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Eco-Sensitive zone

- Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has issued a draft notification to declare the area of Neyyar and Peppara Wildlife Sanctuaries in Thiruvananthapuram as Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ).

Neyyar and Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary

- Both these wildlife sanctuaries are included under the Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve in the Western Ghats.
- These wildlife sanctuaries are known for rich biodiversity, where 1000 species of flowers, 43 mammal species, 233 bird species, 46 reptile species, 13 amphibian species, 27 marine species are found. The endangered Myristica Swamp is also located in this protected area.

Provisions of notification

- It is imperative to prepare a regional master plan in consultation with various departments to ensure strict adherence to the rules.
- ESZ A monitoring committee will be constituted under the chairmanship of the District Collector for monitoring.

Opposition to notification

- Experts are of the view that notified areas may adversely affect the normal life of local bodies as well as their development prospects.

- The restrictions imposed in this area are likely to hamper the ongoing infrastructure development projects, including the Hill Highway project.
- Farmers engaged in agricultural activities may face difficulties due to restrictions.

What is ESZ AREA?

- These are also called Ecologically Fragile Areas or Ecologically Vulnerable Areas. Notification of these areas is issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. These are established in the vicinity of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.
- Under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, mining, sand quarrying, construction of thermal power plants etc. can be banned in these sensitive areas.

E.S.Z. Activities prohibited in the area

- 1 km of protected areas. No construction of any kind, including hotels and resorts, is permitted inside.
- Small scale industries classified as non-polluting by the Central Pollution Control Board can be set up in these areas.
- No tree can be felled in the forest or government or revenue or private land without the prior permission of the competent authority in the State Government.
- Commercial mining, stone quarrying etc. activities are prohibited in this area. Also, new industries and expansion of existing polluting industries are not allowed.
- In addition, hydroelectric projects, solid waste disposal sites, large-scale commercial livestock and poultry farms, wood-based industrial units and brick kilns have also been banned in these areas.
- The use or production of hazardous substances in the region, the discharge of untreated effluents into natural water bodies or land areas, the manufacture and storage of explosives, the commercial use of firewood, the dumping of solid, plastic and chemical wastes in rivers and land areas, Encroachment on the river bank will be stopped.

Regulated activities

- Local communities in these protected areas will be allowed to continue agriculture, horticulture, dairy farming and aquaculture.
- Environment friendly activities like rain water harvesting, organic farming, cottage industries, use of renewable energy and fuel, agro-forestry, eco-friendly transport,

horticulture and medicinal plantation and environmental awareness will be encouraged in these areas.

Central administrative tribunal

- Recently, the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) launched a special drive in all the 19 benches of the tribunal to resolve the cases of applicants like senior citizens/pensioners.

Central Administrative Tribunal:

Establishment:

- It was established under Article 323A of the Constitution.
- It provides for adjudication of disputes and complaints relating to the conditions of service and recruitment of persons appointed to public services and posts in relation to the affairs of other authorities under the control of the Union.

Legal Framework:

- The Parliament passed the Administrative Tribunal Act in 1985 under Article 323A of the Constitution.
- The Act authorizes the Central Government to establish a Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) and State Administrative Tribunals.
- A new path was paved by this Act with the aim of providing speedy and affordable justice to the aggrieved public servants.
- CAT was established during the prime ministership of Rajiv Gandhi.
- Benches / Benches: There are 19 benches of CAT all over India.

Purpose and Structure:

- CAT is an expert body consisting of administrative and judicial members who are capable of dispensing speedy and effective justice on the basis of their specialized knowledge.
- A sitting or retired judge of a High Court is its chairman.

Operating Principle:

- The Tribunal follows the principles of natural justice in deciding the cases and is not bound by the procedure prescribed by the Code of Civil Procedure.
- Under Section 17 of the Administrative Tribunal Act, 1985, the Tribunal has been empowered to exercise the same jurisdiction and authority in respect of contempt itself as the High Court.

Freedom:

- The conditions of service of the Chairperson and Members are the same as that of a High Court Judge as per the Administrative Tribunals (Amendment) Act, 2006.

Appeal against orders:

- Matters relating to the orders of the CAT are challenged through a writ petition under Article 226/227 of the Constitution before the High Court in whose territorial jurisdiction the Bench of the Tribunal is situated.

A new liver disease

- Recently some cases of a mysterious liver disease have been reported in the US and UK, as well as in Spain, Denmark and the Netherlands.

What is this mysterious disease?

- Children from 1 to 6 years of age have been victims of this disease.
- According to reports, this disease can be caused by a virus usually associated with colds.
- So far this disease is being told very serious. Although no child has died from it so far, six children have had to undergo liver transplants in the US and UK.

Symptom:

- Its symptoms are similar to those of common liver diseases such as hepatitis or inflammation of the liver, but the cause is still unknown.
- Symptoms such as jaundice, diarrhea and abdominal pain have also been observed.

Possible reasons:

- Laboratory testing has ruled out the possibility of infection with hepatitis type A, B, C and E viruses for the disease that commonly cause such diseases. It is not yet known if international travel played a role in the spread of the disease.
- A group of viruses called adenoviruses are probably responsible for this, which causes respiratory diseases such as the common cold.
- Some European children have been found to be adenovirus positive while some have been found to be COVID-19 positive.
- Adenoviruses are generally preferred for vaccines because their DNA is double-stranded, which makes them genetically more stable and less likely to change after injection.
- So according to analysis, hepatitis can potentially be associated with adenovirus 41.

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