

Central Empowerment Committee (CEC) ruling on Goa infra projects:

May 1, 2021

In news: The CEC constituted by the Supreme Court has [raised serious concerns over the environmental impact](#) of the double-tracking of the railway line from Castle Rock in Karnataka to Kulem in Goa.

About the ruling-

- The Goa Foundation had filed an application before the CEC on June 26, 2020, alleging violation of the Supreme Court's order on matters relating to the National Park & Wildlife Sanctuaries and contravention of the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**, by the Standing Committee of NBWL.
- The CEC examined the proposals cleared by the Standing Committee for the **three linear projects** in Goa.
- They are **doubling railway tracks, four-laning of a national highway, and the Goa-Tanmar Transmission Project** – that will cut through the Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary (BMWS) and Mollem National Park (MNP) in South Goa.
- The Goa Foundation submitted that taken together, the **three projects involved diversion of about 170 hectares of forest land and sanctuary land, and the felling of an estimated 37,000 trees.**
- In its report, the CEC said that the doubling of the railway track from Castle Rock in Karnataka to Kulem will destroy the fragile eco-system of the Western Ghats which is an internationally recognised Biodiversity hotspot.
- The CEC observed that the estimate of projected increase

in traffic from Karnataka to Goa furnished by the railways is not based on facts and is without any sound reasoning.

- It has asked the Supreme Court to consider revoking the permission granted by the SC-NBWL for the double-tracking project.