

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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### Table of Content

SC Bats for Reform of Colonial-era Laws on Property Deals  
SC Orders Removal of Stray Dogs From Public Places  
National Social Assistance Programme  
National Legal Services Day  
GST Collections & Performances of States

### News In Short

150 Years of Vande Mataram  
BRAIN Initiative Cell Atlas Network (BICAN)  
Christmas Island  
Quantum Gravity  
China's Aircraft Carrier Fujian  
HAL inks \$1-billion deal with GE Aerospace  
Rhesus Macaque

## SC BATS FOR REFORM OF COLONIAL-ERA LAWS ON PROPERTY DEALS

### Context

- The Supreme Court directed the **Law Commission of India** to prepare a report on **restructuring century-old colonial-era laws governing property transactions**.

### About

- Flagging systemic deficiencies** in colonial-era property laws, the SC directed a **nationwide reform** by asking the Law Commission to examine using the **Blockchain technology for restructuring property registration process**.
  - Blockchain technology creates a **secure, transparent, and immutable digital ledger** for all property transactions.
  - Making registration process **tamper-proof** and provides a **single, verifiable source** of ownership history.

### What are the Concerns with the Current Property Transactions Laws?

- Outdated Laws:** These laws were framed for a colonial economy and have become outdated, complex, and inconsistent with present-day socio-economic realities.
  - The laws included the **Transfer of Property Act, 1882, the Registration Act, 1908, and the Stamp Act, 1899**.
- Administrative Hurdles:** They cause delays, disputes, and litigation, particularly in matters of ownership, transfer, tenancy, and succession.
  - Buying and selling property have become cumbersome experience, property disputes account for 66% of civil litigation in the country.
- Lack of Uniformity:** Registration procedures also vary from State to State, as land is a **"State subject"** under the Constitution.
- Incomplete Digitisation:** Though projects like Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP) and National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS) have digitised land records but data remains flawed, and title disputes persist.
- Lack of Inter-Departmental Integration:** Land record data, survey maps, and registration records remain fragmented across departments — revenue, survey, and registration — creating inconsistencies.

### Supreme Court's observation:

- Property rights, though no longer a fundamental right, are **still protected under Article 300A of the Constitution**.

- The constitutionally protected **right to own immovable property** inherently includes the **freedom to freely acquire, possess and dispose of it at will**.
- The Court emphasized the need for a **coherent, modern property framework** balancing individual rights, public purpose, and efficient land management.
- The Law Commission was directed to review, consult stakeholders, and **recommend legislative reforms to bring uniformity and clarity**.

### Significance

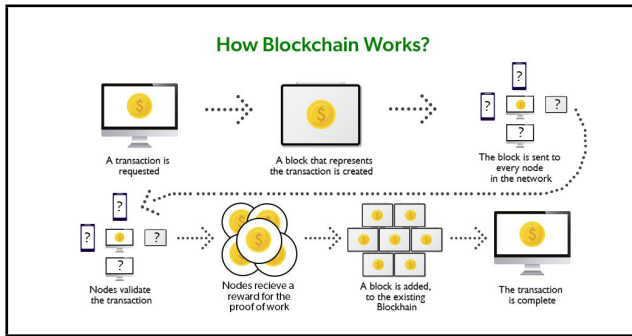
- Part of a larger effort to **decolonise Indian legal architecture** and make property law **more citizen-friendly, transparent, and responsive to present needs**.
- May **influence reforms** in land acquisition, registration, tenancy, and urban planning laws.
- The move aligns with the **broader constitutional principle under Article 300A** and aims to make property governance transparent, efficient, and equitable.

### Right to Property

- Historical Background:** Originally it was a Fundamental Right under Article **19(1)(f)**: Right to acquire, hold, and dispose of property.
  - Article 31:** Protection from deprivation of property except by authority of law and on payment of compensation.
  - Intended to protect citizens from **arbitrary state action while allowing land reforms for equitable redistribution**.
- The 44th Constitutional Amendment in 1978**, deleted Articles 19(1)(f) and 31, and inserted **Article 300A**.
  - Right to Property ceased to be a Fundamental Right; became a **Constitutional/Legal Right**.
  - Property rights are now protected by law, not enforceable as a Fundamental Right.

### About Block Chain Technology

- It is a Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) where encrypted data blocks are permanently linked and stored across multiple computers.
- Each transaction is recorded in a block; blocks are chronologically chained and cryptographically secured.
- Global examples:** Sweden, Georgia, and Ghana have piloted blockchain-based land registries, improving efficiency, reducing fraud, and boosting citizen confidence.



Source: TH

## SC ORDERS REMOVAL OF STRAY DOGS FROM PUBLIC PLACES

### In News

- The Supreme Court, in suo motu proceedings, issued nationwide directions to remove stray dogs and cattle from key public and institutional areas.
  - SC observed that repeated dog-bite incidents are “Not merely a public health challenge, but a matter of human safety under **Article 21 (Right to Life and Dignity)**.”

### Key Directions by the Supreme Court

- Non-release Clause:** Dogs removed from such spaces cannot be returned to the same locality.
- Accountability:** Held the Chief Secretaries of all States/UTs and the Chairperson, NHA, personally accountable for enforcement.
  - Conduct quarterly inspections to ensure compliance.
- Municipal Accountability:** Local bodies to submit compliance reports within 8 weeks.
- Vaccine Stocking:** All hospitals must maintain adequate anti-rabies vaccines.
- NHAI Directive:** Remove cattle and stray animals from highways; establish 24x7 highway patrols with helplines.
- Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI):** To frame Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for stray dog management across India.

### Issue of Stray Dog Problem in India

- India is home to an **estimated 60–70 million stray dogs**, one of the world’s largest populations.
- India accounts for **one-third of global rabies deaths**, with over 20,000 deaths annually. Over **17 lakh dog bite cases were recorded in 2023**, as per the Union Health Ministry.
- Local bodies often lack funds, shelters, and coordination for ABC implementation.

### Ethical Dimension

- Conflict of Values:** Compassion for animals vs. protection of human life.
- Ethical Resolution:** Humane relocation and sterilisation ensures justice to both sides — preventing cruelty while ensuring safety.

### Constitutional and Legal Framework

- Article 21 (Right to Life):** Right to life includes the right to live safely and with dignity — extends to freedom from avoidable dangers in public spaces.
- Article 48A:** State shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard wildlife.
- Article 51A(g):** It is the duty of every citizen to show compassion to living creatures.
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960:** Parent legislation for animal welfare and prevention of cruelty.
- Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023:** Mandates sterilisation, vaccination, and humane management of stray dogs.
- Municipal Acts / Local Body Laws:** Assign responsibility for stray management and waste control to local bodies.

### Way Ahead

- Prioritize Infrastructure:** The long-term success of the order hinges on rapidly building and funding sufficient, humane shelters (pounds/kennels) for the relocated dogs.
- Strengthen ABC Implementation:** The focus must return to achieving the WHO-mandated 70% sterilisation coverage in all localities to reduce overall dog population growth.
- Inter-Departmental Coordination:** Effective implementation requires a “One Health” approach, mandating coordination between the Animal Husbandry, Urban Development, Health, and Transport departments.
- Community Engagement:** Local bodies must work with NGOs, Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), and community feeders to demarcate designated feeding zones (as per Rule 20 of ABC Rules, 2023) to manage the strays in other areas.

Source: TH

## NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

### Context

- The National Social Assistance Programme** serves as a key pillar of India’s social security system, providing essential support to citizens in need.

### National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

- **Introduced:** On 15 August 1995.
- It is a **fully funded Centrally Sponsored Scheme** that extends financial support to individuals **living below poverty line (BPL)**.
- **Implemented by** the **Ministry of Rural Development**.
- **Operation:** It operates across both **rural and urban areas**.
- **Pensions Covered:** NSAP covers old age pension, widow pension, disability pension, family benefit, and food security.

### The NSAP at present comprises five sub-schemes as its components:

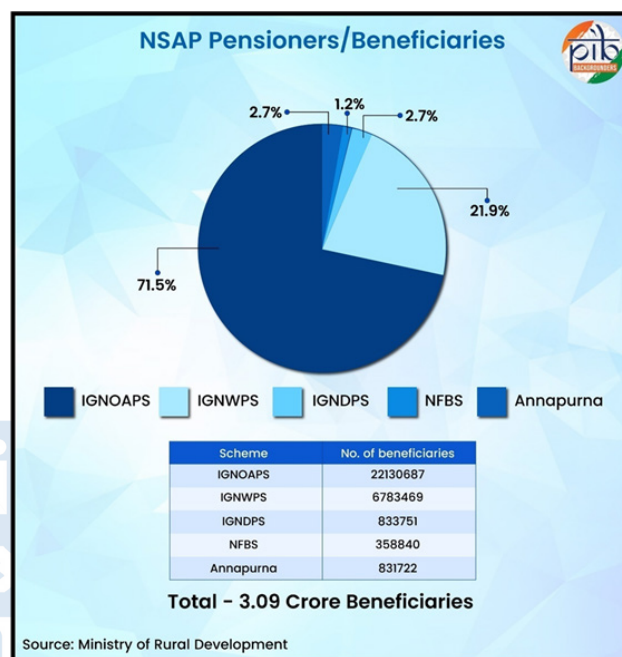
- **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS):** Financial assistance to elderly citizens aged 60 years.
  - ♦ Those between 60 and 79 years of age receive Rs.200 per month, while those aged 80 years and above are provided Rs.500 per month.
- **Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS):** Widows aged between 40 and 79 years.
  - ♦ Pension of Rs.300 per month and for those aged 80 years and above, the amount is Rs.500 per month.
- **Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS):** Scheme caters to individuals aged between 18 and 79 years who have severe or multiple disabilities and belong to families living below the poverty line.
  - ♦ The beneficiaries are eligible for central assistance of Rs.300 per month and who are 80 years and above receive Rs.500 per month.
- **National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS):** A household living below the poverty line becomes eligible for lump sum financial assistance in the unfortunate event of the death of its primary breadwinner between 18 and 59 years of age.
  - ♦ The family receives Rs.20,000 as support to help them cope with the immediate financial difficulties arising from the loss.
- **Annapurna Scheme:** 10kg of food grains per month are provided free of cost to those senior citizens who, though eligible under IGNOAPS, are not receiving old age pension.

### Implementation:

- **Selection:** Gram Panchayats and Municipalities play an active role in identifying eligible beneficiaries under the different NSAP schemes.

- **Disbursement:** Benefits are provided through DBT mode (94%) i.e beneficiary's bank or post office savings accounts, or via postal money orders.
- **Monitoring:** States and Union Territories have the flexibility to implement the schemes through any State Government department, but each must appoint a Nodal Secretary at the State level to oversee implementation and coordinate with relevant departments.

### Beneficiaries Under Each Scheme:



### Conclusion

- By integrating Aadhaar-based authentication and promoting direct benefit transfers, NSAP has improved transparency, reduced fraud, and strengthened the delivery of welfare to millions of beneficiaries.
- Collectively, these measures offer critical financial relief and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable social safety net across the country.

Source: PIB

## NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES DAY

### Context

- Every year, **November 9** is celebrated as the **National Legal Services Day** to commemorate the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**, which led to the establishment of organisations providing free legal aid to the needy.

### About

- India as the world's largest democracy is built on the foundation of justice, equality, and liberty.

- The **Constitution of India** guarantees equal rights and equal protection under the law to all citizens. These include:
  - ♦ **Art 14:** Equality Before Law
  - ♦ **Article 21:** Protection of Life And Personal Liberty
  - ♦ **Article 22:** Protection Against Arrest And Detention in Certain Cases
  - ♦ **Article 39A:** Equal Justice And Free Legal Aid (*Introduced through the 42nd Amendment*)

#### Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987

- It came into effect on **November 9, 1995**, led to the establishment of a nationwide framework to provide **free and competent legal services** to the marginalized and disadvantaged sections of society.
- The **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987** established **Lok Adalats** and **Permanent Lok Adalats** as forums for amicable settlement of disputes, including pre-litigation matters.
- **Three-Tier Structure of Legal Services Authorities:**
  - ♦ **National Legal Services Authority (NALSA):** Headed by the **Chief Justice of India**; funded through Central funding and donations;
  - ♦ **State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs):** Headed by the **Chief Justice of the High Court**; funded through Central and State Government support;
  - ♦ **District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs):** Headed by the **District Judge**; funded through State Government funding and donations;
- **Accessing Free Legal Aid:** Eligible individuals can apply for free legal services through:
  - ♦ Written or oral applications at Legal Services Authorities offices;
  - ♦ **Online applications** via NALSA, State, or District portals;
- Applications are processed promptly, and as per **Regulation 7(2)** of the **NALSA (Free and Competent Legal Services) Regulations, 2010**, decisions need to be made within **seven days**.
  - ♦ From **2022–23 to 2024–25**, over **44.22 lakh people** benefited from free legal aid and advice.

#### Role of NALSA and State Legal Services Authorities

- NALSA, along with State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs), plays a pivotal role in:
  - ♦ **Organizing Lok Adalats** for speedy and amicable dispute resolution.
  - ♦ **Running Legal Aid Clinics** in remote and underserved areas.

- ♦ Conducting legal literacy camps to educate citizens about their rights.
- ♦ Supporting victim compensation schemes and mediation services.

#### Innovative Initiatives for Holistic Justice

- **DISHA Framework:**
  - ♦ **Tele-Law and Nyaya Bandhu:** These digital initiatives connect citizens, especially in remote areas, with legal advisors via technology.
  - ♦ **Legal Literacy and Awareness Programme (LLAP):** It promotes legal awareness through communication materials in **22 scheduled languages**, with active participation from state agencies.
- **Fast-Track Courts (FTCs):** It was established to ensure speedy trials in cases involving women, children, senior citizens, and other vulnerable groups.
- **Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs):** Focused on serious sexual offences, including cases under the **POCSO Act**.
- **Gram Nyayalayas:** These village-level courts enhance access to justice in rural areas.
- **Nari Adalats:** An initiative under the **Mission Shakti** scheme, **Nari Adalats** address gender-based violence through mediation and reconciliation.
  - ♦ Composed of **7–9 women**, they empower women to assert their rights and access legal aid.
- **Special Courts for Marginalized Communities:** To safeguard the rights of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, **211 Exclusive Special Courts** have been set up under the **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989**.

#### Concerns and Challenges in Accessing Legal Services in India

- **Awareness Deficit:** Many eligible citizens are unaware of their right to free legal aid under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.
  - ♦ Legal literacy remains low, especially in **rural and tribal areas**.
- **Geographic Disparities:** Legal aid services are concentrated in urban centers, leaving remote regions underserved.
  - ♦ Mobile legal aid clinics and outreach vans exist but are insufficient to meet demand.
- **Quality and Accountability:** Legal aid lawyers often face criticism for lack of commitment, poor preparation, and inadequate follow-up.
  - ♦ There is limited monitoring or performance evaluation of legal aid providers.

- **Overburdened Judiciary:** India's courts are clogged with pending cases—over 50 million across all levels—leading to delays and denial of timely justice.
  - ♦ Legal aid beneficiaries often face longer wait times and procedural hurdles.
- **Digital Divide:** While e-courts and online legal services are expanding, many citizens lack internet access or digital literacy.
  - ♦ It disproportionately affects women, elderly, and rural populations.
- **Socio-Cultural Barriers:** Marginalized groups—especially Dalits, Adivasis, and women—often face discrimination or intimidation when seeking legal help.
  - ♦ Language barriers and fear of authority further discourage engagement with the legal system.

#### What Needs to Be Done?

- Strengthen legal literacy through school curricula and community outreach.
- Improve training and incentives for legal aid lawyers.
- Expand infrastructure in rural and tribal areas.
- Ensure accountability through transparent monitoring and feedback mechanisms.
- Bridge the digital divide with inclusive tech solutions and offline support.

Source: PIB

## GST COLLECTIONS & PERFORMANCES OF STATES

#### In News

- In October 2025, India's GST collections rose to ₹1.95 lakh crore, a 4.6% increase over the previous year, driven partly by Diwali-related spending.

#### What is the Goods and Services Tax (GST)?

- The GST refers to India's indirect tax regime, introduced in 2017.
- It is a destination-based tax on the consumption of goods and services.
- It is levied at every stage of production and distribution, but tax is charged only on the value added at each stage, with credits available for taxes paid earlier.
- Ultimately, the final consumer bears the tax, and revenue goes to the authority where the goods or services are consumed (place of supply).

#### Benefits

- The introduction of GST marks a major indirect tax reform in India by unifying multiple Central and State taxes into a single system, reducing tax cascading and fostering a common national market.
- It lowers the overall tax burden on goods, enhances competitiveness of Indian products both domestically and globally.
- It is expected to boost economic growth and it may increase revenues for both Centre and States through a broader tax base, higher trade volumes, and better compliance.
- Its transparency also simplifies administration.

#### Issues

- **Revenue Shortfalls:** According to PRS Legislative Research, GST revenues remain below pre-GST levels, with the GST-to-GDP ratio falling from 6.5% in 2015–16 to 5.5% in 2023–24.
- **State-Level Disparities:** Industrial and service-driven states—**Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, and Haryana—accounted for over 40% of the total revenue.**
  - ♦ However, **20 states and UTs saw a contraction in GST receipts.**
  - ♦ While most states experienced declines, **five northeastern states—Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Meghalaya, and Manipur—improved their tax-to-GSDP ratios**, whereas Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha saw the steepest drops.
- **Complex Rate Structure:** Despite slab rationalisation, classification disputes and high rates on select goods persist.
- **Post-Compensation Challenges:** The end of GST compensation has reignited concerns over fiscal autonomy for states.

#### Conclusion and Way Ahead

- GST continues to be a foundational pillar of India's economic reform, but realising its full potential requires addressing key structural challenges.
- This includes simplifying the tax structure through rate rationalisation and fewer exemptions, strengthening state revenues via improved SGST mechanisms and equitable sharing, enhancing enforcement through digital and AI-driven compliance tools, and reinforcing the institutional capacity of the GST Council for effective decision-making and dispute resolution.

Source :IE

## NEWS IN SHORT

### 150 YEARS OF VANDE MATARAM

#### In News

- India commemorates the **150th anniversary of its National Song, Vande Mataram**, a powerful symbol of unity, sacrifice, and patriotism.

#### Historical Background

- Composed by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee**, '**Vande Mataram**' was first published in the literary journal Bangadarshan on **7 November 1875**.
- Later, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee incorporated the hymn in his immortal novel '**Anandamath**' which was published in **1882**.
- First sung by **Rabindranath Tagore at the 1896 Congress session**, it gained prominence during the 1905 Swadeshi and anti-partition movements, with initiatives like the Bande Mataram Sampradaya in Calcutta and massive processions in Barisal.
- In **1907, Madam Bhikaji Cama** raised the tricolour flag for the first-time outside India in Stuttgart, Berlin. The words **Vande Mataram were written on the flag**.

#### National Status

- On 24 January 1950, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, addressing the Constituent Assembly, affirmed the unanimous decision to adopt Rabindranath Tagore's Jana Gana Mana as India's National Anthem and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Vande Mataram as the National Song, granting both equal status.

#### Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–1894)

- Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–1894), the author of Vande Mataram, was one of the most prominent figures of 19th-century Bengal.
- He holds a pivotal role in the intellectual and literary history of Bengal during the nineteenth century.
- As a distinguished novelist, poet, and essayist, his contributions significantly influenced the development of modern Bengali prose and the articulation of an emerging Indian nationalism.
- His notable works, including Anandamath (1882), Durgeshnandini (1865), Kapalkundala (1866), and Devi Chaudhurani (1884), reflect the social, cultural, and moral concerns of a colonised society striving for self-identity.

Source :PIB

### BRAIN INITIATIVE CELL ATLAS NETWORK (BICAN)

#### In News

- Scientists working under the U.S. NIH's BRAIN Initiative Cell Atlas Network (BICAN) have developed the first draft of comprehensive atlases charting the development of the human.

#### Key Highlights

- A large-scale cellular atlas of the human brain built using advanced single-cell sequencing and spatial transcriptomics technologies.
- The atlas charts cell types, gene expression patterns, and developmental pathways in the brain across various ages, including fetal, infant, adolescent, adult, and aged brains.

#### Benefit

- This will help in understanding how brain cells develop, mature, and interact, providing insight into neurological and psychiatric diseases like Alzheimer's, autism, and schizophrenia.

#### About the BRAIN Initiative

- It was launched in 2013 by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) to revolutionize understanding of the human brain's structure and function by mapping every cell and its connections.

Source: TH

### CHRISTMAS ISLAND

#### In News

- Google plans to build a large artificial intelligence data centre on Australia's remote Indian Ocean outpost of Christmas Island after signing a cloud deal with the Department of Defence.



### About Christmas Island

- **Location:** Christmas Island is an Australian external territory located in the Indian Ocean, about 350 km south of Java (Indonesia) and nearly 1,550 km northwest of Australia's mainland.
- **Historical Background:** Discovered on Christmas Day in 1643 by Captain William Mynors of the British East India Company — hence the name Christmas Island.
- **Strategic Significance:** Lies close to key maritime chokepoints like Sunda Strait, Lombok Strait, and Malacca Strait, making it vital for Quadrilateral cooperation (Quad) and Indo-Pacific maritime strategy.

Source: TH

## QUANTUM GRAVITY

### Context

- A new theoretical study suggests that tiny **black holes, called “black hole morsels”**, could help probe **quantum gravity**.

### About

- **Quantum Gravity:** It is an attempt to **reconcile two theories of physics: quantum mechanics**, which tells us how physics works on very small scales — and **gravity (general relativity)**, which tells us how physics works on large scales.
  - ♦ **Quantum gravity remains unsolved** – we know how to describe quantum mechanics and gravity separately, but not together.
- **Hawking Radiation:** When applying quantum theory near a black hole, physicist **Stephen Hawking** found that **black holes can emit radiation — a purely quantum-gravity effect**.
  - ♦ This is one of the few known hints that quantum mechanics and gravity do interact.
- **Black Hole Morsels:** Black Hole Morsels are a theoretical concept — **tiny, short-lived black holes** that could form during extreme cosmic events like black hole mergers.
  - ♦ They are proposed as possible tools to study quantum gravity.
  - ♦ These morsels would emit strong, short-lived bursts of high-energy radiation (Hawking radiation) that could, in principle, be detected by **existing gamma-ray telescopes**.

### Significance

- If detected, such radiation would provide **direct experimental evidence** about the **quantum nature of space, time, and gravity**.
- Quantum gravity can help us understand the **physics within black holes** and the moments right after the birth of the universe.

- It can also aid us in understanding **quantum entanglement, condensed matter physics and quantum information**.

Source: TH

## CHINA'S AIRCRAFT CARRIER FUJIAN

### In News

- China has commissioned its first indigenously designed aircraft carrier, Fujian.

### Aircraft carrier Fujian

- It is China's third aircraft carrier and the first to be indigenously designed, named after the province opposite Taiwan.
- Unlike its **Russian-designed predecessors**, Liaoning and Shandong, it features a flat deck and electromagnetic catapults, enabling it to launch heavier and more advanced aircraft.
- Sea trials have included the J-35 stealth fighter, KJ-600 early-warning aircraft, and a variant of the J-15, marking a significant upgrade in China's naval aviation capabilities.

Source: TH

## HAL INKS \$1-BILLION DEAL WITH GE AEROSPACE

### Context

- India has signed a \$1 billion deal with America's General Electric for the procurement of **113 jet engines** to power the indigenous Tejas Mark 1-A fighters under **Tejas light combat aircraft programme**.

### About

- The GE-F404 engines will be delivered to the **defence PSU Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) between 2027 and 2032**.
- However, the delivery of 99 such engines ordered in 2021 is still pending.
- IAF is looking at **inducting the warplanes as the number of its fighter squadrons has gone down to 31 from officially sanctioned strength of 42**.
- The LCA Mk-1As will replace the IAF's MiG-21 fighter jets.

### Tejas Mk-1A

- **Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas is a 4.5 generation**, all weather and multi-role fighter aircraft.
- The aircraft is designed to be a **multi-role aircraft** capable of taking up offensive air support, close combat and ground attack roles at ease.

- **LCA Mk1A** is the most **advanced version of the LCA Tejas**.
- **It is equipped with** AESA Radar, EW suite consisting of radar warning and self-protection jamming, Digital Map Generator (DMG), Smart Multi-function Displays (SMFD), Combined Interrogator and Transponder (CIT), Advanced Radio Altimeter and other advances features.

Source: TH

## RHESUS MACAQUE

### In News

- The **National Board of Wildlife** has reinstated Schedule II protection for the Rhesus Macaque, strengthening legal safeguards against its hunting, trade, and mistreatment.

### Rhesus Macaque(*Macaca mulatta*)

- It is a diurnal, omnivorous primate that alternates between tree-dwelling and ground movement.
- It inhabits diverse ecosystems, including various forest types, mangroves, scrublands, rainforests, and areas near human settlements.
- It is found throughout most of southern Asia, in eastern Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and India.
- It is listed as **Least Concern**.
  - ♦ It is listed on **CITES Appendix II**.

Source :IE

