

SEPTEMBER

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MK Yadav Sir



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SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

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Food baskets for patients, job training for kin in bid for 'TB mukt Bharat'

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 8

WORKING TOWARDS the goal of eliminating tuberculosis (TB) by 2025, the Union Health Ministry is launching the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan on Friday, which will include community support for patients – nutritional and additional diagnostic support for them, and vocational training for their families.

While the initiative, called 'Ni-kshay Mitra', is already underway in some states like Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, President Droupadi Murmu will formally launch it on Friday.

Under the scheme, individuals,

NGOs and corporates can "adopt" TB patients by committing support for 1-3 years. To join the initiative, they will have to register on the site, <https://communitysupport.nikshay.in>, which has an anonymous list of TB patients, categorised according to the primary health centres, blocks, districts and states. The sponsors can select the number of patients as per their capacity.

A mail will be sent from the central TB division to the sponsor with details of their district's TB officer, while the TB officer will be notified about the sponsor. The details of the patients will be provided to the sponsors by the officer, on condition that they maintain anonymity.

The health ministry, in collaboration with ICMR's National Institute of Nutrition, has developed two options for monthly food baskets. The vegetarian food basket for adults has to contain 3 kg cereals or millets, 1.5 kg pulses, 250 g vegetable cooking oil, and 1 kg milk powder or 6

MONTHLY FOOD BASKETS FOR TB PATIENTS

	FOR ADULTS	FOR CHILDREN
Cereals/ millets	3kg	2kg
Pulses	1.5 kg	1kg
Vegetable cooking oil	250g	150g
Milk powder/ Milk/ Groundnut	1kg/ 6litres/ 1kg	750g/ 3.5litres / 0.7kg
Eggs (optional)	30 nos	30 nos

litres of milk or 1 kg groundnut. The non-vegetarian option will have an additional 30 eggs. For children, the basket has to contain 2 kg cereals or millets, 1 kg pulses, 150 g vegetable cooking oil, and 750 g milk powder or 3.5 litres of milk or 0.7 kg

groundnut. The sponsors are also asked to encourage patients to consume fresh vegetables, beans and fruits.

Each nutrition basket is likely to cost about Rs 1,000, said officials. The food baskets will be modified by the district officials as per the locally acceptable food.

"We don't want people to donate money, we want the human touch. We want them to either make the baskets themselves or, if they are donating from outside the area, have someone do it on their behalf. If that is not possible, then they can ask their TB officer to connect them to local organisations which can do it. But we would prefer that people do it on their own," said a health

ministry official.

"Nutrition is a key factor when it comes to TB. Most of us have the TB bacteria in our body but it gets activated if nutrition is poor and the immune system is impaired. Not only will the programme provide the much-needed nutritional support to the people, it will also connect the community," said an official. Besides raising awareness about TB, officials hope that it will also help reduce the stigma associated with it.

"Adherence to TB medication for several months is a challenge, but, if not done, can lead to drug resistant forms of the disease. When the sponsors are connected to the patients, we want them to remain in contact with

them, check whether they are receiving their monthly supplies and if they are taking their medicines regularly," said the official.

In addition, the sponsors may also offer vocational training to family members of the TB patient. "Most of the TB patients are breadwinners, and this puts financial strain on their families. If a family member is trained in a vocation, they will be able to continue earning," said an official.

India detects 20-25 lakh TB cases every year, and nearly 4 lakh die of it. At present, 13.5 lakh are undergoing TB treatment, of whom 9.26 lakh have already consented to being "adopted" under the initiative, said officials.

India's Initiative to Fight TB

- **National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme:** To align with the ambitious goal, the programme has been renamed from the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) to National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP).
- **Eliminating TB by 2025:** India is committed to eliminating tuberculosis from the country by 2025, five years ahead of the global target by the World Health Organisation (WHO) i.e. 2030.
- **The Nikshay Ecosystem:** It is the National TB information system which is a one-stop solution to manage information of patients and monitor program activity and performance throughout the country.
- **Nikshay Poshan Yojana (NPY):** This scheme is aimed at providing financial support to TB patients for their nutrition.
- **TB Harega Desh Jeetega Campaign:** Launched In September 2019 it is showcasing the highest level of commitment for the elimination of TB.
- **The Saksham Project:** It is a project of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) that has been providing psycho-social counselling to DR-TB patients.
- **JEET (Joint Effort for Elimination of TB):** The Government of India has partnered with the Global Fund to launch JEET (Joint Effort for Elimination of TB), a private sector engagement program operating across the country.

90 PER CENT OF COUNTRIES REGISTER REDUCTION IN HDI VALUE, SAYS UNDP REPORT

India slips 2 places on HDI as Covid-19 reverses global gains

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 8

INDIA'S RANK on the Human Development Index has slipped from 130 in 2020 to 132 in 2021, in line with a global fall in HDI scores in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, shows the Human Development Report 2021-22 released Thursday.

According to the report, released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India's HDI value stood at 0.633 during 2021, which was lower than the world average of 0.732. In 2020, too, India recorded a decline in its HDI value (0.642) in comparison to the pre-Covid level of 2019 (0.645).

In a statement, the UNDP said: "India ranks 132 out of 191 countries and territories on the 2021/22 Human Development Index, tracking the global decline in human development."

"Ninety percent of countries have registered a reduction in their Human Development Index value in 2020 or 2021, reversing much of the progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals," said the statement.

"A large contributor to the Human Development Index's recent decline is a global drop in life expectancy, down from 72.8 years in 2019 to 71.4 years in 2021. The last two years have had a devastating impact on billions of people

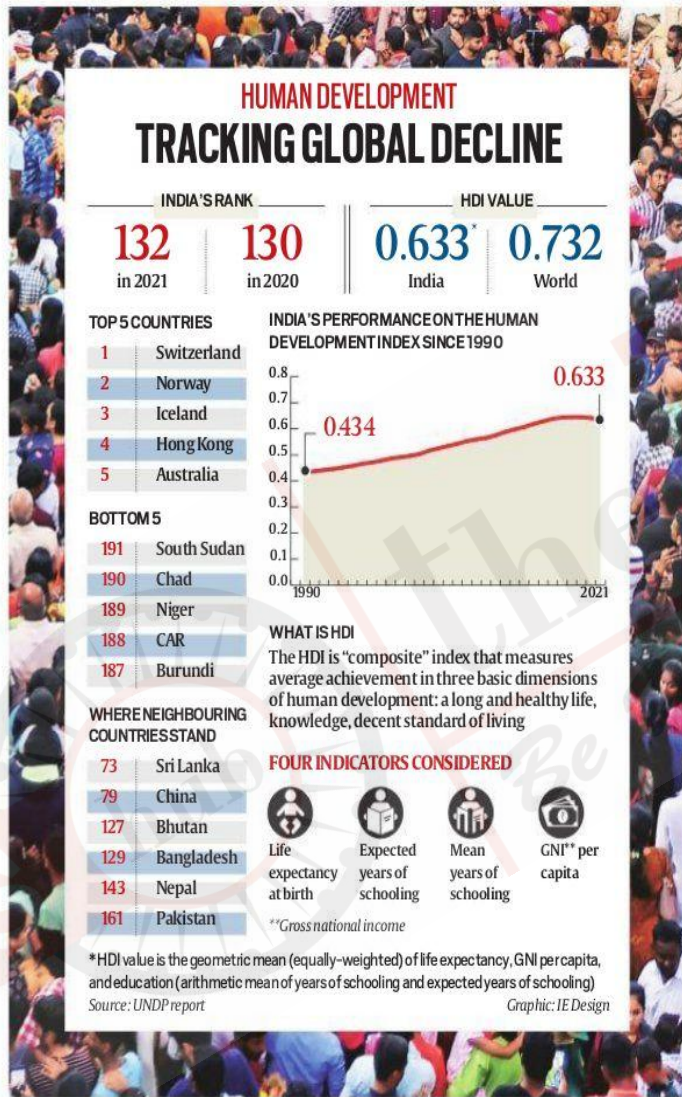
worldwide when crises like Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine hit back-to-back and interacted with sweeping social and economic shifts and dangerous planetary changes," the statement said.

HDI is composite index that measures average achievement in human development taking into account four indicators: life expectancy at birth (Sustainable Development Goal 3); expected years of schooling (SDG 4.3); mean years of schooling (SDG 4.4); and gross national income (GNI) per capita (2017 PPP) (SDG 8.5).

In 2021, India's life expectancy at birth was recorded at 71.4 years; expected years of schooling at 11.9 years; mean years of schooling at 6.7 years; and gross national income per capita (2017 PPP) at \$6,590. On all these four parameters, India was behind the world averages in 2021: life expectancy at 71.4 years, expected years of schooling at 12.8 years, mean years of schooling at 8.6 years and gross national income per capita (2017 PPP) at \$16,752.

"Like global trends, in India's case, the drop in HDI from 0.645 in 2019 to 0.633 in 2021 can be attributed to falling life expectancy — 69.7 to 67.2 years. India's expected years of schooling stand at 11.9 years, and the mean years of schooling are at 6.7 years. The GNI per capita level is \$6,590," the statement said.

India has also been ranked 122 on the Gender Inequality Index.



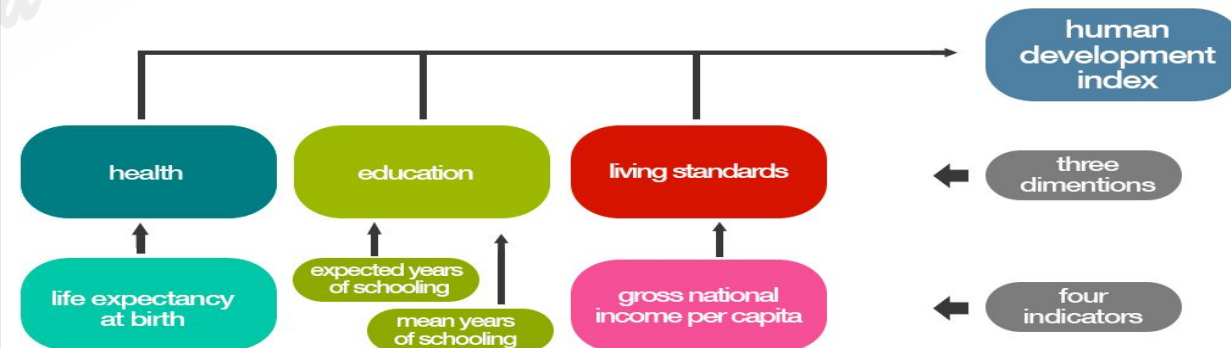
Context: India's rank on the Human Development Index has slipped from 130 in 2020 to 132 in 2021, in line with a global fall in HDI scores in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

About Human Development Index

- The Human Development Index (HDI) is a statistical tool used to measure a country's overall achievement in its social and economic dimensions.
- The social and economic dimensions of a country are based on the health of people, their level of education attainment and their standard of living.
- Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq created HDI in 1990 which was further used to measure the country's development by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

components of the human development index

the HDI - three dimensions and four indicators



India may gain from new US CHIPS Act

FROM PAGE 1

India currently does not have an ecosystem in place for advanced semiconductor manufacturing. However, conglomerates such as the Tata group and Vedanta have expressed interest in setting up chip operations here, and the government has also received interest from some global firms. Commerce minister Piyush Goyal met executives of American chip companies such as LAM Research and Applied Materials on 8 September to explore greater collaboration with Indian companies.

In April, Applied Materials said it plans to invest \$50 million in a new research and development (R&D) facility in India, while *Mint* reported last month that LAM Research plans to set up its second R&D facility in India this month.

"India has already introduced a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to attract global clients. Alongside this, it's not like



The US scheme offers incentives totalling \$53 billion (around ₹4.2 trillion) for firms building chip factories in the US. BLOOMBERG

India has no existing ecosystem of the semiconductor industry—the semiconductor laboratory (SCL) in Mohali, Punjab, manufactures semiconductor chips in partnership with local and Israeli suppliers," noted Vivek Tyagi, chairman of industry body Indian Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA).

Rajeev Khushu, adviser and board member of IESA, said that semiconductor supply chain vendors in India do not have the necessary quality to match the global standards required for making the latest generation chips. SCL, for

instance, still makes 180nm chips at its facility. This, according to both Khushu and Tyagi, could see semiconductor fabs come up in India over the next five years as global tech firms look at markets beyond Taiwan, Korea and China to set up advanced facilities.

"India has already seen some interest from vendors to set up assembly, testing, marking and packaging (ATMP) facilities in the country based on the semiconductor PLI scheme, which could precede the establishment of chip factories since the latter would take larger sums of invest-

ment," Khushu said.

Navkendar Singh, associate vice-president at market research firm International Data Corp (IDC) India, said, "What China has succeeded in doing has been to bring down the pricing of chips, thanks to vastly available and affordable skilled labour and the overall scale of manufacturing. This could be a factor that semiconductor firms struggle to meet in the immediate future."

Singh added that moving the manufacturing of chips away to other markets (including India and the US) could see companies incur a higher cost of manufacturing.

"It is also unlikely that any company will ever put all their eggs in one basket again, so India will likely not be the sole beneficiary of the US' new law. The overall impact could see India make gains in the semiconductor space in the long run, but it will most likely not be the only nation taking advantage of the diversification of the semiconductor supply chain," Singh added.

Context: The ban on American chipmakers building advanced technology facilities in China if they have received federal funding under the CHIPS Act could benefit countries such as India over the years.

Semiconductor

- A semiconductor is a crystalline material made up of silicon, tin, selenium, germanium, gallium, and other elements.
- Semiconductors basically provide electrical conductivity among an insulator and a conductor.
- Semiconductors are utilized in a wide range of electronic devices, including smartphones and cloud servers, as well as modern autos, industrial automation, vital infrastructure, and defense systems.
- Its manufacture necessitates a large number of components and technologies.

Status of Semiconductor industry in India

- The semiconductor industry in India relies completely on imports. Countries exporting semiconductors (to many countries, including India) include China, Taiwan, the USA, Japan, and a few European nations. However, India enjoys an advantage viz-a-viz designing chips.
- As a result, India uses 20,000 engineering hands to make 2,000 chips each year. However, the industry is still dominated by the USA, China, and Taiwan.
- India's consumption of semiconductors is expected to cross \$80 billion by 2026 and is expected to reach \$110 billion by 2030.
- The Indian government recently announced an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore (around \$10 billion), under its PLI scheme, separately for the development of a semiconductor and display manufacturing electronics ecosystem.

India, China disengage at Gogra border

Indian and Chinese troops have begun disengaging from the Gogra-Hotsprings border area in the western Himalayas, the government said in a statement on Thursday, two years after clashes at the frontier strained diplomatic ties.

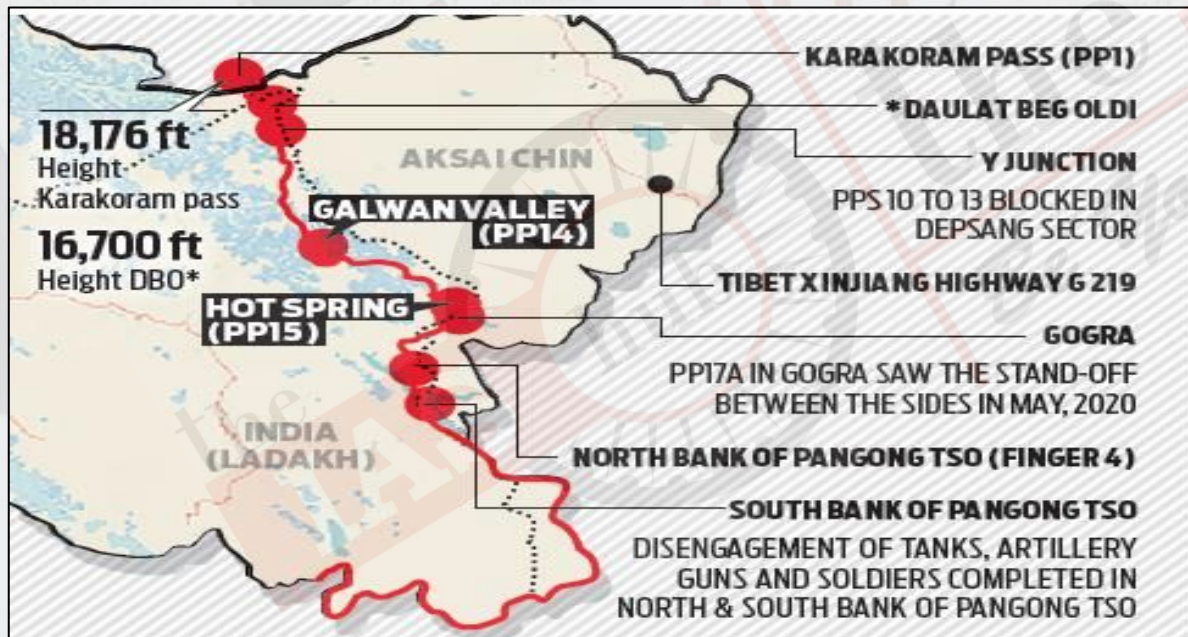
The statement comes ahead of a meeting in Uzbekistan next week which Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi are expected to attend. India said disengagement was taking place in a coordinated and planned way and is meant to

keep border peace. "The eyeball-to-eyeball contact has ended," defence source said, referring to the latest agreement, although both countries still have thousands of soldiers lined up along the de facto border, known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

"The forces have disengaged. They have not been de-inducted."

"This is the first step towards a calmer LAC," the source said, declining to be named as they are not authorized to speak to the media.

REUTERS



HOT SPRING AND GOGRA POST (Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Internal Security)

Context: Indian and Chinese troops have begun disengaging from the Gogra-Hotsprings border area in the western Himalayas.

About Hot spring and Gogra post

- Along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China, Indian Army has been given certain locations that its troops have to access to patrol the area under its control.
- These points are known as patrolling points, or PPs, and are decided by the China Study Group (CSG).
- CSG was set-up in 1976, when Indira Gandhi was the prime minister, and is the apex decision-making body on China.
- Barring certain areas, like Depsang Plains, these patrolling points are on the LAC, and troops access these points to assert their control over the territory.
- It is an important exercise since the boundary between India and China is not yet officially demarcated.
- PP15 and PP17A are two of the 65 patrolling points in Ladakh along the LAC. (Some of these 65 also have an additional Alpha PPs, which are further ahead from the original PPs. So PP17A is different from, but close to, PP17.)
- PP15 is located in an area known as the Hot Springs, while PP17A is near an area called the Gogra post.
- Both of these are close to the Chang Chenmo river in the Galwan sub-sector of the LAC in eastern Ladakh.
- While Hot Springs is just north of the Chang Chenmo river, Gogra Post is east of the point where the river takes a hairpin bend coming southeast from Galwan Valley and turning southwest.
- The area is north of the Karakoram Range of mountains, which lies north of the Pangong Tso lake, and south east of Galwan Valley.

Odisha govt. cancels shrimp culture leases inside Bhitarkanika

'Eco-sensitive nature of land ignored'

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has cancelled leases granted to two aquaculture companies for shrimp culture over a sprawling area inside Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary, which is famous for crocodile conservation and thick mangrove forests.



Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary is known for crocodile conservation and mangrove forests. *FILE

Following the cancellation of leases issued by Director of Fisheries, the Lok Ayukta, Odisha, has decided not to proceed further on the case. The RTI activist Ranjan Kumar Das, who was petitioner in the case, had died under mysterious circumstances days after filing the case with the Lok Ayukta.

Lease of Banapada cluster for shrimp culture was granted in favour of Odisha Aqua Traders and Marine Exporters Private Limited in December, 2016. It was alleged in the petition, authorities in Fisheries and Animal Resource Development awarded the lease for shrimp culture ignoring the eco-sensitive nature of the land. The petitioner had also alleged kickback in granting of the lease.

In response to show cause notice, the Director of Fisheries had submitted a compliance report which says the two firms could not carry out culture during the first year (2017) and started culture operation in the second year (from the year 2018).

"The starting of culture, operation by Odisha Aqua Traders and Marine Exporters Private Limited was in violation of Clause-(g) and (h) of the Lease Agreement, for which the Director of Fisheries served a show cause notice for cancellation

of lease. The show cause notice was challenged by the two companies in Orissa High Court," says Lok Ayukta in its order. The Orissa HC had directed the companies to file detailed reply and the Director of Fisheries was asked to take a decision in accordance of law.

As per decision of Director of Fisheries, the area leased out to the two firms was coming under Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary after rationalisation of boundary in February 2020 and more-over two lessees had started shrimp culture in violation of lease accord. After cancellation of leases, the firms were asked to take back assets created in leased area. Citing the cancellation order, the Lok Ayukta felt no need to proceed further on the complaint.

No permission

The petitioner had, however, flagged instances of many irregularities stating that no public hearing was conducted before granting of lease and there was no permission obtained from Ministry of Forest and Environment and Climate Change, Coastal Aquaculture Authority, Chennai.

SHRIMP CULTURE/FARMING

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Agriculture & Economy)

Shrimp Culture/farming

- Shrimp Culture/farming is an aquaculture business that exists in either a marine or freshwater environment, producing shrimp or prawns (crustaceans of the groups Caridea or Dendrobranchiata) for human consumption.
- Generally, in shrimp / fish farming system, ammonia, a nitrogenous waste, is produced from its excretory material and the uneaten feed.
- In normal farming system, ammonia is converted to nitrite by nitrosomonas bacteria and nitrite (toxic to animal) is converted to nitrate (non toxic to animal) by nitrobacter bacteria.
- **Suitable Soil Type for Shrimp Culture:**
 - o Usually, clay or loam-based soil containing more than 90% clay and pH between 6.5-8.5 is preferable.
 - o Sites with sandy or silty soil should be avoided due to their porous nature that may lead to erosion, seepage of water and easy infiltration of waste into the soil.
 - o Mangrove or acid sulfate soils are not suitable for shrimp pond culture due to their high organic matter contents and acidic nature that require a high water exchange rate and low stocking density.

New scheme to certify shrimp farms

- The Marine Products Exports Development Authority (MPEDA) has developed a certification scheme for aquaculture products called 'Shaphari', a Sanskrit word that means superior quality of fishery products suitable for human consumption.
- This certification was proposed as a market-based tool for hatcheries to adopt good aquaculture practices and help produce quality antibiotic-free shrimp products to assure global consumers.
- The Shaphari scheme is based on the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization's technical guidelines on aquaculture certification and will have two components - certifying hatcheries for the quality of their seeds and, separately, approving shrimp farms that adopt the requisite good practices.

India's status

- Frozen shrimp is India's largest exported seafood item. It constituted 50.58% in quantity and 73.2% in terms of total U.S. dollar earnings from the sector during 2019-20.
- Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are India's major shrimp producing States, and around 95% of the cultured shrimp produce is exported.

39 exotic animals seized in Assam

Two persons from T.N. arrested for alleged bid to smuggle animals into Bengal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Assam Police on Thursday seized 39 exotic animals from two Delhi-registered SUVs that travelled from the Mizoram-Myanmar border and were bound for Siliguri in northern West Bengal.

This was the biggest seizure of smuggled exotic animals in Assam. Two joeys or baby wallabies, 19 chimpanzees and monkeys, 13 small turtles, three large tortoises and two exotic birds were seized.

“The Rangiya Police intercepted the vehicles following a tip-off and arrested two people after finding the rare animals packed in cages. The two said they travelled from the Mizoram-Myanmar border and were heading for Si-



Baby wallabies, chimpanzees, monkeys and tortoises were among the animals seized on Mizoram-Myanmar border. • AP

liguri for delivering the consignment,” Hitesh Chandra Roy, the Superintendent of Police of Kamrup district, told *The Hindu*.

Sunnydeo Chaudhary, the Divisional Forest Officer of North Kamrup division, said the two arrested persons – identified as Raghu from

Theni district and Karthik from Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu – were being interrogated for information about others involved in the animal-trafficking trade.

“The animals have been taken to the Assam State Zoo where their health condition would be assessed and the

species identified,” he said.

North Bengal hub?

Assam forest officials said Myanmar, despite the civil war, has been the source of most exotic animals smuggled into Northeast India and elsewhere in the country with northern West Bengal becoming a hub of this illegal trade.

“There seems to be a craze for keeping exotic animals as pets, which is fuelling the animal trafficking racket. But the biggest worry is that these animals, unlike those exchanged by zoos, come in without health screening, thus posing the risk of spreading diseases,” Bibhab Talukdar of the Assam-based green group Aaranyak said.

EXOTIC LIVE SPECIES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 -Environment & Ecology)

Context: The Assam Police seized 39 exotic animals from two Delhi-registered SUVs that travelled from the Mizoram-Myanmar border and were bound for Siliguri in northern West Bengal.

Exotic live species

- The term exotic does not have a set definition but it usually refers to a wild animal or one that is more unusual and rare than normal domesticated pets like cats or dogs.
- Exotic live species are animal or plant species moved from their original range (location) to a new one. These species are introduced to a new location most often by people.
- The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change has defined “exotic live species” as only “the animals named under the Appendices I, II and III of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Fauna and Flora”. (CITES Appendix I, no trade happens, Appendix II trade can happen with prior permission and in Appendix III there are a large number of animals and birds which can be traded.)

Provisions Related to Illegal Trade of Animals:

- Illegally traded exotic animals are confiscated under Section 111 of the Customs Act, 1962 which is read with the provision of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Foreign Trade Policy (Import-Export Policy) of India.
- Sections 48 and 49 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 prohibit trade or commerce in wild animals, animal articles or trophies.

EWS quota: SC to test validity, frames 3 issues

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Thursday decided to examine the validity of the 103rd constitutional amendment for carving out 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections in admissions and jobs on the main ground of whether it is in conformity with the basic structure of the Constitution. The SC framed three legal issues out of more

► **SC to hear pleas against CAA on Sept 12, P 11**

than 50 suggested by lawyers appearing for different parties. A five-judge Constitution bench accepted three out of four questions framed by AG

ALSO IN THE SC

► **How is hijab compulsory in Islam when namaz isn't, asks SC** after petitioner in K'taka hijab ban case says Islamic tenets essential to religion, but not compulsory | **P 11**

► **Centre claims state nod not needed for holding CBI probe within the state if the case involves a central govt staff and violation of central law. Court disagrees** | **P 13**

K K Venugopal, saying they cover all aspects over the amendment's validity. TNN

► **To hear from Sept 13, P 24**

EWS QUOTA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Social Justice)

Context: The Supreme Court decided to examine the validity of the 103rd constitutional amendment for carving out 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections in admissions and jobs on the main ground of whether it is in conformity with the basic structure of the Constitution.

3 key questions for examining EWS quota: The court will examine:

- Whether the amendment breaches the Basic Structure by permitting the state to make special provisions, including reservation, based on economic criteria.
- Whether it violates the Basic Structure by allowing the state to make special provisions in relation to admissions to private unaided institutions.,
- Whether the Basic Structure is trampled upon by the constitutional amendment by excluding SEBC/OBC/SC/ST communities from the scope of the EWS quota.

Economically Weaker Section

- Economically Weaker Section (EWS) in India is a subcategory of people having an annual family income less than ₹8 lakh and who do not belong to any category such as SC/ST/OBC across India, nor to MBC in Tamil Nadu.
- A candidate who does not fall under SC/ST/OBC and fulfils the EWS economic criteria are to be part of the EWS category.
- The 10% reservation was implemented in January 2019 as part of the 103rd Constitution Amendment.
- It added Clause (6) to Article 15 to give the government the authority to make special provisions for the EWS among citizens who are not already eligible for reservation.
- It allows up to ten percent reservation in public and private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided, with the exception of minority-run institutions.
- It also added Clause (6) to Article 16 to make employment reservations easier.
- The new clauses state unequivocally that the EWS reservation will be added to the existing reservation.

Invasive south red-eared slider turtle poses threat to Indian biodiversity

This turtle is very small and easy to maintain and these features made them popular pets

By Himanshu Nitnaware
Published: Thursday 08 September 2022



Types of Indian Turtles

- There are five species in Indian waters i.e. Olive Ridley, Green turtle, Loggerhead, Hawksbill, Leatherback.
- The Olive Ridley, Leatherback and Loggerhead are listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- The Hawksbill turtle is listed as 'Critically Endangered' and Green Turtle is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- They are protected in Indian Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, under Schedule I.
- Turtles have been protected in India under the Biodiversity Conservation and Ganga Rejuvenation programme.

RED-EARED SLIDER TURTLES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Environment & Ecology)

Context: The presence of invasive and non-native south red-eared slider turtles would lead to the extinction of native species of their own kind.

Key points

- India is home to 29 freshwater turtles and tortoise species of the 356 turtle species recognised worldwide and around 80 per cent of them are threatened.
- The red-eared slider are native to southeastern USA and Mexico, but have found their way across the globe including India through trade of exotic animals.
- In India, keeping indigenous turtles as pets is prohibited under the wildlife protection act. But the foreign breeds are not restricted and are kept as pets in many families across India.
- It is also not mentioned in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
- As their size increases, they no longer fit in small tanks or ponds. The owners release them in the wild or nearby water bodies and once released, they become a threat to the local fauna.
- The species has a wide set of diet and eats almost all vegetation, unlike native species.
- The red-eared slider is also aggressive, it drives away the native species. Its paws are also lethal.
- It is widely found in urban wetlands, such as - Sukhna lake in Chandigarh, temple ponds of Guwahati, lakes of Bengaluru, Sanjay Gandhi national park in Mumbai, Yamuna river in Delhi - among other water bodies.
- The species is considered as one of the world's 100 worst invasive non-native species.
- The Union Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change has only an advisory in place to streamline the import and possession of exotic live animals in India.
- The government advisory demands registration and declaration of progenies of the imported exotic live species.

Ministry of Coal Decriminalizes 68 Provisions of Mineral Concession Rules, 1960

A Move Towards Ease of Doing Business

Context: The Ministry of Coal has amended Mineral Concession Rules, 1960 (MCR) with a view to decriminalize its provisions.

Mineral Concession Rules (MCR), 1960

- The Mineral Concession Rules (MCR), 1960 have been framed under section 13 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 for regulating the grant of reconnaissance permits, prospecting licences and mining leases in respect of minerals and for purposes connected therewith.
- **Status of Mineral Concessions:**
 - There are three kinds of mineral concessions, viz Reconnaissance Permit (RP), Prospecting License(PL) and Mining Lease(ML).
 - RP is granted for preliminary prospecting of a mineral through regional, aerial, geophysical or geochemical surveys and geological mapping.
 - PL is granted for undertaking operations for the purpose of exploring, locating or proving mineral deposit.
 - ML is granted for undertaking operations for winning any mineral.

Constitutional Provision Related to Mining:

- The entry at serial No. 23 of List II (State List) to the Constitution of India mandates the state government to own the minerals located within their boundaries.
- The entry at serial No. 54 of List I (Central List) mandates the central government to own the minerals within the Exclusive Economic Zone of India (EEZ).
- The central government has the ownership over all offshore minerals (ie, minerals extracted from the sea or ocean floor in the Indian maritime zones such as the territorial waters, continental shelf and exclusive economic zones).

Shri Piyush Goyal to attend Indo-Pacific Economic Forum (IPEF) Ministerial meeting in Los Angeles tomorrow

Indo-Pacific Economic Forum (IPEF) to work to ensure that Indo-Pacific Region would remain secure and open for business: Shri Piyush Goyal

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework

- Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) is an economic initiative launched by United States President in May 2022.
- The framework launched with a total of fourteen participating founding member nations, with the late entry of Fiji, the first South Pacific Island to join, with an open invitation for other countries to join at any time.
- The initiative is intended to be a precursor for later negotiations, as it does not include a uniform lowering of tariffs.
- The four themes of the proposed IPEF are:[6]
 - Fair and resilient trade
 - Supply chain resilience
 - Infrastructure, clean energy, and decarbonization
 - Tax and anti-corruption
- The IPEF, which comprises a “baker’s dozen” of Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam, represents 40% of the world’s GDP.
- The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework would "outweigh" in both population and gross domestic product the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.
- The only RCEP members not also included in the IPEF are China, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos; while non-RCEP members are the United States, India, and Fiji.

THANK YOU!



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