangered list and classified them as vulnerable in 2016. Experts say that the country has managed to save its iconic animal through its long-term conservation efforts, like the expansion of its habitat and recreating and repopulating the bamboo forests, the main diet of Pandas.



CLIMATE DISASTERS DISPLACE MORE PEOPLE THAN CONFLICTS- WORLD MIGRATION REPORT 2022

History has often told us that conflicts and violence have been the biggest trigger for displacement. But the trend seems to be changing. According to the World Migration Report 2022, published every second year by the International Organization for Migration of the UN in 2020, "30.7 million new displacements were triggered by disasters in 145 countries and territories." Most of the new displacement is due to changing climate.

The report brings into focus the displacement and migration caused by climate change-induced factors, like extreme disasters and weather events. The Philippines saw the highest no. of disaster displacements in 2020. Asia reported the second-largest displacement due to disasters. India reported new disaster displacements of nearly four million.



INDONESIA'S GREEN PORT INITIATIVE

Indonesia is launching a program to make the country's ports more environmental friendly to reduce its carbon emissions and protect its marine ecosystem. The shipping activity in Indonesian waters contributes 19% of the country's annual greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonizing shipping would help in achieving its targets.

This initiative forms a part of Indonesia's plan to reduce 29% emissions by 2030. The initial efforts would include having port terminals for domestic and international vessels that use low-sulfur marine fuel oil and setting up solar panels at ports. Marine observers are happy with this government initiative saying that it is a crucial step towards achieving Indonesia's emissions reduction target while others say that it is a cover-up to the environmental degradation happening due to the indiscriminate construction of ports by the government. the only way for the Green port initiative to be truly environmentally friendly is to support the interests of traditional and small-time fishermen and tat of coastal communities, especially the indigenous coastal communities.



NATURAL VEGETATION AND TREE COVER REPLACED DUE TO EXPANSION OF CROPLAND

Cropland area across the world increased 9 per cent. The growth was primarily due to agricultural expansion in Africa and South America, the paper <u>published in Nature Food</u>. 49 per cent of the new cropland area replaced natural vegetation and tree covers, indicating a conflict with the sustainability goal of protecting terrestrial ecosystems. The largest expansion was seen in Africa, Southeast Asia and South America.

The report defined cropland as 'land used for annual and perennial herbaceous crops for human consumption, forage (including hay) and biofuel'. Perennial woody crops, permanent pastures and shifting cultivation are excluded from the definition. The change is attributed to the increase in population in the last two decades when the study was being carried out.



THE GREAT BLUE WALL

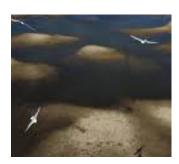
The Great Blue Wall is an international movement that seeks to protect and restore the Indian Ocean. Ten countries are coming together and planning to create a connected network of marine conservation areas to protect the most threatened aquatic areas.

Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania and France, as its overseas territory La Réunion is in the Indian Ocean, are part of the initiative. The initiative will protect not just ecologically-important marine areas like corals but also environmentally-critical areas like marshlands, mangroves, seagrass meadows and underwater ecosystems. The Great Blue Wall is inspired by the Great Green Wall project that seeks to reforest a length of 8000 km across Africa and to prevent further desertification of the sub-Saharan region.



HYDROGEN LEVEL IN ATMOSPHERE INCREASED 70% TO HEAT UP PLANET

According to a new study published in PNAS, the amount of molecular hydrogen (H2) in the atmosphere has increased by 70% in recent years as a result of human actions. Scientists from the University of Colorado Boulder and the University of California, San Diego studied air samples trapped in Antarctic ice and discovered that molecular hydrogen levels in Earth's atmosphere grew from 330 parts per billion to 550 parts per billion between 1852 and 2003. Although hydrogen is not a greenhouse gas and hence does not contribute to global warming directly, its abundance in gaseous form can have an indirect impact on ozone and methane distribution, which eventually when comes in contact with carbon-dioxide becomes a significant contributor to global warming.



LATEST UN REPORT ON GLOBAL WARMING

According to a new UN Framework Convention on Climate Change report on global emissions targets, the earth is on track to warm by 2.7 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. Global temperatures should stay below 1.5 degrees Celsius, according to scientists. UN Secretary-General António Guterres commented on the findings, calling the planet's present trajectory "catastrophic." He added that "This is a betrayal of the promise made six years ago to pursue the Paris Agreement's 1.5-degree Celsius goal. "The tremendous loss of lives and livelihoods will be quantified in failure to attain this goal." According to scientists, the world must reduce emissions by 45 percent by 2030 in order to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. According to existing country emissions commitments, emissions will increase by 16% in 2030 compared to 2010. According to the report, this will result in warming of 2.7 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. The real-life effects of this were evident this summer, when wildfires ravaged the western United States and southern Europe, while China and Germany were hit by severe floods.





Municipal
Corporation of
Greater Mumbai v
Ankita Sinha &
others

Introduction

A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court of India recently held in Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai v Ankita Sinha & Others that the National Green Tribunal (NCT) has the power to take suo motu cognizance of environmental issues, despite the fact that the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 (NGT Act) does not expressly grant the NGT that power. The decision was made in a series of related cases involving the same question: whether the NGT has the authority to exercise suo motu jurisdiction in carrying out its duties under the NGT Act.

The Supreme Court declared that the National Green Tribunal, which protects the right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, can "self-ignite action either toward amelioration or prevention of injury" even if no application is filed. At the same time, it was emphasised that the NGT's suo motu authority would be bound by natural justice and fair play principles, stating that before pronouncing an adverse decision, a party likely to be impacted by the order should be given an opportunity to be heard.

Issue

Thee issue that the Supreme Court was examining was whether the NGT has the jurisdiction to take suo moto cognizance without any formal application.

Facts

The aforesaid case stems from the decision in Ankita Sinha v. the State of Maharashtra (2018), in which the Principal Bench took note of an article titled "Garbage Gangs of Deonar: The Kingpins and Their Multi-Crore Trade" and considered it as an application under Section 14 of the NGT Act. According to the storey, rubbish from garbage dumping zones in Deonar, Mumbai, was illegally disposed away. Such illegal operations are carried out for profit, resulting in large fires that may have a negative impact on the environment, health, and lives of residents. This also caused a huge violation of several legislations related to environmental issues such as the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution), Act 1974, Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 and the Hazardous Waste Management Rules, 2016.

The Central Pollution Control Board and the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board have been asked to undertake a joint inspection with local collectors and members from the Municipal Corporation Greater Mumbai. It was also given the task of preparing certain action plans for legacy trash cleanup and compiling a report on the activities performed. The joint inspection report also noted that there was a significant quantity of legacy garbage and fire incidents, both of which resulted in significant air pollution and contributed to the Municipal Corporation Greater Mumbai's failure. Such harm to public health was self-evident, and it resulted in massive environmental degradation and legal violations. As a result, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai has been ordered to compensate the environment by depositing Rs. 5 crore with the Central Pollution Control Board within one month. This amount could also be recovered from polluters or erring officers who failed to adhere to the timetable for taking follow-up environmental rectification and the rule of law that is required for environmental protection, for which the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai has been ordered to provide a performance guaranteed to the satisfaction of the CPCB in the amount of Rs. 100 crore.

In 2019, the Supreme Court decided to keep the NGT's contested ruling on hold. Other petitions were filed against the NGT, including the prominent case of Municipal Corporation of GR. Mumbai v. Ankita Sinha (2018). Krishnan Venugopal and V Giri, senior advocates, stated the appeals in front of the bench. The bench then decided to hear all of the cases, including the lead case, on August 25, 2018.

Arguments Advanced

The arguments against NGT's suo motu jurisdiction are grouped under three broad headings: (1) NGT is a statute, and without express jurisdiction of such import, none could be conferred on it; (2) NGT's jurisdiction relates to disputes between parties, implying an adversarial pre-condition for its invocation/trigger; and (3) NGT does not have the broad judicial review power akin to the writ courts under Articles 32 and 226 of the Constitution. The reasons made in favour of the NGT's suo motu jurisdiction were not summarised in the decision.



Supreme court Judgment

To reach its conclusion in this judgement, the Supreme Court carefully considered the legislative intent, the objects and reasons for the establishment of the NGT in India, and purposefully interpreted the statutory provisions of the NGT Act in light of underlying principles of environmental justice and equity. The Supreme Court further emphasised the importance of the NGT's role in the evolution of environmental legislation in India, citing worldwide discussions on the subject.

The Court reasoned that because the NGT was established to enforce the fundamental right to life enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution in the context of environmental issues and has special jurisdiction to enforce environmental rights, the legislature envisioned the NGT's mandate and jurisdiction to be one of the most expansive. As a result, the provisions of the NGT Act must be read with the goal of emphasising them.

In light of this, the Court examined the design of the NGT Act and its accompanying regulations and concluded that the legislature gave the NGT broad suo motu power equivalent to writ courts, but confined it to environmental matters under Article 21. The Court outlined the NGT's unique function in delivering environmental justice and how it differs from other statutory tribunals.

It was pointed out that the NGT's powers go beyond simple arbitration of disputes between two parties. The phrase "to secure purposes of justice" appears in Rule 24 of the National Green Tribunal (Practice & Procedure) Rules, 2011 (Rules), implying that the NGT has been given broad discretionary power to secure justice, as well as the responsibility to utilise that power to accomplish the goal. The power also includes, among other things, promoting environmental rights, paying compensation to disaster victims, devising strategies to put environmental ideals into practise, and hauling up authorities for inactivity when necessary. The NGT Act gives locus standi broad powers (akin to writ courts) and the ability to shape remedy even if it is not granted.

NGT also has "non-adjudicatory powers," according to the Court. To do full justice to its environmental mandate, NGT's job has always been to fulfil equally important responsibilities that are preventative, ameliorative, or remedial in nature. The Court has emphasised, however, that this broad jurisdiction does not preclude the use of limited "merits review" or other legislative constraints on power.

It was also noted that the NGT has "self-activating power" under Section 14(1) of the NGT Act, implying that an application is not required to activate the NGT's authority. When the three requirements of Section 14(1) are met, namely, no civil lawsuits, participation of a serious environmental matter, and execution of the law.

In addition to the foregoing, the use of the terms "decision" and "award" or "order" in Section 20 of the NGT Act demonstrates the broad scope of the NGT's authority when adopting the "precautionary principle."

Finally, the Court discussed the significance and relevance of environmental justice and equity in India. Individuals' rights may not be reduced even if they are unable to bring a case before the NGT owing to a lack of access to justice. Beyond simple adjudication at the request of an application, the NGT's positive function is therefore deemed to be unquestionably necessary for achieving environmental justice.

The Court noted that, as a procedural safeguard, the NGT would be compelled to issue a notice to the sender of a letter or the author of a media item on which the action is based before taking suo motu action. Furthermore, a party who is likely to be harmed by such action should be given a fair chance to plead its case before being subjected to unfavourable orders.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court's decision establishes and specifies the outlines and breadth of the NGT's authority to address environmental concerns on its own initiative. The Supreme Court has balanced the use of purposive interpretation to "unbind" the specialised tribunal in the preservation of environmental justice and equality with stated safeguards. The nature of the trigger, such as a letter or a suo motu commencement, cannot be the foundation for curtailing the function and responsibilities of the specialised forum when the NGT is legally acting within the confines of its legislative authority and with procedural protections. The Court has underlined, however, that the NGT will be governed by natural justice and fair play principles when exercising suo motu power.





Citizens of Great Doon vs Union of India

Introduction

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways launched the Chardham Mahamarg Vikas Pariyojna on December 23, 2016, with the goal of widening about 900 kilometres of national highways to provide safer, smoother, and quicker traffic flow. These roads link the holy temples of Uttarakhand's "Chote Char Dham" – Yamunotri (NH94/134 up to Janki Chatti), Gangotri (NH-108), Kedarnath (NH-109, up to Sonprayag), Badrinath (NH-58), and the Tanakpur-Pithoragarh portion of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra route (NH-125).

The project's goal was to make it easier to go to these shrines by extending existing roads and making travel safer, smoother, and faster. With 16 bypasses, realignments, and tunnels, 15 flyovers, 101 minor bridges, and 3516 culverts, it aims to enlarge existing highways into a double lane with paved shoulder format. The MoRTH has divided the project into 53 separate projects, each of which is less than 100 kilometres long.

Issue

The project's construction was contested on the grounds that it would have a harmful impact on the Himalayan ecology by causing deforestation, hill excavation, and muck dumping, all of which would cause further landslides and soil erosion in an already fragile region.

Facts

The national roads from Rishikesh to Mana, Rishikesh to Gangotri, and Tanakpur to Pithoragarh will be built to the 2020 MoRTH Circular's double-lane carriageway width with paved shoulder standard. The national highways connecting Rishikesh to Mana, Rishikesh to Gangotri, and Tanakpur to Pithoragarh serve as feeder routes to border areas and are critical for national security. It also serves as a critical link between the Armed Forces' bases along the Nelong Axis, Mana Pass, Rimkhim Pass, Niti Pass, and Lipulekh Pass. The relevance of double-laned roadways has been underlined since they are required for the transit of military trucks, equipment, and troops.

The Stage-I Forest Clearances issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Changel on 29 September 2020 and 24 December 2020 in respect of stretches of road that are part of National Highway No 72A in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh; and (ii) the Wildlife Clearance issued by the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife on 5 January 2021. Noting that the principal objection was to the Stage-I Forest Clearances, this Court reserved the right of the appellants to take proper legal action by petitioning the National Green Tribunal2 to challenge the Stage-I Forest Clearances in its order of September 7, 2021. The appellant was also given authority to dispute the Wildlife Clearance at the proper time, according to the directions.

Following this Court's judgement, the appellant filed Original Application No. 240 of 2021 with the National Green Tribunal, citing the tribunal's authority under Section 14(1) of the National Green Tribunal Act 20103. The Tribunal denied the claim in a judgement dated 6 October 2021, citing the appellants' effort to 'circumvent' its appellate authority under section 16 by invoking its original jurisdiction under section 14.

Arguments Advanced

No reason to entertain the application and forego the right to appeal. Furthermore, the applicant has stated that in the case of linear projects, a streamlined method is applicable. The acceptance of Stage I is considered working authorisation for tree cutting. As a result, if the permit was lawfully given, tree cutting within the limits of that authorization will not be considered a violation of the law. In the absence of a challenge to the award of EC, a claim that EC was granted incorrectly or that the reports on which EC was granted were factually erroneous cannot be considered. The project involves road upgrading and enlargement, as well as some building. There is no material to show any such violation. If any such violations are found, the same can always be challenged in accordance with law.

Cutting down even a single tree is unquestionably a cause for worry. When it comes to the ecological services provided by trees, every effort must be done to safeguard each one. At the same time, under some circumstances, tree cutting is legal, subject to the consent of the statutory authorities, compliance with the statutory restrictions, and the use of all required protections, such as afforestation and translocation wherever practicable. In this scenario, the order granting FC establishes the essential requirements. There is no allegation of a violation. In these circumstances, there is no justification for the Tribunal to intervene.



In reality, no order for tree cutting was reported to have been published in the public domain, hence the award of a Stage-I Forest Clearance would not be subject to the Tribunal's appellate authority.

On September 11, 2021, an application was filed with the Divisional Forest Officer5 under the Right to Information Act 20056, requesting particular disclosure of information on whether any authorisation for tree cutting had been given. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans responded on October 11, 2021, that no order for tree felling had been issued. However, in the supplemental papers submitted on behalf of the respondents in these proceedings, a DFO decision dated August 27, 2021, enabling tree cutting, has been placed on the record.

It is crucial to understand the nature of the Tribunal's authority under Section 16 of the NGT Act. A person aggrieved by an order or decision issued (after the commencement of the NGT Act) by the State Government or other body under Section 2 of the FC Act may file an appeal with the Tribunal within thirty days, according to Section 16(e). Thus, a clear reading of Section 16(e) shows that the right to an appellate remedy arises when the State Government or any other body issues an order or judgement under Section 2 of the FC Act.

A person aggrieved by an order or decision of the State Government or other body under Section 2A of the FC Act has the right to appeal to the Tribunal, in addition to the provisions of Section 16(e). The FC Act's Section 2A is identical to the NGT Act's Section 16(e). Section 2(ii) of the FC Act states that no State Government or other authority may issue an order ordering, among other things, that "any forest land or any portion thereof may be utilised for any non-forest purpose" without the prior consent of the Central Government. As a result, Section 2 contemplates the State Government issuing an order with the prior permission of the Central Government. Therefore, unless an order has been passed or a decision is made, the appellate remedy before the Tribunal would not be available

Judgment

The Supreme Court held the Court cannot override the modalities decided upon by the Army and the Ministry of Defence to safeguard the security of the nation's borders.

Court is referring to the litigious chain that surrounded the Char Dham Project construction, an ambitious project aiming at widening the roads of nearly 900 kms of the national highways in the State of Uttarakhand which shall act as vital arteries to reach establishments of the Armed forces apart from connecting Hindu shrines located in an area called "Kedarkhand", today, largely known as Garhwal.

The Supreme Court, according to Justices DY Chandrachud, Surya Kant, and Vikram Nath, cannot intervene in an establishment policy decision because it cannot second-guess the Armed Forces' infrastructure needs or override the modalities decided upon by the Army and the Ministry of Defense to safeguard the nation's borders.

The Court has noted that the armed forces' operational requirements include infrastructural assistance for enabling the mobility of personnel, equipment, and machinery, and the MoD has demonstrated its bona fides in this respect, at least as far as the project is concerned.

The Supreme Court, while supporting the Centre's decision to build the Char Dham road project, stated that "the requirement for the creation of national roads of a DL-PS quality is commensurate to the goal of meeting the nation's security concerns as evaluated by the MoD."

Conclusion

The Court has chosen the road of sustainable development, and the Centre has agreed to move forward with the project on the condition that it meets all of the issues highlighted by the High Powered Committee (HPC) about the environment in the sensitive area.

The Court has also established an oversight committee to ensure that the HPC's recommendations are carried out. Shri Justice Arjan Kumar Sikri, a former Supreme Court judge, will preside over the meeting.

"The purpose of this Oversight Committee is not to conduct a new environmental examination of the Project, but to assess the execution of the HPC's recommendations," the court stated.



The National Green
Tribunal has refused to
reinstate an order
barring mining in
Chittorgarh.

The National Green Tribunal has rejected to overturn a ban on mining operations within 10 kilometres of the Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary in Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, citing the "precautionary principle." The restriction would have to be maintained until an expert study on the impact of mining outside the borders of the Eco-Sensitive Zone is completed, according to a bench led by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel.

The bench stated that such a study could be carried out by a seven-member joint committee consisting of the Chief Wildlife Warden of Rajasthan, the Wildlife Institute of India in Dehradun, the Indian School of Mines in Dhanbad, the ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil and Water Conservation in Dehradun, IIT Roorkee, the CPCB, the State PCB, and the District Magistrate of Chittorgarh. The NGT ordered the committee to convene its first meeting within one month, as well as conduct a site visit and speak with stakeholders.

Except for site visits, the Committee will be able to perform its business online, and the report will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Forests within three months after its first meeting. In response to the request for a vacate order barring mining within 10 kilometres of the sanctuary, we believe that allowing mining too near to the sanctuary violates the "Precautionary" principle. As a result, the restriction will have to be maintained until a decision is reached following an expert evaluation of the consequences of mining outside the ESZ's limits.

According to the NGT, a joint committee of the MoEF and the CPCB might convene within a month to develop recommendations for sustainable limestone mining in cooperation with any other expert or organisation. Further corrective action may be taken by a combined committee of the CPCB, the State PCB, and the District Magistrate of Chittorgarh. The activity might be finished in as little as six months. The tribunal was considering a case made by Pratap Bhanu Singh Shekhawat, a Rajasthan resident who had raised the issue of enormous air pollution, which presented a threat to the lives of those who lived in the vicinity.



The National Green
Tribunal has formed a
committee to
investigate the water
quality of the Doodh
Ganga and Mamath
Kull in Kashmir.

At first glance, it appears that continuing violations of the Water Act, to the detriment of the environment and public health, are going unnoticed. As a result, the Tribunal's involvement may be required, according to an order issued on Monday. The NGT ordered the authorities to verify the facts and take appropriate legal measures, as well as forming a five-member team to investigate the water quality and provide a factual report within two months. The decision also established a five-member Joint Committee comprising the CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board), the J&K PCC (Pollution Control Committee), the Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar and Budgam, and the Director, J&K Urban Local Bodies.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has formed a five-member committee to investigate the water quality in the Doodh Ganga river and Mamath Kull in Kashmir, claiming that there is ongoing violation of the Water Act in these water bodies, which is endangering the environment and public health. The J-K Pollution Control Board would be the lead agency for compliance and coordination, according to the tribunal. Within two weeks, the joint committee might convene and inspect the places in concern. The committee may investigate the water quality in terms of faecal coliform, the amount of sewage discharged, solid waste dumped along the banks, and the action plan prepared by the River Rejuvenation Committee (RRC) for J-K, which was formed in accordance with the tribunal's orders in OA 673/18, according to the NGT.

It went on to say that more action will be planned and carried out as a result. The NGT requested that the committee submit a factual report through e-mail within two months. The date for further deliberation has been set for March 8, 2022.



Dolomite Mining in Uttarakhand: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered a 2 crores interim payment for environmental damage and spreading muck beyond the allotted area.



The National Green Tribunal recently ordered the project proponent to deposit Rs. 2 crore as interim compensation for causing environmental damage and spreading muck beyond the leased area in a case involving the alleged illegal mining of dolomite rock by one M/s N.B Minerals Corporation Ltd in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh area. The court, chaired by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, gave the project proponent one month to deposit the funds since it believed the project proponent had failed to take preventative measures to prevent spilling from the pit area into the valley.

The CPCB, the Indian School of Mines, Bihar, the Indian Bureau of Mines, the Ministry of Mines, Government of India, and the SEIAA, Uttarakhand had formed a joint committee to carry out remediation and determine compensation in the case. Muck was spilled beyond the designated region into the environment. The bench noted that the overflow material was not correctly placed, resulting in further damage.

The Tribunal ordered the following after reviewing the report of the joint committee, which found that the proponent failed to take adequate measures to prevent spillages from the active mine pit area towards the slope or valley: on the principle laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the compensation liable to the paid may be not less than Rs. 14 crore. We require the Project Proponent to pay an amount of Rs. 2 crore within one month as interim compensation, which will be a condition precedent for enabling mining to resume, in addition to other compliances already directed.

The Tribunal ordered the following after reviewing the report of the joint committee, which found that the proponent failed to take adequate measures to prevent spillages from the active mine pit area towards the slope or valley: on the principle laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the compensation liable to the paid may be not less than Rs. 14 crore. We require the Project Proponent to pay an amount of Rs. 2 crore within one month as interim compensation, which will be a condition precedent for enabling mining to resume, in addition to other compliances already directed.

The sum will be in addition to the compensation already awarded for agricultural losses, according to the Tribunal. The Tribunal further ordered that mining activities be prohibited until the entire land has been rehabilitated and the victims have been compensated.



The National Green Tribunal directed NMCG to observe the development in Namami Gange Project



The issue was the dumping of sewage and other pollutants into the rivers Dibru, Brahmaputra, and Dangori in the Tinsukia district of Assam by boats and houseboats.

According to an affidavit submitted by the Assam State Pollution Control Board on November 12, 2021, an environmental compensation fee of Rs. 2,25,000/- was issued on the polluting unit - M/s Royal Princes, which the polluting unit has not deposited to date.

The aforementioned house boat unit also filed an appeal with the Supreme Court, which ordered the deposit of Rs.1,25,000/with the court's registry and set the case for November 22, 2021.

In light of the situation, the NGT ordered that the case be brought before the Tribunal following the Supreme Court's ruling, and adjourned the case sine die.



Supreme Court issued notice against NGT order to shut restaurants at Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary



The Supreme Court has given notice against the National Green Tribunal's order instructing the Rajasthan government to close all restaurants in the notified forest area of the Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary/Nahargarh Fort in Jaipur on December 1st. The Supreme Court's ruling came in response to a petition contesting the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) judgment prohibiting restaurants from opening in the Nahargarh Sanctuary.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court issued notice to environmentalist Rajendra Tiwari to file a response because Secretary of the Department of Archaeology and Museums and others filed an appeal after NGT has given an order to shut down all the restaurants on his petition.



NGT approved the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor Expressway



The National Green Tribunal (NGT) approved the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor Expressway and constituted a committee to guarantee that no environmental damage occurs. The court observed that the corridor is essential for strategic defence purposes because it allows for the rapid and smooth transit of army/warheads to higher Peaks of the himalayas.

The committee will consist of 12 independent members in total and will be headed by the chief Secretary, Uttarakhand with nominees of Wildlife Institute of India, Central Pollution Control Board, Uttarakhand State PCB, and others. The committee will have to ensure that there is no improper muck disposal or blocking of animal corridors, on the Ganeshpur-Dehradun Road (NH-72A) segment.



National Green Tribunal constituted a committee to look into violations at chandrapura lake.



The National Green Tribunal has formed a seven-member joint committee to investigate suspected violations of buffer zone and solid waste management standards at Chandapura lake in Bengaluru's Anekal taluk.

The decision came after NGT took suo moto cognizance of The Indian Express report 'Lakes of Bengaluru: Industrial effluents, raw sewage; stinky tale of Chandapura lake' published on November 21. As per the report The lake, which was built during the Chola dynasty to suit the drinking and household needs of the local residents, was choked by rapid encroachment and industrial effluents. Furthermore, through storm water drains, the lake receives untreated sewage from Chandapura town.



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FUN FACTS



The rate of wildlife extinction is at its worst since the dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago:

In a new her new book The Extinction Market: Wildlife Trafficking and How to Counter It, Vanda Felbab-Brown explains that the planet is experiencing alarming levels of species loss. This loss, she says, is caused in large part by intensified poaching and wildlife trafficking driven by expanding demand for medicines, food, and trophies. Affecting many more species than just the iconic elephants, rhinos, and tigers, Felbab-Brown explains that the rate of extinction is now as much as 1,000 times the historical average and at its worst since the dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago. In addition to causing irretrievable biodiversity loss, wildlife trafficking also poses serious threats to public health, potentially triggering a global pandemic.



Saharan Desert Winds Fertilize The Amazon Basin:

Despite the fact that the Sahara and the Amazon Rainforest are miles apart, they share millions of tons of dust. Dust carried from the wind of the Saharan Desert help to fertilize the Amazon Basin, which is the world's most bio diverse ecosystem! In reality, it's not actually the dust, but the nutrients that it carries, especially phosphorus – which is a key nutrient for plants to grow and survive.



Natural disasters lead to reductions in educational attainment and academic performance especially for adolescent girls:

According to Erica Chuang, Jessie Pinch off, and Stephanie Psaki, research has shown an overall reduction in educational attainment, lower academic performance, and higher rates of absenteeism among children who have experienced climate shocks. After these events, children may also miss school due to sickness (e.g., malnutrition during drought, or increased rates of diarrheal disease after floods), injury, or displacement. In the long run, this may reduce lifetime earnings when these children reach adulthood.

Moreover, climate events disproportionately affect vulnerable students, particularly adolescent girls. This pattern is particularly alarming say the researchers, as evidence suggests that climate-related shocks (cyclones, flash floods, wildfires) and stresses (drought, for example) are increasing in frequency and intensity. The relationship between girls' education and climate events is complex, but the authors note that new research is exploring the problem—and suggesting potential solutions.

The Ozone Layer Will Be Fully-Healed By 2069

The UN's Environment Agency (UNEP) has declared that the ozone layer, the planet's protective shield of gas, is on track to heal completely in our lifetime. The recovery was made possible due to the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances, showing that if humans work together, we can really save the planet!





We Can Get Energy From The Ocean

Yes, we can source energy from the ocean! Ocean thermal energy is a new technology that produces energy by harnessing the different temperatures (thermal gradients) between the deep ocean and the ocean surface. Many countries have started to experiment with ocean thermal energy regulation as a source of renewable energy.

Aluminium Can Be Recycled Indefinitely:

Recycling just one aluminium can save enough energy to power a TV for 3 hours! Aluminium is the most recyclable materials in the recycling bin, as well as one of the most recycled materials! Aluminium can be recycled back to its original form and has a cost-effective recycling process, where it more than pays for its recycling costs and saves 90% more energy than sourcing new aluminium.





Fungi Help To Manage The Earth:

Fungi are earth's environmental managers! Without them, all life in the forest would be buried under layers of dead matter. They not only decompose dead matter, but also break down rocks and even help to absorb oil spills and radiation. Through the decomposition process, fungi release nutrients into the soil, which are needed for plants to grow and thrive.



SUCCESS STORY NANDINI VELHO

NANDINI VELHO, A TRAINED FIELD BIOLOGIST WHOSE MAIN PURPOSE IN LIFE IS TO PROTECT THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE WORLD AND SAVE THE PLANET. VELHO'S DETERMINATION AND QUICK WIT FOR CONSERVATION IS APPRECIABLE AND SHE HAS LEFT NO STONE UNTURNED TO ACHIEVE IT. WITH A MASTER'S DEGREE IN CONSERVATION BIOLOGY FROM THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY UNDER HER BELT, AND A DOCTORAL DEGREE FROM AUSTRALIA'S JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY. NANDINI IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE FACE OF MODERN CONSERVATION IN INDIA.

TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW POLICY WORKS (OR DOES NOT WORK). SHE WORKED AS A 'POLICY FELLOW' AT THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS WITH JAIRAM RAMESH, FORMER MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS. WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE FOREST DEPARTMENT, LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADERS AND OTHER NGOS, SHE WAS PART OF A TEAM THAT ORGANISED THE FIRST-EVER ARUNACHAL BIRD FESTIVAL AT EAGLENEST. SHE HAS REVIEWED AND HELPED WRITE TIGER CONSERVATION PLANS OF IMPORTANT RESERVES IN NORTHEAST INDIA. A CONSERVATION DYNAMO, SHE HELPED DESIGN AND CREATE A DELIGHTFUL NATURE INTERPRETATION CENTRE AT PAKKE. AND ANNUALLY WORKS WITH CHILDREN LIVING IN VILLAGE SCHOOLS AROUND EAGLENEST. REACHING OUT TO SUPPORTIVE ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS HEMENDRA KOTHARI'S WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TRUST, SHE WORKS WITH THE FOREST DEPARTMENT AND DR. ANISH ANDHERIA (DIRECTOR OF WCT) TO RAISE FUNDS FOR UNIFORMS AND PROVISIONS FOR AS MANY AS 140 FRONTLINE, ANTI-POACHING STAFF OF PAKKE, THE LOCATION FOR THE FIELDWORK THAT RESULTED IN BOTH HER DISSERTATIONS. AN EXCEPTIONALLY CHARISMATIC COMMUNICATOR, NANDINI'S WRITINGS RANGE FROM ACADEMIC JOURNALS ACROSS THE WORLD TO POPULAR PUBLICATIONS WHERE SHE EXPERTLY BREAKS DOWN COMPLICATED ISSUES INTO LANGUAGE THAT LAYPERSONS CAN COMPREHEND. A LINK BETWEEN HARD CONSERVATION, SCIENCE, AND COMMUNITY WELFARE, NANDINI IS UNSTOPPABLE IN HER QUEST TO WIN SUPPORT FOR WILD NATURE.







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