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News: Greater Adjutant Stork

- The Greater Adjutant Stork, locally known as ‘Garuda’ once commonly found in southern Asia and mainland southeast Asia, is now restricted to a small area Assam in India.

Greater Adjutant Storks (Garuda)

- Locally called Garuda, the Greater Adjutant is a member of the stork family, Ciconiidae.
- There are about 20 species in the family.
- They are long-necked large birds.
- Once found across South and Southeast Asia, the Greater Adjutant is one of the most threatened stork species in the world.
- There are only three known breeding grounds – one in Cambodia and two in India (Assam and Bihar).
- The widespread destruction and degradation of the wetlands that this scavenger bird needs to forage (i.e. search for food) and the loss of its nesting trees, led to a decline.

- IUCN Red List: **Endangered**.
- Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972: **Schedule IV**.
- They are considered the **mount of Vishnu, one of Hinduism's prime deities**.
- Some worship the bird and call it “Garuda Maharaj” (Lord Garuda) or “Guru Garuda” (Great Teacher Garuda).
- They **help farmers by killing rats and other farm pests**.
- Recently, **Bihar has decided to tag ‘Garuda’ with GPS trackers** to monitor their movement as part of efforts to conserve them.