

**17 – 07 – 2023**

**News:** Hoolock Gibbon

## **Hoolock Gibbon**

- The tailless Hoolock Gibbon is the **only ape found in India.**
- They are the fastest and smallest among all apes.
- The **primate is native to eastern Bangladesh, Northeast India and Southwest China.**
- The **estimated population of hoolock gibbons is 12,000.**
- The Hoolock Gibbon is **categorised into two types: Western hoolock gibbon and Eastern hoolock gibbon.**

### **Western hoolock gibbon**

- Western hoolock gibbon inhabits **in all the states of the north-east, restricted between the south of the Brahmaputra River and east of the Dibang river. And outside India, it is found in eastern Bangladesh and north-west Myanmar.**
- It is **listed as Endangered under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.**

## Eastern hoolock gibbon

- Eastern hoolock gibbon inhabits specific pockets of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam in India, and in southern China and north-east Myanmar outside India.
- It is listed as Vulnerable under the IUCN Red list.
- In India, both the species are listed on Schedule 1 of the Indian (Wildlife) Protection Act 1972.
- The hoolock gibbon faces threat primarily from the felling of trees for infrastructure projects.

## News: Lightning not a natural disaster, says Centre

- The Union government is not in favour of declaring lightning a natural disaster as deaths caused by it can be prevented by making people aware of safety steps, a senior government official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, says.
- India is among only five countries in the world that has an early warning system for lightning — the forecast is available from five days to up to three hours.
- The States such as Bihar and West Bengal have been demanding that lightning deaths be covered as a natural disaster.
- Once this is notified, the victims will be entitled to compensation from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

- The Centre makes 75% of the contribution to the SDRF. Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslip, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost and cold wave are now considered disasters under the SDRF.

## **National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)**

- National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the **enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005**.
- It is defined in **Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act)**.
- It is placed in the **“Public Account”** of Government of India under **"Reserve funds not bearing interest"**.
- It is managed by the Central Government for **meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation due to any threatening disaster situation or disaster**.
- It **supplements the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in the SDRF**.
- The **Centre contributes 75% of the SDRF allocation for general category States and Union Territories, and 90% for special category States/UTs (northeast States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir)**.

- NDRF is **financed through the levy of a cess on certain items**, chargeable to excise and customs duty, and approved annually through the Finance Bill.
- Currently, a National Calamity Contingent Duty (NCCD) is levied to finance the NDRF and additional budgetary support is provided as and when necessary.
- NCCD is levied in the case of goods specified in the Seventh Schedule (goods manufactured or produced).
- **Department of Agriculture and Cooperation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare** monitors relief activities for calamities associated with drought, hailstorms, pest attacks and cold wave/ frost while rest of the natural calamities are monitored by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)** audits the accounts of NDRF.

## **State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)**

- State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) has been **constituted under Section 48 (1) (a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005**.
- It was **constituted based on the recommendations of the 13<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission**.
- It is the **primary fund available with the State governments for responses to notified disasters** to meet expenditure for providing immediate relief.

- It is audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) every year.
- The Centre contributes 75% of the SDRF allocation for general category States and Union Territories and 90% for special category States and Union Territories (northeastern States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir).
- The annual Central contribution is released in two equal installments as per the recommendation of the Finance Commission.
- Disaster(s) Covered under SDRF include Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost and cold waves.
- A State Government may use up to 10% of the funds available under the SDRF for providing immediate relief to the victims of natural disasters that they consider to be 'disasters' within the local context in the State and which are not included in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs.