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MK Yadav Sir



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ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

**Science
Reporter**



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प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

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The way Jallikattu is being held in Tamil Nadu might be cruel, says SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said the sport of Jallikattu as such now might not be brutal but the "form" in which it was being held in Tamil Nadu might be cruel.

A Constitution Bench led by Justice K.M. Joseph said the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act of 2017 and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Con-

duct of Jallikattu) Rules of 2017 had laid down procedures to protect the bulls from brutality. Violation of these rules would attract penal action.

Justice Ajay Rastogi asked whether the act of Jallikattu, once the protective mechanism was in place, could be termed cruel. "Suppose Jallikattu is the only way traditionally for a poor man to get married to the local landlord's daughter. He has to get at the trinkets on the

horns of the bull. This is a tradition which has been going for time immemorial... consider the cruelty shown to that young man?", asked Justice Hrishikesh Roy. "It is not cruelty. It is just the deprivation of an opportunity for the young man to advance his position... Cruelty is to the animal who is forced without choice to be part of it," senior advocate Shyam Divan responded.

Mr. Divan said it was not whether Jallikattu was per-

formed following a set of rules or not. He said the basic issue here was that Jallikattu was antithetical to the very nature and body structure of the bull, a bovine animal. He said it was cruelty pure to compel a frightened, choiceless animal to suffer pain.

Justice Rastogi said the court should confine itself to the rules and not ground realities. The senior advocate, however, responded that the court should also test the efficacy of the law.

Legal Aspects

- **Legal scrutiny:** Jallikattu first came under legal scrutiny in 2007 when the Animal Welfare Board of India and the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) moved petitions in the Supreme Court against Jallikattu as well as bullock cart races.
- **Ban in the state:** The Tamil Nadu government worked its way out of the ban by passing a law in 2009, which was signed by the Governor.
- **Prohibition:** In 2011, the Central government added bulls to the list of animals whose training and exhibition is prohibited.
- **SC Judgement:** In May 2014, the Supreme Court banned the bull-taming sport, ruling on a petition that cited the 2011 notification.
- **Lifted the ban:** In 2017, the Tamil Nadu government released an ordinance amending the central Act and allowing Jallikattu in the state; this was later ratified by the President.
- **Current status:** PETA challenged the state ordinance of 2017, arguing it was unconstitutional.
 - In 2018, the Supreme Court referred the Jallikattu case to a Constitution Bench, where it is pending now.

JALLIKATTU

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Art & Culture)

Context: The Supreme Court said the **sport of Jallikattu** as such now might not be brutal but the "form" in which it was being held in Tamil Nadu might be cruel.

Jallikattu

- **About:** A tradition over 2,000 years old, Jallikattu is a competitive sport as well as an event to honour bull owners who rear them for mating.
 - Jallikattu is celebrated in the second week of January, during the Tamil harvest festival, Pongal.
- **Jallikattu belt:** The bull-taming sport is popular in Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Theni, Pudukkottai and Dindigul districts - known as the Jallikattu belt.
 - It is a violent sport in which contestants try to tame a bull for a prize; if they fail, the bull owner wins the prize.
- **Significance:** Jallikattu is considered a traditional way for the peasant community to preserve their pure-breed native bulls.
 - Kangayam, Pulikulam, Umbalachery, Barugur and Malai Maadu are among the popular native cattle breeds used for Jallikattu.
- **Prizes:** A dhoti, a towel, betel leaves, bananas and a cash prize of Rs 101. Over the last two decades, the prizes have included grinders, a fridge and small furniture.
- **Other states status:** Except in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, where bull-taming and racing continue to be organised, these sports remain banned in all other states including Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Maharashtra due to the 2014 ban order from the Supreme Court.

In 2022, world-topping \$100 bn in remittances have come to India

RUCHI BHATIA
30 November

Migrant workers from India are on track to send home a record amount of money this year, boosting the finances of Asia's third largest economy poised to retain its spot as the world's top recipient of remittances.

Remittance flows to India will rise 12 per cent to reach \$100 billion this year, according to a World Bank report published on Wednesday. That puts its inflows far ahead of countries including Mexico, China and the Philippines.

Highly-skilled Indian migrants living in wealthy nations such as the US, the UK and Singapore were sending more money home, the report said. Over the years, Indians have moved away from doing lower paid work in places like the Gulf.

Wage hikes, record-high employment and a weakening rupee also supported growth.

Inflows from the world's largest diaspora are a key source of cash for India, which lost almost \$100 billion of foreign exchange reserves in the past year amid tightening global conditions that weakened currencies including the rupee against the dollar.

The decline in population has also come on the back of a rise in life expectancy and better health outcomes

Remittances, accounting for nearly 3 per cent of India's GDP, are also important for filling fiscal gaps. Cash transfers to India from high-income countries climbed to more than 36 per cent in 2020-21, up from 26 per cent in 2016-17. The share from five Gulf nations, including Saudi Arabia and the UAE, declined to 28 per cent from 54 per cent, the World Bank said, citing Reserve Bank of India data.

Green pathways present a \$1.6-trn investment window

SHIVA RAJORA
New Delhi, 30 November

Keeping spaces cool using alternative and innovative energy-efficient technologies can open up an investment opportunity of \$1.6 trillion by 2040 in India, says a report released by the World Bank on Wednesday.

The report, "Climate Investment Opportunities in India's Cooling Sector", also found this shift to efficient

technologies had the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emission and create nearly 3.7 million jobs.

Auguste Tano Kouamé, World Bank country director in India, said the report had suggested a sustainable road map for cooling, which had the potential to reduce 300 million tonnes of carbon dioxide annually by 2040.

More on business-standard.com

Remittances earned by migrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are expected to drop this year, the World Bank noted. "Migrants responded to exchange rate deprecia-

tions in home countries by sending less money through formal channels and opting for black-market premia in the parallel exchange markets," the report said.

BLOOMBERG

Context: Migrant workers from India are on track to send home a record amount of money this year, boosting the finances of Asia's third largest economy poised to retain its spot as the world's top recipient of remittances.

Remittance

- **About:** It is derived from the word 'remit' which means 'to send back'.
 - It refers to money that is **sent or transferred to another party, usually overseas.**
 - It can be sent via a **wire transfer, electronic payment system, mail, draft, or cheque.**
 - It can be used for **any type of payment** including invoices for business purposes or other obligations like personal transfers made to family and friends.
- **Two main components:** Personal Transfers in cash or in kind **between resident and non-resident** households and Compensation of Employees, which refers to the income of workers who work in another country for a limited period of time.
- **Significance:** Remittances **help in stimulating economic development** in recipient countries, but this can also make such countries over-reliant on them.
- **India's Status:** With \$87 billion, **India was the top remittance recipient** among low- and middle-income countries, as per 2021 WHO estimates, way ahead of China and Mexico's 53 billion dollars, the Philippines (36 billion dollars) and Egypt (33 billion dollars).
 - According to the report, in 2021 the **top five remittance** recipients in current US dollars were India, China, Mexico, the Philippines and Egypt.
 - The United States was the **largest source country for remittances** in 2020, followed by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Switzerland.
 - As a **share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**, the **top five remittance recipients** in 2021 were smaller economies: Tonga: 44%, Lebanon: 35%, Kyrgyzstan: 30%, Tajikistan: 28% and Honduras: 27%
 - The **key contributing factors** are the willingness of migrants to support their families in times of need, together with the fiscal stimuli and employment support programmes implemented in the United States and European destination countries, which provided many migrants with the financial wherewithal to increase support to their families at home.

Top recipients of remittances among low- and middle-income nations in 2022 (estimated) in \$bn



Source: World Bank

SC floats idea of 'Project GIB': What is this endangered bird

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 30

HEARING A plea to protect the endangered bird Great Indian Bustard (GIB), the Supreme Court Wednesday asked if a 'Project GIB', on the lines of 'Project Tiger', could be launched. "We had that Project Tiger, is it not possible to have some mechanism to bring focus on GIB like having 'Project Great Indian Bustard'," the bench of CJI DY Chandrachud, Justice A S Bopanna and Justice V Ramasubramanian said, as reported by PTL.



This Great Indian Bustard is found mainly in Rajasthan and Gujarat. File

What is the GIB

This bird, found mainly in Rajasthan and Gujarat, has been categorised as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). While the GIBs' historic range included much of the Indian sub-continent, it has shrunk to just 10% of that. Among the heaviest birds with flight, GIBs prefer grasslands as habitats. The terrestrial birds spend most of their time on the ground, feeding on insects, lizards, grass seeds, etc. GIBs are considered the flagship bird species of grassland and hence barometers of the health of grassland ecosystems.

Why endangered

Among the biggest threats to the GIBs are overhead power transmission lines. Due to their poor frontal vision, the birds can't

spot the power lines from a distance, and are too heavy to change course when close. Thus, they collide with the cables and die.

According to the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), in Rajasthan, 18 GIBs die every year after colliding with power lines.

SC's earlier order

The SC in April 2021 ordered that all overhead power transmission lines in core and potential GIB habitats in Rajasthan and Gujarat be made underground. During Wednesday's hearing, the court sought reports from the chief secretaries of the two states in six weeks on installation of bird diverters (reflector-like structures strung on power cables) in priority areas. It also asked them to assess the length of transmission lines that need to go underground.

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD (Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

Context: The Supreme Court mooted the idea of launching 'Project GIB' on the lines of 'Project Tiger', which was started in 1973 to save the big cats, and sought the government's view on the proposal.

Great Indian Bustard (GIB)

- **About:** A bustard found on the Indian subcontinent. Bustards are **large terrestrial birds found in dry grasslands and steppe regions**.
 - It is also known as the **Indian Bustard**, it is among the heaviest of flying birds in existence.
- **Key Characteristics:** The **female is smaller than the male**.
 - Although the **Kori bustard (Ardeotis kori)** and the **great bustard (Otis tarda)** are bigger than it, the Great Indian Bustard is the largest flying bird in its native region, standing at about 3.3 ft tall.
 - The male Indian Bustard is usually solitary but forms small flocks during the winter.
- **Habitat:** The Great Indian Bustard is found in **semi-arid and arid grasslands**, with tall grass in the open. They are also found near farmlands as well.
- **Distribution:** The Great Indian Bustard was **spread throughout India and Pakistan** but now is only found in a few pockets in both the countries.
 - Earlier present in 11 states of India, they are **now restricted to the following 6 states today:** Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
 - Many sanctuaries such as the **Ranabennur Blackbuck Sanctuary, Desert national Park in Gujarat, Kutch Bird Sanctuary, Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary in Maharashtra and Rolapadu Wildlife Sanctuary** have a sizable population of the Indian Bustard.
- **Food habits:** The bird is **omnivorous** preying on insects, rodents and reptiles mostly while also consuming grass seed berries. Near farmlands they also feed on groundnut, millets and legumes pods.
- **Protection Status:**
 - **International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List (IUCN):** Critically Endangered
 - **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):** Appendix 1
 - **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):** Appendix I
 - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I
- **Project Great Indian Bustard:** It was launched by the State government of **Rajasthan** during the World Environment Day in 2013.
 - It aimed to **identify the exclusive habitat** of the Indian bustard and fence them off to prevent human intervention along with providing closed-off breeding enclosures.

BJP gets ₹614.53 cr as contributions

The ruling BJP received ₹614.53 crore as contributions, more than six times the funds garnered by the opposition Congress during fiscal year 2021-22.

The Congress received funds to the tune of ₹95.46 crore, according to Election Commission data.

The Trinamool Congress, which is in power in West Bengal, received ₹43 lakh as contributions during the period while the CPI-M, which is in government in Kerala, received funds of ₹10.05 crore.

The West Bengal assembly polls were held in March-April 2021. In Kerala too, assembly election were conducted in April 2021.

The four national parties had recently filed their latest contributions reports to the Election Commission which made the documents public on Tuesday.

Electoral trusts, including Prudent Electoral Trust, have been major contributors to the BJP's kitty.

PTI

ELECTORAL TRUSTS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Polity & Governance)

Context: Electoral trusts, including Prudent Electoral Trust, have been major contributors to the BJP's kitty.

Electoral Trusts

- **About:** A **non-profit organization** established for orderly receipts of voluntary contributions from any person for distributing the same to political parties, registered under **Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951**.
 - These trusts are **approved by Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)** in accordance with the **Electoral Trust Scheme of 2013**.
 - Electoral Trust Scheme of 2013 was notified by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).
- **Objective:** Electoral Trusts are **designed to bring in more transparency** in the funds provided by corporate entities to the political parties.
- **Key Features:** These Electoral Trust companies are **not allowed to accept contributions** from foreign citizens or companies.
 - The trust shall also **maintain a list of persons** from whom contributions have been received and to whom the same have been distributed.
 - The ET shall accept contributions **only by way of an account payee cheque/bank draft/electronic transfer** to its bank account.
 - It shall **not accept any contributions** in the form of cash.
 - The ET shall be **issuing a receipt** immediately on receipt of any contribution.
 - The ET shall **not accept any contributions** without PAN of the contributor who is a resident and passport number in the case of a citizen of India, who is not a resident.
- **Voluntary contributions:** The electoral trust may receive voluntary contributions from:
 - An individual who is a **citizen of India**.
 - A company which is **registered in India**.
 - A **firm or Hindu undivided family** or an Association of persons or a body of individuals, resident in India.

PLAN TO RELAX PAID UP EQUITY CAPITAL THRESHOLD

Views Sought on Proposed Changes to Insurance Act

Our Bureau

New Delhi: India is proposing to remove the minimum Rs 100 crore paid up equity capital requirements for carrying out life, general and health insurance business in the country as part of a significant revamp of its insurance framework.

The finance ministry Wednesday invited comments on proposed amendments to the Insurance Act, 1938 and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.

"The proposed amendments primarily focus on enhancing the financial security of the policyholders, promoting policyholders' interests, improving returns to the policyholders, facilitating entry of more players in insurance market leading to economic growth and employment generation," the finance ministry noted while seeking comments from all stakeholders.

It further noted that the aim is to enhance efficiencies of the insurance industry - operational as well as financial and enabling ease of doing business. One of the proposed amendments is that insurer shall commence or carry on any class or sub-class of insurance business unless it has such minimum paid up equity capital as may be specified by regulations considering the size and scale of operations, class or sub-class of insurance business and the category or type of insurer.



"The proposal includes various measures such as opening up registration to various classes, sub-classes and types of insurers with appropriate minimum capital requirements as specified by IRDAI," it said noting that the last date for sending comments is December 15.

The finance ministry noted that this is being done in view of the changing needs of the insurance sector, and the comprehensive review of the legislative framework governing the sector has been done in consultation with IRDA and the industry. "A number of suggestions have been received to enhance insurance penetration, improve efficiency, and enable product innovation and diversification," it noted.

INSURANCE ACT, 1938(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Context: The finance ministry invited comments on proposed amendments to the Insurance Act, 1938.

Insurance Act, 1938

- **About:** A law originally passed in 1938 in British India to regulate the insurance sector.
 - The Insurance Act had resulted in the formation of **Controller of Insurance, a regulatory.**
 - But following the **nationalisation of major insurance companies** in India, under Life Insurance of India Corporation Act, 1956 and General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Act, 1972, its importance diminished.
- **Objectives:** It provides the **broad legal framework** within which the industry operates.
- **Key Features:** Under it, **only an Indian company**, as defined and registered under Companies Act, 1956, is allowed to operate in India.
 - Its **foreign entity-owned equity** should not exceed 49% as of 2015.
 - It must have a **licence from Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India.**
- **Insurance Amendment act, 2021:** The act amends the Insurance Act, 1938 to increase the maximum foreign investment allowed in an Indian insurance company.
 - The **act increases the limit on foreign investment** in an Indian insurance company from 49% to 74%, and removes restrictions on ownership and control.
 - While **control will go to foreign companies**, the majority of directors and key management persons will be resident Indians who will be covered by law of the land.

Despite SC order, NMC rejects patients' pleas on state council rulings

Rema.Nagarajan@timesgroup.com

Getty Images/stockphoto



A SYSTEM WITH MALADIES?

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has rejected 65 appeals from patients against state medical council decisions in keeping with its October 2021 decision that only appeals from doctors would be taken up by its Ethics and Medical Registration Board (EMRB) and that patients should not be allowed to file appeals before the EMRB. A patient's right to appeal against the decision of any state medical council before the apex medical regulator was a result of a case in the Supreme Court, which led to a new clause being incorporated in the ethics code for doctors in 2003, allowing such appeals. However, ignoring this, the NMC has decided to disallow appeals of non-doctors.

According to the NMC's reply to RTI activist and ophthalmologist Dr KV Babu's RTI application, from March to September this year, 65 appeals from non-doctors "have been returned due to their non-maintainability under section 30(3) of the NMC Act, 2019".

Section 30 (3) of the NMC Act 2019 states: "A medical practitioner or professional who is aggrieved by any action taken by a state medical council under sub-section (2) may prefer an appeal to the Ethics and Medical Registration Board against such action, and the decision, if any, of the Ethics and Medical Registration Board thereupon shall be binding on the state medical council, unless a second appeal is preferred under sub-section (4)." Sub-section (4) allows doctors to appeal to the commission against EMRB decisions within sixty days of communication of the decision.

"How can the NMC take away a right given to patients by the Supreme Court? The regulator is meant to regulate the profession in public interest. It is not a professional interest group. The NMC Act states that 'the rules and regulations made under the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956, shall continue to be in force and operate till new standards or requirements are specified under this Act or the rules and regulations made thereunder'. The ethics code has not been replaced by the NMC.

It continues to operate and so does clause 8.8. So the NMC's decision to disallow appeals of non-doctors is illegal," argued Dr Babu.

In 2003, the members of an Adhoc Committee appointed by the Supreme Court and of the Executive Committee of the erstwhile Medical Council of India approved the suggestion for incorporation of new clauses which included clause 8.8 in Chapter 8 of the Professional Conduct Etiquette and Ethics Regulations, 2002. This was approved by the Council in its general body meeting held on October 20, 2003. Clause 8.8 stated: "Any person aggrieved by the decision of the State Medical Council on any complaint against a delinquent physician, shall have the right to file an appeal to the MCI within a period of 60 days from the date of receipt of the order passed by the said Medical Council." This was notified in the Gazette of India on May 27, 2004.

While rejecting a patient's appeal in March this year, NMC referred to section 30(3) of the NMC Act and stated that in a meeting of the commission held on October 16, 2021 it was reiterated that only medical practitioners or professionals should be allowed to file an appeal before EMRB, and that "patients should not be allowed to file appeal before EMRB" under the section. It went on to state that it has been decided by EMRB that all appeals of non-doctors "filed on or after coming into force of the NMC Act, 2019 with effect from September 25, 2020 shall be returned".

Dr Babu also wrote to the health ministry against this decision of the NMC, but beyond forwarding his letter to the NMC the ministry has not intervened to safeguard public interest. Attempts to get a response from NMC on the issue proved futile.

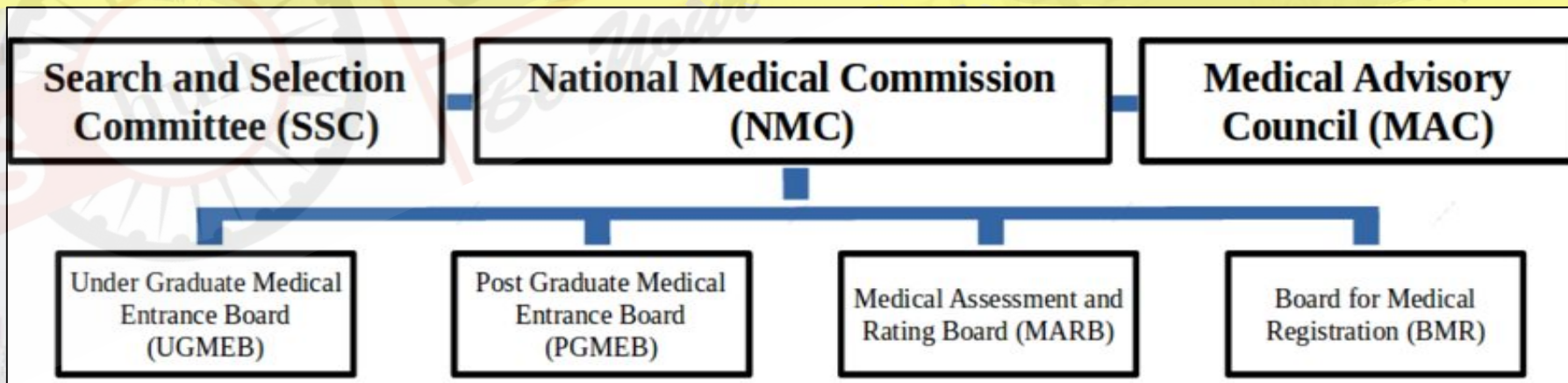
NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Context: The National Medical Commission (NMC) has rejected 65 appeals from patients against state medical council decisions in keeping with its October 2021 decision that only appeals from doctors would be taken up by its Ethics and Medical Registration Board (EMRB) and that patients should not be allowed to file appeals before the EMRB.

National Medical Commission (NMC)

- **About:** An Indian regulatory body of 33 members which regulates medical education and medical professionals.
- **Statutory Body:** It replaced the Medical Council of India on 25 September 2020.
 - MCI was first established in 1934 under the **Indian Medical Council Act, 1933**.
 - NMC was established under **National Medical Commission Act 2019**.
- **Objectives:** The Commission grants recognition of medical qualifications, gives accreditation to medical schools, grants registration to medical practitioners, and monitors medical practice and assesses the medical infrastructure in India.
- **Autonomous boards:** The commission consists of four autonomous boards:
 - Under-Graduate Medical Education Board (UGMEB),
 - Post-Graduate Medical Education Board (PGMEB),
 - Medical Assessment and Rating Board and
 - Ethics and Medical Registration Board
- **Composition:** The NMC consists of 33 members: A Chairperson (medical professionals only), 10 ex officio Members and 22 Part-time Members.



JOINT HADR EXERCISE 'SAMANVAY 2022' CULMINATES AT AIR FORCE STATION AGRA

Context: The Annual **Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise 'Samanvay 2022'** was conducted by the IAF at Air Force Station, Agra from 28 November 2022 to 30 November 2022.

Samanvay 2022

- **About:** An annual joint exercise involving various stakeholders from India and representatives from the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** counties.
- **Objectives:** Provide a **unique platform for exchange of domain knowledge**, experience and best practices with the participating ASEAN member countries.
- **Samanvay 2022:** It **promote a synergistic approach towards HADR** by various national and regional stakeholders involved in Disaster Management including the Civil Administration, the Armed Forces, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), etc.
 - It contribute in the evolution of institutional frameworks for effective communication, interoperability, cooperation and their application for successful conduct of HADR.
- **Location:** Held at **Air Force Station Agra**.
- **Other exercises with ASEAN:** **Watershed' Military Exercise** held in 2016.



MoD approves extension of pension payment for three months for banks' pensioners, migrated to SPARSH, whose identification was due in November 2022

Context: Ministry of Defence has approved the extension of pension payment for three months for banks' pensioners, who migrated to **SPARSH**, {**System for Pension Administration (Raksha)**} and whose identification was due in November 2022.

Key points

- It is reiterated that the **process of Annual Identification/Life Certification** is a statutory requirement for continued and timely credit of monthly pension.
- All defence pensioners who are yet to complete their annual identification are requested to **complete their annual identification/life certification by February 2023** positively to ensure smooth processing and credit of their pension entitlement.

SPARSH: System for Pension Administration Raksha

- **About:** An **integrated system for automation** of sanction and disbursement of defence pension.
 - This **web-based system processes** pension claims and credits pension directly into the bank accounts of defence pensioners without relying on any external intermediary.
 - A Pensioner Portal is **available for pensioners** to view their pension related information, access services and register complaints, if any.
 - SPARSH envisages **establishment of Service Centres** to provide last mile connectivity to pensioners who may be unable to directly access the SPARSH portal.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Defence.
- **Objectives:** It is established with the objective of **empowering a Defence Pensioner** with regard to his pension account.
 - It aims at providing a **comprehensive solution to the administration of pension** to the defence pensioners in line with the vision of the government of India of Digital India, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and "Minimal Government, Maximum Governance".
- **Associated Banks:** The two largest banks dealing with defence pensioners - **State Bank of India (SBI) and Punjab National Bank (PNB)** - have been co-opted as Service Centres.
- **Benefits:** It will **interface with all the stakeholders** and provide a single source of truth there by ensuring transparency, accountability and ease of doing business through information dissemination and simplification of pension processes through Business Process Re-engineering(BPR) .
 - It provides the **option to the pensioner to use enabled services** for quicker processing of his requests and signing of declarations making his experience a truly paperless and hassle free one.

ROOIBOS BUSH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

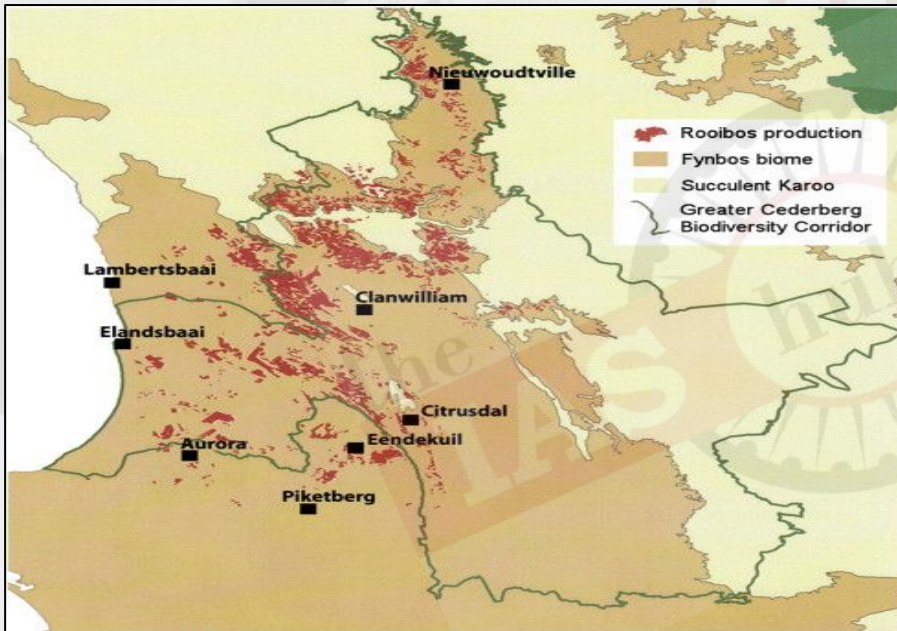
Road to COP15 Montreal: Indigenous groups in South Africa benefit from rooibos tea industry; here is how

Rooibos comes loaded with antioxidants that can boost immunity, reduce risks of heart diseases, protect from viral infection and has anti-ageing properties



NEXT NEWS >

By Vibha Varshney
Published: Tuesday 29 November 2022



Context: As the world inches towards the **Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) COP15** in Montreal, scheduled from December 7-19, 2022, there is a success story from South Africa that the negotiators could do well to keep in mind.

- **Rooibos, endemic to South Africa**, comes loaded with antioxidants that can boost immunity, reduce risks of heart diseases, protect from viral infection, and has anti-aging properties.

Rooibos (*Aspalathus linearis*)

- **About**: A broom-like **member of the plant family Fabaceae** that grows in South Africa's fynbos biome.
 - Rooibos is a **widely traded and exported commodity**, sold to over 30 countries, with the United States and Europe being the biggest importers.
- **Usage**: The leaves are used to **make a herbal tea** that is called rooibos (especially in Southern Africa), bush tea, red tea, or redbush tea (predominantly in Great Britain).
- **Distribution**: Rooibos is usually grown in the **Cederberg**, a small mountainous area in the West Coast District of the Western Cape province of South Africa.
- **Chemical composition**: As a fresh leaf, rooibos contains a **high content of ascorbic acid** (vitamin C).
 - Rooibos tea does not contain caffeine and has low tannin levels compared to black tea or green tea.
 - Rooibos **contains polyphenols**, including flavanols, flavones, flavanones, dihydrochalcones, aspalathin, and nothofagin.
 - The processed leaves and stems contain **benzoic and cinnamic acids**.
- **Associated community**: The **San and Khoi communities** were the first to learn the health benefits of rooibos' needle-like leaves that grew widely on their land.
 - The San and Khoi communities are the oldest **inhabitants of Southern Africa**.
- **Conservation**: Due to uncontrolled harvest, the plant has been put in **Appendix 2 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**.
 - **Appendix 2** includes species that are not necessarily threatened with extinction now but may become so unless trade is closely controlled.

COP15 Montreal: Asia must speed up its protected area coverage 6 times to meet 30X30 goal

Conservation measures governed by local communities can help the world meet targets on protected areas, according to a new research



By Vibha Varshney
Published: Wednesday 30 November 2022

NEXT NEWS >



30x30 target

- **About:** The 30x30 target is a **global target** that aims to halt the accelerating loss of species and protect vital ecosystems that are the source of our economic security.
 - **High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature and People** has been formed in 2021 to promote an international agreement on 30x30 target.
- **High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature and People:** An intergovernmental group championing a global deal for nature and people that can halt the accelerating loss of species, and protect vital ecosystems that are the source of our economic security.
 - Launched in 2019 by **Costa Rica, France and Britain**.
 - It has **more than 70 countries** which are a mix of countries in the global north and south, European, Latin American, Africa and Asia countries are among the members.
 - In 2021, **India officially joined** the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People.
 - **India is the first of the BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) to join the HAC.
- **Target:** The 30x30 target implies protection of at **least 30 % the of world's land and ocean by 2030**.

Context: Asia is not likely to meet the ambitious 30X30 goal proposed under the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, according to a new research released November 29, 2022.

- Countries have to commit to protect 30 percent of the land and sea by 2030 under this goal.

Key Points

- Most Asian countries have **failed to achieve even the global minimum target** of protecting at least 17 per cent of land by 2020.
- **Only 40 percent of Asian countries achieved** the target of a minimum of 17 per cent coverage for protected areas by 2020.
- Asian countries **managed to protect barely 13.2 percent of land** in 2020, compared with a global average of 15.2 percent protection.
- The target of 17 per cent is **part of the 20 Aichi Targets** set at the 2010 UN CBD.
- It is set to be finalised at the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the CBD in Montreal, Canada next month.
- Countries in Asia also have a **slower year-on-year** increase in the amount of land protected for conservation, at just 0.4 per cent per year on average.
- Some countries showed **no change while others showed** decrease in protected area coverage. Countries with larger areas under agricultural land in 2015 had a lower protected area coverage in 2020.
- The **30X30 target was first floated in 2019** in an article A Global Deal for Nature: Guiding principles, milestones, and targets published in Science Advances.
- This then became the global call of the **High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People** in 2020 and as of October 2022, more than 100 countries are part of it.
- The target has been **dubbed 'the biggest land grab in history'** which will take away land and livelihood from 300 million people, many of them tribal and indigenous peoples.
- Human rights experts fear that if the world pushes the proposed target, indigenous communities would have **lower access to the areas**.

THANK YOU!



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