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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



MK Yadav Sir

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INDIAN EXPRESS

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SUGGESTIONS FOR 3 NEW CRIMINAL BILLS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity)



Govt decides to withdraw three criminal law Bills

Reworked Bills set to be introduced based on House panel suggestions

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 11

THE CENTRE has decided to withdraw the three new criminal law bills from Lok Sabha to bring in new draft laws, reflecting some of the changes suggested by the Parliamentary panel, including replacing "mental illness" as a defence of the accused with "unsound mind" in the Bhartiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS) 2023.

The BNS 2023 is meant to replace the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which provides protection from prosecution to a person of unsound mind. The BNS changes this to a person with mental illness. The Parliamentary panel, headed by BJP MP Brij Lal, was of the opinion that the government should bring back the term "unsound mind" since "mental illness" is "too wide in its import" and could even include mood swings and voluntary intoxication in its ambit.

"The committee has accordingly recommended that the word 'mental illness' in this Sanhita may be changed to 'unsound mind' wherever it occurs, as the present one can create problems during the trial stage, as an accused person can simply show that he was under the influence of alcohol or drugs during the time of the commission of a crime and cannot be prosecuted even if he has committed the crime without intoxication," the panel's report states.

According to sources, the government has accepted the suggestion. The sources said that the government has rejected the proposal to retain the offence of adultery in BNS 2023 and to criminalise non-consensual sex between men, women, and/or transgender individuals by reintroducing section 377 of the IPC once again.

The BNS has omitted Section 497 of the IPC since the Supreme Court, in a ruling in 2018, had decriminalised adultery.

However, the committee has expressed concerns there is a need to retain the provision to safeguard the sanctity of the institution of marriage, while it can be tweaked to address the gender discrimination aspect.

The government has disagreed, sources said. The reworked bills may face opposition from the INDIA bloc in Parliament. The opposition parties have already decided to coordinate their floor strategy in Parliament on the three bills, as well as on the Chief Election Commissioner and Other ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Bill.

They have decided to demand that the three Bills be referred to a joint Select Committee. The Bills have already been scrutinised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, and the government is unlikely to accept the opposition demand.

On August 11, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had introduced three Bills in Lok Sabha which were referred to a standing committee the same day.

From a new provision on mob lynching, punishable by seven years imprisonment or life imprisonment or death penalty; to enabling speedy justice through video trials, e-filing of FIRs; expanding the definition of sedition; bringing corruption, terrorism, and organized crime under the penal laws; introducing community service and solitary confinement as new forms of punishment; holding trials in the absence of an accused; among others — the new Bills provide for substantive changes in criminal jurisprudence.

Context: The **Centre has decided to withdraw the three new criminal law bills** from Lok Sabha to bring in new draft laws, **reflecting some of the changes suggested by the Parliamentary panel.**

Key Changes and Provisions

- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**, 2023, replaces the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860.
- **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023**, replaces The Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973 (originally enacted in 1898).
- **Bharatiya Sakshya (BS) Bill, 2023**, replaces the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

New Suggestions in Bills

- The **BNS 2023** is meant to replace the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which **provides protection from prosecution to a person of unsound mind**.
- The **committee has accordingly recommended** that the **word 'mental illness'** in this Sanhita may be **changed to 'unsound mind'**.
- the **committee has expressed concerns there is a need to retain** the provision to safeguard the **sanctity of the institution of marriage**, while it can be tweaked to address the gender discrimination aspect.

New provisions in Bills

- **Mob lynching is subject to penalties** of seven years imprisonment, life imprisonment, or the death penalty.
- **Fast-track justice is facilitated through video trials** and electronic filing of First Information Reports (FIRs).
- The definition of **sedition has been broadened, and provisions against corruption**, terrorism, and organized crime have been strengthened.
- **New forms of punishment, such as community service** and solitary confinement, have been introduced.

THE HINDU

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RETAIL INFLATION

Syllabus GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Retail inflation is stable now: FM

India's retail inflation has declined from an average of 7.1% in April-October 2022 to 5.4% in the corresponding period of 2023, Ms. Sitharaman tells Parliament; the FM attributes weakening price rise largely to a steady drop in core inflation

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The country's consumer price inflation is now "stable" and within the official tolerance band of 2% to 6%, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman conveyed to the Lok Sabha on Monday, attributing weakening price rise largely to a steady drop in core inflation.

"India's retail inflation has declined from an average of 7.1% in April-October 2022 to 5.4% in the corresponding period of 2023. Core inflation [that excludes food and energy costs] has declined from 5.1% in April 2023 to 4.3% in October 2023," the FM said in response to a question from MP Sushil Kumar Rinku on retail inflation and adverse weather conditions" and the government and the Reserve Bank of India had helped resolve such mismatches and reined in inflation through proactive supply-side initiatives and effective demand stabilisation measures, she underlined.

"Retail inflation is now stable and within the notified tolerance band of 2% to 6%," Ms. Sitharaman said, adding that the pace of price rise had been "mostly within acceptable limits" since the introduction of the tolerance band in 2016. A steady decline in core inflation had been critical in weakening inflationary pressure in the Indian economy, she said. Ms. Sitharaman outlined some of the government's steps to restrain inflation such as easing food imports, preventing hoarding, extending the free food grain scheme, and raising LPG subsidy.

November's retail inflation numbers will be released by the National Statistics Office on Tuesday and the RBI has indicated there may be a spike in inflation in November from the four-month low of 4.87% in October due to an uptick in vegetable prices.

Easing inflation

FM asserts inflation has been within acceptable limits since the introduction of the tolerance band in 2016

- Nirmala Sitharaman says retail inflation is now stable and within the RBI's notified tolerance band of 2% to 6%
- Core inflation has declined from 5.1% in April 2023 to 4.3% in October 2023, FM says



- Temporary increases in inflation reined in by supply-side and demand stabilisation measures, she asserts

"increasing steeply".

Temporary increases in inflation "on a few occasions were caused by demand-supply mismatches arising out of global shocks

Context: Recently, **India has witnessed a decline in retail inflation**, dropping from an average of 7.1% in April-October 2022 to 5.4% in the corresponding period of 2023.

Inflation

- **About**: Inflation may be defined as a sustained rise in the general level of prices brought about by high rates of expansion in aggregate money supply over a period of time.
- **Measured By**: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
- Inflation tracks how the prices of a collection of goods and services change on average as time passes.
- **Two main sets of inflation indices**: The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- **Rural, Urban Inflation:** Inflation faced by rural consumers eased from 5.33% in September to 5.1%, but urban households saw a fractional increase in inflation at 4.65%.
- **Retail Inflation**
  - **About**: It is also known as Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation, which is the speed at which prices of items people purchase for their personal needs go up over a period.
  - **It checks how much the cost changes for a set** of items that families usually get, like food, clothes, homes, transport, and medical help.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)	Wholesale Price Index (WPI)
It measures the change in the retail prices of goods and services	It measures change in price of goods charged by whole seller.
CPI releases on a monthly basis.	WPI releases on a weekly basis
CPI includes both goods and services.	WPI includes only goods.
It includes about eight categories of products and services.	It includes primary articles, fuel & power and manufactured goods.

PIB Dec 11

HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Steps taken for protection of wildlife and management of human-wildlife conflict

Context: Recently, according to the population assessment, there is no indication of a decline in the populations of Asiatic lions, tigers, and elephants.

Human Wild Life Conflict

- **About:** Human-wildlife conflict refers to the negative interactions or conflicts that arise when human activities intersect with the natural behaviour and habitat of wildlife.
- **Causes of Human-Wildlife Conflict**
  - Habitat Loss and Fragmentation
  - Competition for Resources
  - Encroachment into Wildlife Territories
  - Changes in Land Use
  - Human Waste and Food Availability
  - Climate Change
  - Insufficient knowledge and understanding

Impacts of Human-Wildlife Conflict

- **Livelihood and Economic Losses**: For instance, studies estimate that farmers in some regions of India experience annual crop losses of up to 20%, leading to economic losses of millions of dollars.
- **Conservation Challenges:** According to a survey conducted in India, 40% of respondents expressed negative perceptions of wildlife, associating them with threats to agriculture and human safety.
- **Human Casualties and Injuries**: In 2020, India recorded approximately 800 reported cases of human injuries caused by wildlife attacks, with the majority occurring in conflict-prone regions.
- **Displacement and Relocation**: Over the past decade, an estimated 100,000 people in India have been displaced or forced to relocate due to human-wildlife conflicts, resulting in social and cultural disruptions in affected communities.

Plan Bee: Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has adopted an innovative technique called 'Plan Bee' to save elephants from train accidents.

- It is an amplifying system imitating the buzz of a swarm of honey bees to keep wild animals from getting killed on the railway tracks.

Project Re-Hab: Started by KVIC.

- Under this project fencing of bee boxes is installed in areas from where elephants move towards the human settlements and farmers' agriculture. The bee-boxes fencing on the routes of movement of elephants will block the path of wild elephants preventing them from attacking humans and destroying farmers' crops.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS Page 2

WPI TO PPI

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

India may switch from WPI to new index

MUKESH JAGOTA
New Delhi, December 11

THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL Commission (NSC) is examining the working group report on the roadmap for introducing the Producer Price Index (PPI) in India to replace the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and their recommendations are awaited, a senior official said Monday.

"The working group submitted the report some time back. It (the entire issue of introducing PPI in India) is with the statistical commission. We will wait for the panel recommendation before moving ahead," the official who did not wish to be named said.

The PPI has been discussed for the past 20 years when its idea was first mooted. While the need to move to PPI from WPI was expressed in 2003 it was only in 2014 that a working group was set up to determine the methodology and data requirements to move ahead. The report of the group came in 2017 but no decision was taken on it.

In 2019, the government had constituted a working group for revision of the current series of WPI that has 2011-12 as its base year. The task before the group was to suggest a new base year for WPI and suggest additions and deletions of commodities in the basket of goods whose prices are tracked to draw the index.

The working group was also empowered to recommend a roadmap for moving to the Producer Price Index (PPI) from WPI.

Stressing the importance attached to introducing the PPI, the official said India is one of the few countries that still uses WPI. "All members of the G-20, including China, have PPI."

PPI globally tracks price movements in both goods and services. "Initially PPI in India will only include goods. Services will come at a later stage."

The WPI will not be discontinued immediately after the PPI is introduced. "Initially we will probably go with both before discontinuing WPI," the official added.

Context: Recently, the **National Statistical Commission (NSC) has been scrutinizing the** working group report outlining the **roadmap for introducing the Producer Price Index (PPI) in India as a replacement for the Wholesale Price Index (WPI)**, and we are eagerly awaiting their recommendations.

- PPI is different from WPI in the way that it measures the average change in prices received by producers and excludes indirect taxes.

Wholesale Price Index (WPI)

- **About:** The WPI is a gauge used to monitor and record fluctuations in the prices of bulk goods at the wholesale level within India.
- **Published by**: Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Base year**: WPI has been revised from 2004-05 to 2011-12 in 2017.
- **Formula**: WPI = (Total value of the basket of goods and services at current prices / Total value of the basket of goods and services at base year prices) x 100
- **Component of WPI**: Manufactured products = 65% approx (64.2% now)
  - Primary articles = 20% approx (22.6% now)
  - Fuel and power = 15% approx (13.1% now)

Producer Price Index (PPI)

- **About:** It is a family of indexes that measures the average change over time in selling prices received by domestic producers of goods and services. PPIs measure price change from the perspective of the seller.
- **Calculation**: PPI = (Value of Total Output at Current Prices ÷ Value of Total Output at Base Year Prices) x 100
- **Coverage of PPI**: Mining, Manufacturing, Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, Gas, Electricity, Waste and Scrap materials.

PIB

Dec 11

IAADB-2023
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Scheme)

India Art, Architecture and Design Biennale- 2023

Context: The **recently inaugurated India Art, Architecture, and Design Biennale 2023** is taking place from the 9th to the 15th of December, **with the opening ceremony held at the historic Red Fort** in Delhi.

India Art, Architecture, and Design Biennale 2023 (IAADB)

- **About:** The Biennale is designed to initiate a holistic conversation between artists, architects, designers, photographers, collectors, connoisseurs, curators, art professionals, gallerists, academic institutions, researchers, students and youth to strengthen the cultural dialogue and provide them with avenues and opportunities.
  - It is being organised with the **intention of it being a global cultural initiative** and the **flagship programme of the Ministry of Culture.**
- **Aim:** To invigorate the cultural space and creative industries and leverage the Arts for Global Cultural Diplomacy & Connect.
- **Theme**: Doors of India, Gardens of India, Baolis (step-wells) of India, Temples of India, Architectural Wonders of Independent India, Indigenous Design and Women in Architecture and Design.
- **Objective**:
  - Showcase **traditional, grassroot artisans as well as contemporary designers**, curators & thought leaders cutting across age, gender & genre lines.
  - **Celebrate the best that our country has to offer in the fields of ancient,** modern, contemporary and tech driven art, architecture and design.

TIMES OF INDIA

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CSE REPORT ON WASTE
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Governance)



Delhi generates maximum C&D waste in country, says CSE report

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi generates 3,711 tonnes per day (TPD) of construction and demolition waste, the highest among the 35 non-attainment cities, stated a report released by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) on Monday.

The report, 'Construction and demolition waste–closing the waste loop for sustainability', stated that the data was disclosed by the 35 non-attainment cities on the Central Pollution Control Board's portal for regulation of air pollution in non-attainment cities, while the remaining 96 had not shared any data. PRANA is part of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) designed to improve local air quality. "Of the 131 non-attainment cities that have shared their city action plans on it, only 35 (26%) have data on C&D waste generation. Together, these cities have generated 6,563.5 TPD C&D waste. Only eight cities have reported how much C&D waste they collect daily," the report stated. Delhi is followed by Ahmedabad at 1,000 TPD, and Faridabad and Noida at 300 TPD each.

It stated that Delhi's capacity to treat 5,150 TPD through five plants was more than adequate, and the goal should be to send all C&D waste to processing plants. The report pointed out flaws in calculating C&D waste under the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0, under which cities are expected to apply a thumbrule of 50 gram per capita per day as part of the city solid waste action plan. "The top generators — according to the SBM 2.0 estimations — are Mumbai (919.8 TPD), Delhi (817.5 TPD), Kolkata (702 TPD) and Bengaluru (426 TPD). This is a gross underestimation."

Additional assessments carried out by CSE in the 35 cities revealed that the actual generation was expected to be much higher given the status of live construction sites. For instance, Delhi generates 3,711 TPD, more than four times the estimated quantity.

Mitashi Singh, programme manager of sustainable habitat at CSE, said, the data, needed to plan NCAP, had not been updated beyond 2021.

Context: Recently, a **report released by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)** stated that **Delhi generates the highest amount of construction and demolition** waste among the 35 non-attainment cities, with a daily output of 3,711 tonnes.

Key Highlights of Report

- **Top Generators(according to the SBM 2.0)**: Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Bengaluru.
- **The Capital's number** was followed by Ahmedabad, Faridabad and Noida. The report **also pointed to flaws in calculating C&D waste** under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) 2.0.
- The **data from micro-action plans in PRANA shows that only 35 cities** (26% of the 131 non-attainment cities that have uploaded their plans) have provided statistics on C&D waste generation.
- Portal for Regulation of Air-pollution in Non-Attainment cities **(PRANA) is part of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)** designed to improve local air quality.

Swachh Bharat Mission

- **About:** It is the world's largest sanitation initiative was launched by the Prime Minister of India
- **Launched**: In 2014
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Jal Shakti
- **Aim**: To accelerate the efforts to achieve universal sanitation coverage and to focus on sanitation.

National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

- **Launched:** January 2019
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- **Target**: To achieve 20% to 30% reduction in concentrations of PM10(particulate matter of diameter between 10 and 2.5 micrometer) and PM2.

ALL INDIA RADIO

Dec 11

KRISHI UDAN SCHEME
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Scheme)

58 Airports in the country have been covered under Krishi Udan Scheme: Govt replies in RS

Context: The Government has said that 58 Airports in the country have been covered under the Krishi Udan Scheme.

Krishi Udan Scheme

- **About:** It is an international and national routes to assist farmers in transporting agricultural products to help improve their value realization.
- **Launched**: August 2020
- **Aim**: To ensure seamless, cost-effective, time-bound air transportation and associated logistics for all Agri-produce originating especially from Northeast, hilly and tribal regions of the country.
- **Implementation Agency**: AAI Cargo Logistics and Allied Services Company Limited (AAICLAS)
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Objectives**
- To increase the share of air in the modal mix for transportation of Agri-produce, which includes horticulture, fishery, livestock & processed products.
- **Providing more air connectivity** (national and international) between origin-destination airports aimed at bringing in improved logistics efficiency.
- Improving infrastructure and performance in processing of air cargo by all stakeholders, including Agri-produce, horticulture, fisheries, livestock products at airports and off-airport facilities, by regulatory participating governmental agencies (PGAs).
- Imparting **special focus to air freight of organic and natural produce** of NER, Tribal and Hilly Districts.

KRISHI UDAN 2.0

- **About**: The scheme proposes to facilitating and incentivizing movement of Agri-produce by air transportation.

LIVEMINT

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VINBAX-2023

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

India, Vietnam start military exercise

The Indian and Vietnamese armies began an 11-day military exercise in Vietnam on Monday, in sync with the expanding strategic engagement between the two countries against the backdrop of common concerns over China's increasingly aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea.

The aim of the exercise is to foster a collaborative partnership and promote interoperability between the two forces, the Indian Army said. "

The joint exercise will help in promoting understanding and interoperability between the two contingents and further strengthen the defence cooperation between the friendly armies," it said. In reflection of the growing strategic ties, India gifted its in-service missile corvette, INS Kirpan, to Vietnam in July. Vietnam, an important country of the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), has territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea region. India has oil-exploration projects in the Vietnamese waters in the South China Sea. The military exercise—"VINBAX-23"—between the two armies will take place from 11-21 December in Hanoi.

PTI

Context: Recently, the Indian Armed Forces contingent arrived in Hanoi, Vietnam, to participate in the fourth edition of the Joint Military **Exercise VINBAX-2023**.

VINBAX-2023

- **About:** It is an annual military training event, alternating between India and Vietnam.
- **Venue**: Hanoi, Vietnam
  - Inception Instituted in 2018, the inaugural edition of VINBAX occurred in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Edition 2022**: The most recent edition of VINBAX was conducted at Chandimandir Military Station in August 2022.
- **Objective**: To foster a collaborative partnership and promote interoperability.
  - To share best practices, guided by Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter on Peacekeeping Operations.
- **Aim**: To further strengthen defense cooperation between the friendly armies of India and Vietnam.
- **Training Activities:** Encouraging the exchange of ideas is a key focus, with both contingents jointly rehearsing tactics, techniques, and procedures.
  - Modern methods for constructing infrastructure in operational areas, such as roads, culverts, helipads, ammunition shelters, and observation posts, will be shared.

ARTICLE 370

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Apex Court Backs Centre's Decision to Abrogate Art 370

Wants statehood restored to J&K at the earliest & polls held by Sept '24

Raghav Ohri

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the Centre's decision to abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution, which conferred special status on the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, ruling that it was a temporary provision and that the President had the power to revoke it.



A five-judge Constitution bench also unanimously upheld the Centre's decision, of August 5, 2019, to divide the former state into two Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, while directing that statehood be restored to J&K "at the earliest" and that elections be held to its legislative assembly by September next year.

The bench, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud, held that "Article 370 was a feature of asymmetric federalism and not sovereignty". It delivered three judgments, one authored by the CJI, with inputs from justices BR Gavai and Surya Kant, and two separate yet concurring judgments by justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sanjiv Khanna.

Context: The Prime Minister of India said that the **Supreme Court's verdict on the abrogation of Article 370 is historic** and constitutionally upholds the decision taken by the Parliament of India on 5th August 2019.

Article 370 and its Removal

- **Background**: The Constituent Assembly of Jammu & Kashmir (through Article 370) was empowered to recommend which articles of the Indian Constitution should apply to the state.
  - **Clause 3 of the article 370 gives** the **President of India the power** to amend its provisions and scope.
- **Removal of Article 370**:
  - Amendments were made to make applicable the entirety of India's Constitution to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).
  - **It was done when the State was under President's Rule** with no elected Legislative Assembly in place.
  - In 2019, the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order 2019, issued by the President, withdrew the special status of J&K and extended all provisions of the Indian Constitution to J&K.
  - The **J&K (Reorganisation) Act 2019 bifurcated J&K into two UTs** - J&K was an UT with a Legislative Assembly; Ladakh was without an Assembly.

Supreme Court ruling

- **On temporary nature of Article 370**:
  - It was intended as an interim arrangement until the Constituent Assembly of the State was formed since in the interim, and
  - The provision was adopted because of the special circumstances in the state, which was experiencing war conditions.

HINDUSTAN TIMES

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CINEREOUS VULTURE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Rare vulture species seen at Asola Bhatti sanctuary

Jasjeev Gandhiok

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus*) – a rare bird classified as "near threatened" and one of the largest raptors in the world – has been sighted at the Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary, making it the first such sighting of the bird in over five decades in Delhi, people aware of the matter said on Monday.

A winter migrant, the cinereous vulture travels thousands of kilometres from Europe towards western India – including Rajasthan and Gujarat – in winter, but seldom Delhi.

Surya Prakash, a zoologist and birder, who made the sighting on Saturday, said it was extremely rare for the vulture to land in the Capital. The last confirmed sighting of the bird in Delhi was on the Yamuna floodplains in June 1969. It was classified as "near threatened" by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



The vulture was spotted on Saturday. SURYA PRAKASH

"The bird used to regularly be sighted in Delhi till the late 1960s. However, it stopped visiting over the last few decades. It might be using Delhi as a stopover before flying to Rajasthan," said Prakash, who has been birding for the last 35 years.

The raptor is a sober dark brown shade flanked by broad wings and a slightly wedged tail. It is an altitudinal migrant – meaning it migrates from a higher to a lower altitude.

Prakash said he spotted the bird flying over the Neeli Jheel on Saturday, where other vultures have also been sighted.

"I noticed two raptors flying above the lake, but their size difference was massive. It was flying alongside an Egyptian vulture, but the cinereous vulture is nearly 3.5 times bigger and stood out," he said.

"It moves from places where the winter is harsh as it cannot tolerate the cold," he added.

Context: Recently, the **cinereous vulture has been sighted at the Asola Bhatti Wildlife** Sanctuary, marking the first occurrence of this bird in Delhi in over five decades.

Cinereous Vulture (Aegypius monachus)

- **About:** A winter migrant, the cinereous vulture travels thousands of kilometres from Europe towards western India — including Rajasthan, Gujarat
- **Characteristics**: The raptor is a sober dark brown shade flanked by broad wings and a slightly wedged tail. It is an altitudinal migrant — which means it migrates from a higher to a lower altitude.
- **IUCN Status:** Near Threatened
- **Wildlife Protection Act 1972**: Under Schedule IV
- **Threats**: Poisoning from diclofenac, loss of natural habitats, food dearth and contamination, hunting and electrocution by power lines.

Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary

- **Coverage Area**: 32.71 km2 area on the Southern Delhi Ridge of Aravalli hill range.
- **Location**: Delhi-Haryana border lies in Southern Delhi as well as northern parts of Faridabad and Gurugram districts of Haryana state.
  - It is also part of the Sariska-Delhi Wildlife Corridor, which runs from the Sariska Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan to Delhi Ridge.
- **Vegetation**: Dry deciduous,
- **Flora**: Consists of Prosopis juliflora as the dominant exotic species and Diospyros montana as the dominant native species in the sanctuary.
- **Fauna**: Golden Jackals, Striped-Hyenas, Indian crested-Porcupines, Civets, Jungle Cats, Snakes, Monitor Lizards, Mongoose etc.

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