

DAILY PT POINTERS

13th December, 2023



HEADLINES OF THE DAY



The Hindu: GS2-Polity and Governance (Page 1)

Lok Sabha passes Bills for women's quota in J&K, Puducherry

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Tuesday passed two Bills to extend the provisions of the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, which grants 33% reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, to the Union Territories of Puducherry and Jammu and Kashmir. The debate in the House was, however, dominated by Supreme Court's verdict on Monday on Article 370.

Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai introduced the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Second Amendment) Bill and the Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha.



Nityanand Rai

Parliament by amending the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019," said the Bill. The provisions for providing reservation for women in the Puducherry Assembly also need to be made by Parliament, the statement read.

National Conference's Hasnain Masoodi pointed out that while there was

- The Lok Sabha passed two Bills to extend the provisions of the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act to the Union Territories of Puducherry and Jammu and Kashmir.
- It grants 33% reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

Do you know ?

- The Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023, seeks to reserve 33 per cent of the seats for women in the Lok Sabha, the State legislative assemblies and the Delhi legislative assembly, through the amendment of Article 239AA of the Constitution and the insertion of two new articles — Article 330A and Article 332A.
- The reservation would also apply to seats for SC/ST in Lok Sabha, the state legislative assemblies and the Delhi legislative assembly

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The Hindu: GS2-Governance / GS3-Economy (Page 13)



Understanding the debates around anarcho-capitalism

The term has recently gained popularity with Javier Milei, a self-proclaimed anarcho-capitalist, winning the presidential elections of Argentina. The political philosophy calls for the abolition of the state and for law and order to be controlled by private companies.

Prashant Ponnala

Anarcho-capitalism refers to a political philosophy which calls for the abolition of the state and for the provision of law and order to be controlled by private companies in a free market. The term was coined by American libertarian economist Murray Rothbard, while Belgian political economist Guy de Méliard is considered to be the first anarcho-capitalist. It has recently gained popularity with Javier Milei, who calls himself an anarcho-capitalist, winning the race to become the President of Argentina last month.

How does it work?

Traditionally, free market advocates have supported the private provision of most goods and services, except police and courts which, it was believed, could only be provided by the state. But anarcho-capitalists believe that private companies competing in a free market can provide policing and legal services as well, often far better than the state when it comes to quality and price, just the way private companies today can offer better cars, healthcare services, etc. at cheaper prices than the government. Anarcho-capitalists argue, private companies can also provide a far better

police and legal system.

It should be noted that in an anarcho-capitalist society, people would be paying private police and courts to offer them protection against crime and to adjudicate disputes with others. Anarcho-capitalists argue that serious companies, which depend on customer patronage for their survival, would ethically serve the needs of their customers. This is in contrast to the current monopoly police and court system offered by the state that is funded using taxpayer money and characterised by delays and various inefficiencies. Since citizens often need to pay more regardless of the quality of the police or legal services offered by the state, the police and courts are not accountable to citizens. Further, the quality of these public services is often quite low while their costs are significantly high. In an anarcho-capitalist society, on the other hand, customers who are unhappy with the services of a certain private court or police can stop paying the market and switch to a competing court or police in the marketplace. In other words, competition would ensure that the quality of police and legal services is high and prices low.

An impractical ideology?

Critics of anarcho-capitalism, however, believe that services like police and

judiciary cannot be provided by multiple firms within a single geographical region. They argue that this would lead to fragmentation and conflict between different armed private groups trying to protect the interests of their own paying clients or local niches. Critics also point out that police protection and legal adjudication offered by markets would favour the rich and not the poor. They argue that the rich can easily get away with crime by paying a higher sum of money to the private police or court and leave the poor without justice.

Anarcho-capitalists, however, deny both these claims made by their critics. Firstly, they point out that it would not be sensible for a private police or court seeking long-term profits to refuse cooperation with its competitors in order to avoid a client (who perhaps has committed a crime). If a private police or court engages in such behaviour, it would lose customers from its competitors who could choose to cooperate with its competitors. For example, if private police agency A kills a client who has committed a crime against a client of private police agency B, then B can decide to demand another client who has committed a crime from agency A and use it to discredit A. A will thus risk losing its customers to other clients to whom it is unable to deliver justice. So what is

likely to happen, anarcho-capitalists argue, is that competing police and courts, trying to avoid a costly stalemate, would agree to play by a certain pre-agreed set of rules which is common to conflicts between their clients. While these non-market rules turn out to be self-administered by the competing demands of customers in the market.

Anarcho-capitalists also deny that the poor would be subject to injustice from the rich under anarcho-capitalism. They point out that, in the case of most goods and services sold in the market, the sellers get the majority of their revenues not from the rich but from the lower society. So, a private court or police firm is unlikely to favour the rich as it would then run the risk of losing the patronage of other poorer customers in the market. Further, anarcho-capitalists point out that the poor might actually have better chances of obtaining justice in an anarcho-capitalist society because private firms would try to satisfy a market demand in the bottom of the pyramid.

This is contrast to the current police and legal system backed by the state in which favours are often out to groups based on their lobbying power.

David Friedman, Robert Nozick and Michael Huemer are a few contemporary anarcho-capitalists.

- Anarcho-capitalism refers to a political philosophy which calls for the abolition of the state and for the provision of law and order to be controlled by private companies in a free market.
- Anarcho-capitalists believe that private companies competing in a free market can provide policing and legal services as well, often far better than the state when it comes to quality and price.
- The term was coined by American libertarian economist Murray Rothbard

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu: GS2-Polity and Governance (Page 14)

Rajya Sabha passes Bill for appointment of CEC, ECs

Appointments so far had not been guided by any laws, and the Bill makes the process transparent, says Law Minister; Opposition questions government's intent, says the Bill violates the Constitution

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday passed the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, which will guide the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and the Election Commissioners (ECs) in future.

Denying the Opposition's charges that the Supreme Court was being kept away from the process of selecting the CEC and the ECs, Union Law



Major decision: It completely negates the Election Commission to the authority of the Executive, says Randeep Singh Surjewala. PTI

the commissioners had so far been decided by the go-

The Opposition wanted to send the

jected by the House.

The Opposition questioned the intention of the Centre. Congress general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, who initiated the debate, said the Bill violated the Constitution.

'Subjugating EC'

"It completely negates and subjugates the Election Commission to the authority of the Executive and it does away willingly, maliciously the judgment of the Supreme Court, and that is why this law is *per se* like a stillborn child," he said.

"An independent appointment mechanism would guarantee eschew-

- The Rajya Sabha passed the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023.
 - The Bill replaces the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991.
 - It provides for the appointment, salary, and removal of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs).
 - According to the provisions of the Bill, the CEC and ECs will be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of a Selection Committee.
 - The Selection Committee will consist of the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister, and Leader of Opposition or leader of the largest opposition party in Lok Sabha.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu : GSII-Issues related to poverty and hunger (Page 16)

74% Indians could not afford healthy diet in 2021: report

A. M. Igeesh
NEW DELHI

More than 74% of Indians could not afford a healthy diet in 2021, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations said in a report on Tuesday. In 2020, the percentage was 76.2.

In Pakistan, the figure was 82.2% and in Bangladesh, 66.1% of the population faced difficulties in finding healthy food.

Rising food costs, if not matched by rising income, would lead to more people being unable to afford a healthy diet, the report, "Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023: Statistics and Trends", said.

The FAO report is a glimpse of the progress in meeting Sustainable Development Goals and World Health Assembly (WHA) global nutrition targets. It said that during the pandemic and the "5Fs" crisis – food, feed, fuel, fertilizer, and finance – the Asia Pacific region witnessed harrowing statistics.

"Even to date, the region is still suffering from some protracted effects. The latest statistics indicate that the region, with 370.7 million undernourished people, continues to represent half of the global total. Similarly, the Asia and the Pacific region accounts for half of the world's severe food inse-



The reports said the Asia Pacific region witnessed harrowing crisis during the pandemic. FILE PHOTO

as anaemia among women of reproductive age, are still off the marks in terms of World Health Assembly global nutrition targets," the report said.

16% undernourished

being to include economic and social costs," it said.

The region, according to the report, had a lower prevalence of both moderate or severe and severe food insecurity when compared with the world pre-

Asia where the lowest prevalence of severe food insecurity was observed. Compared with the world, Southern Asia had higher percentages for both moderate or severe and severe food insecurity since 2015," the report said.

It said that 31.7% of children in India under the age of five showed stunted growth. "Stunted growth and development are the result of poor maternal health and nutrition, inadequate infant and young child feeding practices, and repeated infections interacting with a variety of other factors over a sustained period," it said.

For wasting (low weight for height), India recorded the highest rate in the re-

global nutrition target," the report noted, adding that 2.8% of children below five were overweight, another health risk.

It said that 53% of women aged between 15 to 49 in India had anaemia, which was the largest prevalence rate in the region in 2019. "It (anaemia) impairs health and well-being in women and increases the risk for adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes," the report warned. It also said that 1.6% of adults in the country were obese.

On exclusive breastfeeding among infants in the age group of 0-5 months, India had improved the prevalence with a percentage of 63.7%, which is

- The FAO report is a glimpse of the progress in meeting Sustainable Development Goals and World Health Assembly (WHA) global nutrition targets.
- It said that during the pandemic and the "5Fs" crisis – food, feed, fuel, fertilizer, and finance – the Asia Pacific region witnessed harrowing statistics.
- The latest statistics indicate that the region, with 370.7 million undernourished people, continues to represent half of the global total. Similarly, the Asia and the Pacific region accounts for half of the world's severe food insecurity, with more women than men being food insecure.
- Southern Asia showed higher prevalence of severe food insecurity compared with the other subregions, and it is in Eastern Asia where the lowest prevalence of severe food insecurity was observed.
- More than 74% of Indians could not afford a healthy diet in 2021,
- 31.7% of children in India under the age of five showed stunted growth.
- India had the highest prevalence of low birth weight in the region (27.4%), followed by Bangladesh and Nepal.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express: Governance—GS 2 (Page 12)



Going after touts: the change in Advocates Act

KHADIJA KHAN

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 12

ON DECEMBER 4, the first day of Parliament's Winter Session, The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023, was passed in Lok Sabha. The Bill, which was introduced in Rajya Sabha and passed on August 1 during the Monsoon Session, received Presidential assent on December 8.

Aimed at weeding out 'touts' from the legal system, the Act repeals the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879, and amends the Advocates Act, 1961, to reduce "the number of superfluous enactments in the statute book" and repeal all "obsolete laws".

Replying to a question on the Bill, Minister for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal said the Legal Practitioners Act was a colonial-era Act without any utility, adding that 1,486 such laws have been done away with since 2014.

What did the now-repealed 1879 Act say?

The Legal Practitioners Act came into force in 1880 "to consolidate and amend the law relating to Legal Practitioners in certain provinces". Section 2 of the Act defined the term "legal practitioner" to include advocates, vakils, or attorneys of any High Court. It also introduced a new definition of the term "tout".

A "tout" was defined as a person "who procures, in consideration of any remuneration from any legal practitioner, the employment of a legal practitioner in any legal business; or one who proposes to any legal practitioner or anyone interested in any legal business to procure, for remuneration, the employment of the legal practitioner in such business".

The definition also included people who frequented civil or criminal courts, revenue offices, railway stations, etc. for such procurement purposes. Simply put, a tout is a person who procures clients for a legal practitioner in exchange for payment.

Congress MP Karti Chidambaram wel-

comed the new Bill, saying, "Because of the asymmetry in our society in terms of education, access to people in authority and wealth, sometimes people do not know how to navigate the legal system... This is what is being exploited and some people step in as touts. Touts thrive because of the complexity in dealing with our legal system."

And what is The Advocates Act of 1961?

After Independence, a need was felt to bring changes in India's judicial administration. In its 249th Report titled *Obsolete Laws: Warranting Immediate Repeal*, the Law Commission recommended the repealing of the 1879 Act.

The Advocates Act of 1961 was then passed to create a single Act to regulate the legal profession. It also provided for the constitution of Bar Councils and an All-India Bar. It repealed the bulk of the 1879 Act, but left behind provisions relating to its extent, definitions, and powers to frame and publish lists of touts.

What does The Advocates (Amendment) Act, 2023, say?

The 2023 Act amends the 1961 Act by inserting a new provision after Section 45, which prescribes six months' imprisonment for persons illegally practising in courts and before other authorities.

The new provision, Section 45A, enables every High Court and district judge to frame and publish lists of touts. However, no person's name will be included in any such list until they have had an opportunity to show cause against such inclusion.

If proven to be a tout, the person's name will be included in the list of touts that will be published by the authority, and displayed in every court. The court or judge may exclude any person whose name is included in any such list from the court's vicinity.

Additionally, this provision punishes anyone acting as a tout "while his name is included in any such list" with imprisonment up to three months, a fine that may extend to five hundred rupees or both.

- , the Parliament passed the Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023.
- The Bill amends the Advocates Act, 1961.
- The legislation repeals certain sections related to touts under the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879.
- It provides that every High Court, district judge, sessions judge, district magistrate, and revenue officer not below the rank of a district collector, can frame and publish lists of touts.
 - Tout refers to a person who either proposes to procure or procures the employment of a legal practitioner in a legal business in return for any payment.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express: Species in news –GS 3 (Page 12)

THE GOLDFISH: A CUTE PET IN A BOWL, GIANT THREAT WHEN FREE IN A LAKE

INSIDE A fishbowl, goldfish — a species of carp native to East Asia, bred for aesthetic delight and traditionally believed to bring good fortune — is hardly more than home décor. Usually just a few inches long, it is among the easiest of pets to keep.

But released into the wild, the seemingly humble fish, can grow to monstrous proportions. They can even kill off native marine wildlife and contribute to the destruction of fragile and economically valuable ecosystems.

"They can eat anything and everything," said Christine Boston, an aquatic research biologist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Over the past several years, Boston and her colleagues have been tracking invasive goldfish in Hamilton Harbour, which is on the western tip of Lake Ontario, about 56 km southwest of Toronto. The bay has been decimated by industrial and urban development as well as by invasive species — making it among the most environmentally degraded areas of the Great Lakes.

Their study, published last month in the *Journal of Great Lakes Research*, could help pinpoint goldfish populations for culling, said Boston, who is the lead author. "We found out where they are before they start spawning," she said.

The fast-growing female goldfish, Boston noted, can also reproduce several times in one season. "They have the resources," she added, "and they can take advantage of them".

Goldfish can tolerate a wide range of

water temperatures, reach sexual maturation quickly, and can eat almost anything, including algae, aquatic plants, eggs and invertebrates, Boston said.

Their football-shaped bodies can swell to a size that makes them too large a meal for predators — up to about 16 inches long.

The feral goldfish are also destructive. They help spawn harmful algal blooms by consuming the algae and expelling nutrients that promote its growth, Boston said, creating conditions that are intolerable to native fish.

Nicholas Mandrak, a professor of biological sciences at the University of Toronto Scarborough, said that while goldfish were introduced to North America in the late 1800s, the wild population had begun to "dramatically increase" in the past two decades. Their spawning explosion, he said, resulted partly from people in densely-populated areas releasing pets in urban ponds.

Climate change may play a role, because of the goldfish's capacity to adapt to warming and poorly oxygenated waters, he added.

"There are literally millions of goldfish in the Great Lakes, if not tens of millions," Mandrak said.

The problem is not unique to Canada. In Australia, a handful of unwanted pet goldfish and their offspring took over a river in the country's southwest. Feral goldfish have flooded waterways in the United Kingdom, and in Burnsville, Minnesota.

THE NEW YORK TIMES



- The gold fish (*Carassius auratus*) is considered to be the most popular and attractive pet fish among all ornamental fishes, due to its many variations such as colour, fin shape, size and body structure
- Native to Asia; now present world-wide.
 - Subtropical, freshwater fish, but prefers cooler waters.
- The goldfish is the most common aquarium fish and one of the oldest and best-known fish in the industry.
- *Carassius auratus* is listed as **Least Concern**(IUCN Red list)



HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express: GS 2-IR / GS 3-Economy (Page 17)



Over 1,000 'opaque fleet' tankers involved in Russian oil trade

SUKALP SHARMA

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 12

NEARLY 1,100 tankers operated in Russia's crude oil and petroleum products trade since price caps were imposed by the Group of Seven (G7) countries and their allies on Moscow's oil and petroleum products from December 5, 2022 and February 5, 2023, respectively, as per an analysis of ship tracking data till November 15 by energy cargo tracker Vortexa.

Given India's newfound status as the largest destination of Russian crude following Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, a sizable number of these tankers would have been involved in transporting oil from Russia to Indian refiners. India now accounts for nearly half of Russia's crude oil exports. Similarly, Russia is now India's largest source of crude as Moscow accounted for over 35 per cent of New Delhi's oil imports so far in 2023. "Tankers (totalling 1,089) in the Russian trade

EXPLAINED
E What are 'opaque fleet'?

THE OPAQUE tanker fleet refers to vessels involved in Russian, Iranian, and Venezuelan crude oil and petroleum products trade. The oil and gas industries of these countries have been under sanctions from international powers, particularly the US.

account for 75 per cent of the opaque fleet; this includes tankers which have operated in more than one market. Tankers exclusively in the Russian trade (not in Iran and Venezuela) account for 66 per cent of the opaque fleet," Vortexa said in a recent report, adding that overall, 1,649 unique tankers operated in the opaque oil and petroleum products market since January 2021.

The opaque tanker fleet

refers to vessels involved in Russian, Iranian, and Venezuelan crude oil and petroleum products trade. With Western fleet operators loath to get involved in the oil trade of these countries due to sanctions of varying degrees, operators from countries like Greece, Russia, and China, and tax havens like Marshall Islands, Liberia, and Panama have emerged as the major players. The oil and gas industries of Russia, Iran, and Venezuela have been under sanctions or restrictions from international powers, particularly the United States (US). Recently, the US eased sanctions on Venezuela's oil sector, authorising oil exports without limitation for six months.

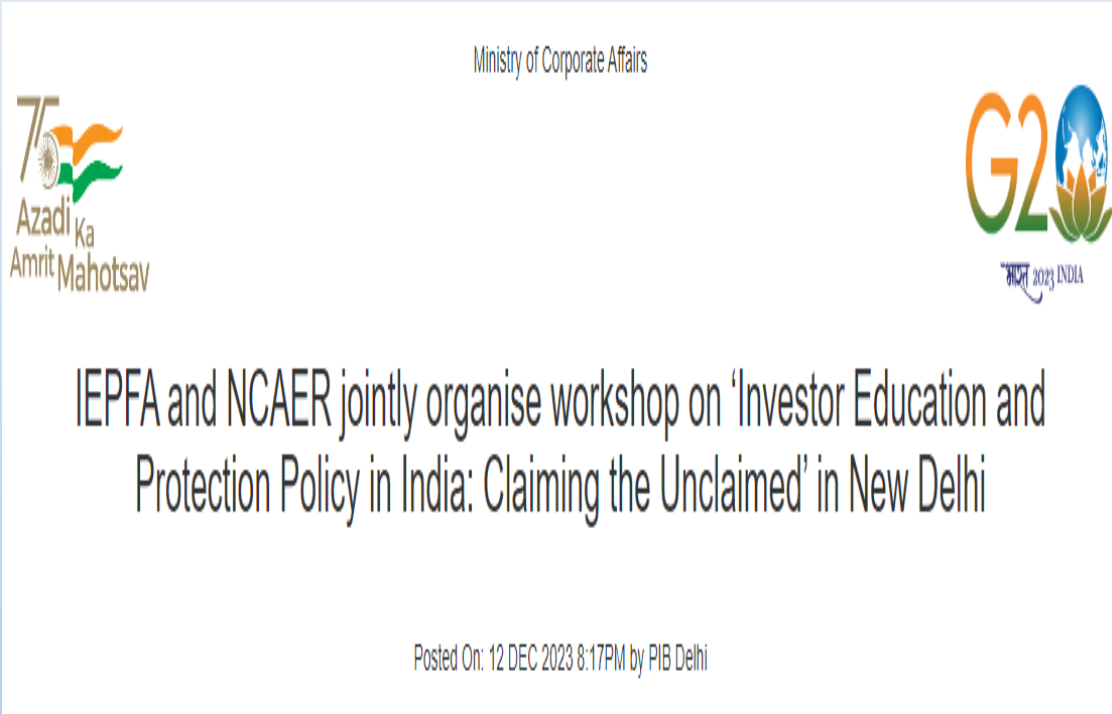
A large number of opaque fleet tankers have complex and obscure ownership structures and are registered in geographies with lax regulatory oversight. Often, such vessels, which are usually quite old, operate with substandard insurance and certifications.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

- The opaque tanker fleet refers to vessels involved in Russian, Iranian, and Venezuelan crude oil and petroleum products trade.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB: Economy-GSIII



About IEPFA

- The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) was set up on September 7, 2016, under the aegis of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, for administering the Investor Education and Protection Fund for making refunds of shares, unclaimed dividends, and matured deposits/debentures, among other things, to investors.

About NCAER

- NCAER is India's oldest and largest independent economic think tank, set up in 1956 to inform policy choices for both the public and private sectors.
- It is one of a few independent think tanks world-wide that combines rigorous economic analysis and policy outreach with deep data collection capabilities, particularly for large-scale household surveys.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB: Species-GSIII

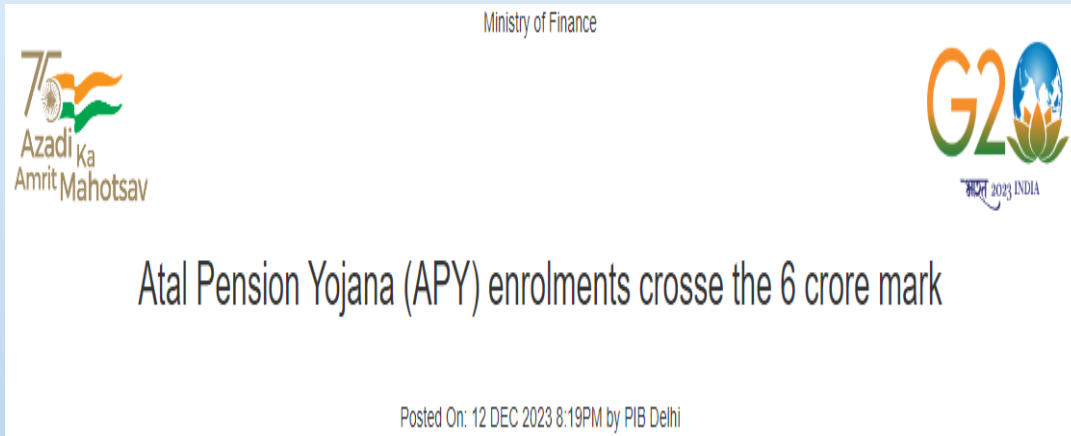


- The species is native to India, Nepal and Bangladesh
- The Indian Tent Turtle is protected species under Schedule 1 of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* : **listed as Least Concern.**



HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB: Polity and Governance-GSII



- The APY, a flagship social security scheme of the Government of India, was launched on 9th May 2015 by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to provide old age income security to Indian citizens, with a particular focus on the poor, underprivileged, and workers in the unorganized sectors.
- APY is administered by Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- APY is open to all bank account holders in the age group of 18 to 40 years who are not income taxpayers.
- Subscribers would receive the guaranteed minimum monthly pension of Rs. 1000 or Rs. 2000 or Rs. 3000 or Rs. 4000 or Rs. 5000 after the age of 60 years, based on the contributions made by the subscriber after joining the scheme.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB: Governance-GSII / Disaster Management-GSIII

Centre approves financial assistance of over 338 crore rupees to Gujarat and 634 crore rupees for Himachal Pradesh from National Disaster Response Fund



- The National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF), constituted under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, supplements SDRF of a State, in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in SDRF.
 - **Disaster (s) covered under SDRF:** Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost and cold waves.