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#### **4. Open Budget Survey 2019**

**Prelims Syllabus:** International Institutions – Summits, Working, Organisations

**Prelims Tag:** Open Budget Survey, International Budget Partnership (IBP)

**Mains Syllabus:** GS-II Important International Institutions, Agencies and fora- their Structure, Mandate.

**Mains Tag:** Open Budget Survey, International Budget Partnership (IBP)

#### **Why in News?**

- The International Budget Partnership (IBP) has recently released an Open Budget Survey (OBS) 2019.

#### **About Open Budget Survey:**

- It is part of the International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Initiative, a global research and advocacy program to promote public access to budget information and the adoption of accountable budget systems.
- It is a biennial survey, which covers 117 countries.
- It rates the level of budget transparency across countries on a scale of 0-100, based on several normative, internationally comparable indicators
- It evaluates each country on the basis of the availability of key budget documents of the Central or Federal Government, and assesses whether these are made public, in a timely manner, and provide comprehensive information.

#### **About International Budget Partnership (IBP):**

- It is a collaborative effort of multiple actors – including civil society, state actors, international institutions and the private sector.
- It was formed in 1997 to promote transparent and inclusive government budget processes as a means to improve governance and service delivery in the developing world.
- It intends to bring citizens participation in open, inclusive budgeting processes to shape policies and practices that promote equity and justice on a sustainable basis.
- It focusses on citizens and civil society organizations (CSOs) was driven by the pioneering civil society budget monitoring efforts in a small number of middle-income countries in the early 1990s.
- Its ultimate aim is to ensure that public resources are used more effectively to fight poverty and promote equitable and sustainable development in countries around the world.

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### **About the Global Scenario in OBS:**

- In OBS 2019, it finds a modest global improvement in budget transparency, which is consistent with the overall trend measured by the survey over the past years.
- The global average transparency score has turned out to be 45 out of 100 and thus levels of publicly available budget information remains limited.
- New Zealand tops the chart with a score of 87. Further, South Africa (87), Mexico (82) and Brazil (81) are among the top six countries providing extensive information to the public for scrutiny.
- The citizens' participation in the budget process continued to be at a dismal level and thus average global scores on the OBS participation measure remains 14 out of 100.
- Out of 117 countries only 30 surveyed countries have adequate scores both for audit and for legislative oversight.

### **About Indian Scenario in OBS:**

- India has been placed at 53rd position among 117 nations in terms of budget transparency and accountability.
- India's Union Budget process has a transparency score of 49 out of 100, which is higher than the global average of 45.
- Some of the other large developing countries, with the exception of China, have got much higher transparency scores compared to India.
- The public participation in its budgets has been flagged as an area of improvement required for India.
- The absence of a published Pre-Budget Statement and not bringing out a Mid-Year Review in 2018-19 pulled down the transparency score for the Union Budget of India.

### **Way Ahead:**

- Though many governments and citizens have embraced the open budgeting agenda, more efforts to translate good intentions into better practice are required.
- A global effort of joint, sustained activism is needed to accelerate progress and deliver the promises of open Budgeting to all Citizens.