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News: Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs)

- Recently, the **Supreme Court (SC)** has warned states and Union Territories of contempt proceedings if they don't establish Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs) in every district.
- 370 out of 760 districts in India lack operational SAAs, despite court orders mandating their establishment nationwide.
- This gap has led to a significant disparity between adoption registrations (13,467 in 2023-2024) and actual adoptions (approximately 4,000), mainly due to inadequate infrastructure.
- Only Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, and Chandigarh have fully complied with the SCs' directive.
- Larger states like Uttar Pradesh face serious challenges, with 61 out of 75 districts lacking SAAs.
- Adoption in India is governed by the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956 (for Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhists), and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
- Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is the nodal body regulating the adoption of orphaned, surrendered and abandoned children in India.

Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)

- Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is a statutory authority under **Ministry of Women and Child Empowerment**.
- It functions as a nodal body for the adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and **regulate in-country and inter-country adoption**.
- CARA is designated as **the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Conventions on Inter-Country Adoptions, 1993, ratified by the Government of India in 2003**.
- CARA primarily deals with adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated /recognised adoption agencies.