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18 April 2024

National & International News

Green Credit Programme (GCP)

Why in the news?

- The **Green Credit Programme (GCP)** encourages **organizations** and **individuals** to invest in **afforestation projects** in **'degraded'** forest lands for **'green credits'**.
- The **Union Environment Ministry**, the **coordinator** of the programme, emphasizes **restoring ecosystems** over merely tree planting.

Key points:

- **Individuals** and **companies** can apply to the **Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE)** to pay to **"restore"** **'degraded'** forest lands.
- **Two years** after planting and following an **evaluation** by the ICFRE, each planted tree could be worth one **'green credit.'**
- **These credits** can be used to
 - Comply with existing forest laws or for reporting under environmental, social and governance leadership norms or to meet **corporate social responsibility requirements**.
- As of now, **these credits** are **not tradeable**. However, the **GCP** aims to **incentivize environmentally positive actions** through a **market-based mechanism** and generate green credit, which **shall be tradable** and **made available for trading** on a **domestic market platform**.
- The Environment Ministry has issued guidelines that **States** must **rely on** to **calculate** what it would cost to **restore a degraded forest landscape**.
- The **Ministry** has changed the earlier requirement of a **minimum of 1,100 trees per hectare** to **qualify as reforested landscapes** and left it to States to specify them.
- **Preference** would be given to **indigenous species** and naturally growing seedlings would be retained.
- **Public sector companies** such as Indian Oil, Power Grid Corporation, National Thermal Power Corporation, Oil India, Coal India, and National Hydropower Corporation **had registered to invest in the programme**.

Think:

- Know about the **Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE)**.



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- Know about the **Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)**.

Malcom Adiseshiah Award 2024 and Elizabeth Adiseshiah Citation-2024

Why in the news?

- **Surinder S. Jodhka**, professor, the School of Social Sciences, **Jawaharlal Nehru University**, has been chosen for the **Malcom Adiseshiah Award 2024**.
- **Vikas Kumar**, associate professor, the School of Development, **Azim Premji University**, will receive the **Elizabeth Adiseshiah Citation-2024**.
- Every year, the awards are given to outstanding **social scientists**.

Key Points:

- It is awarded by the **Malcolm and Elizabeth Adiseshiah Trust**.
- The **Malcom Adiseshiah Award** carries a citation and a cash prize of **Rs.2 lakhs**.
- The **Elizabeth Adiseshiah Award** will carry a cash prize of **Rs.1 lakh**.
- The award is open to **Indian and foreign scholars** ordinarily resident in India.

Did you know:

- **Malcolm Sathyanathan Adiseshiah** (18 April 1910 – 21 November 1994) was an **Indian development economist and educator**.

About Malcolm Sathyanathan Adiseshiah:

- He was born in **Vellore, Tamil Nadu**.
- He obtained a **doctorate in economics** at the London School of Economics.
- In **1976**, he was awarded the **Padma Bhushan**, India's third-highest civilian award.
- In **1998**, **UNESCO** created the **Malcolm Adiseshiah International Literacy Prize** in recognition of his **contribution to education and literacy**.
- He was **nominated to the Rajya Sabha**, the upper house of the Parliament of India, in **1978**.
- He served as the **Vice Chancellor of the University of Madras** from 1975 to 1978.
- He was the founder of the **Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS)**.
- He was associated with several professional bodies both in India and abroad.



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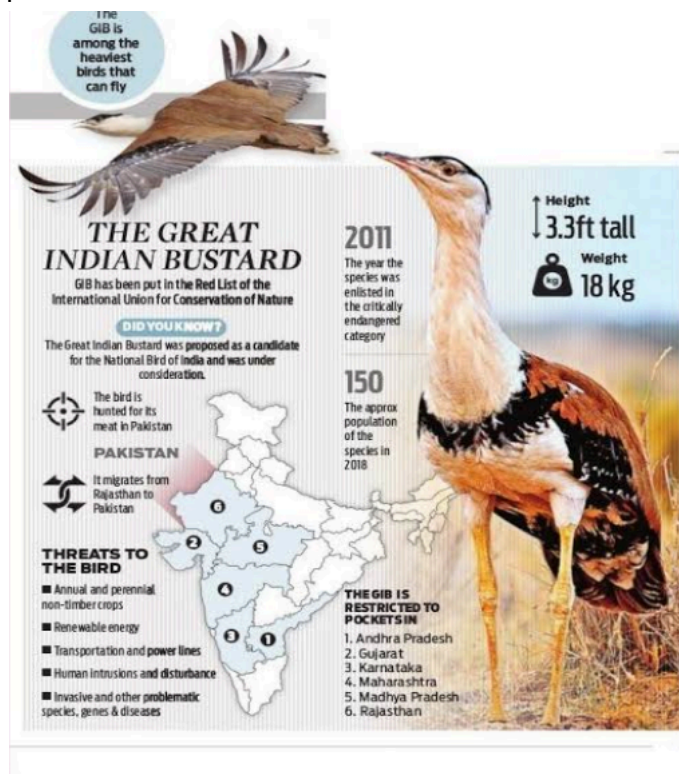
The Great Indian Bustard

Why in the news?

- The **Supreme Court of India** has recently **recognized a fundamental right to be free from the adverse impacts of climate change**.
- This judgment has attracted significant attention, particularly from environmentalists, with a focus on its implications for the protection of the **Great Indian Bustard**.

About The Great Indian Bustard:

- The Great Indian Bustard is considered a **flagship species of grassland ecology**, indicating the health of the ecosystem.
- The majority of its population is **found in Rajasthan and Gujarat**, with smaller populations in **Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh**.
- The species is listed as **Critically Endangered** according to the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**.
- It is protected under **Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- The species is listed in **Appendix I** of both the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** and the **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)**, indicating it is among the most endangered species in the world.





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<p>Heat Action Plans (HAPs)</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted an increase in the maximum temperature and the frequency of heatwave conditions in the upcoming days, particularly over eastern and southern India. • In response, governments at various levels — including State, district, and city — have prepared Heat Action Plans (HAPs). <p>About Heat Action Plans (HAPs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and India Meteorological Department (IMD) are collaborating with 23 states to develop HAPs. • HAPs serve as a comprehensive early warning system and preparedness plan for extreme heat events. • The plan includes both immediate and long-term actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase preparedness ○ Enhance information-sharing ○ Improve response coordination • The primary goal of HAPs is to reduce the health impacts of extreme heat on vulnerable populations. • On a regional level, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) prepared the first Heat Action Plan in 2013, in response to the devastating heatwave-related deaths in 2010. <p>What is a Heatwave?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A heat wave, sometimes described as extreme heat, is a period of abnormally hot weather. • It is usually measured relative to the usual climate in the area and to normal temperatures for the season. • High humidity often accompanies heat waves, especially in oceanic climate countries. • In India, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has specific criteria for declaring a heat wave. • It is considered if the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C or more for Plains, and at least 30°C or more for Hilly regions. If the above criteria are met at least in 2 stations in a Meteorological sub-division for at least two consecutive days, it is declared a heatwave on the second day.
<p>Nagorno-Karabakh region</p>	<p>Why in the news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russian peacekeepers have started withdrawing from Nagorno-Karabakh, a territory disputed between Azerbaijan and Armenia.



- The conflict has affected ties between Russia and Armenia, with Armenia suspending its participation in the Moscow-led **Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)**.

About Nagorno-Karabakh region:

- **Geography:** Nagorno-Karabakh is a **landlocked**, mountainous, and forested region located in the **South Caucasus region**. It is **internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan**.
- **Control:** Most of the region is controlled by Armenian separatists, despite being part of Azerbaijan territory since the Soviet era.
- **Current Status:** The area, while remaining in Azerbaijan, is **governed by separatist Armenians** who have declared it a republic called the **“Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast”**. The Armenian government supports the region politically and militarily but does not recognize it as independent.
- **Peace Efforts:** The **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group**, chaired by **France, Russia, and the US**, has tried to get the two countries to reach a peace agreement for several years.



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