Vacancies in Courts & Tribunals

Why in news?

In recent days, the Supreme Court has voiced concerns over a large number of vacancies in High Courts and tribunals.

What are the Court's observations?

- Chief Justice of India confronted the Government with a list of 240 vacancies in various tribunals.
- Many tribunals lack presiding officers, and recommendations made by selection committees have not been acted upon.
- The vacancies in High Courts are at a staggering 455, as on 1st August, 2021.
- Even after the Court orders fixing time-frames for the Intelligence Bureau and the Government to process names forwarded by the Collegium, the centre has not acted on it.
- This is adversely affecting the adjudication of commercial disputes.

What are the concerns?

- The jurisdiction previously exercised by High Courts is now being exercised by the tribunals.
- But the government seems to be undermining their independence by repeatedly framing rules that seek to provide for greater executive control over the tribunals.
- Also, tribunals were created for specialization, domain expertise and relatively quicker adjudication.
- These purposes of the tribunals are lost if these bodies have a large number of vacancies.
- The Union government is also reluctant to create a national body for overseeing the appointment of members on tribunals as well as their appraisals.

Source: The Hindu