



News Analysis (03 Jan, 2020)

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New Norms For Reward To Whistleblowers

Why in News

The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has come out with a new mechanism to **reward whistle-blowers** and other informants for sharing information about **insider trading cases**.

Key Points

- It would be **mandatory** to disclose the **source of information**. At the same time, confidentiality regarding the identity of the informant would be protected.
- **Reward** would be given in case the information provided leads to a **disgorgement of at least ₹1 crore** in accordance with the **“Prohibition of Insider Trading (PIT) Regulations”**.
 - **Disgorgement** is repayment of ill-gotten gains that is imposed on wrongdoers by the courts. This implies that funds that were received through illegal or unethical business transactions are disgorged, or paid back, with interest to those affected by the action.
- The **Office of Informant Protection (OIP)** has been established by the SEBI as an independent office for receiving and processing the **Voluntarily Information Disclosure Form**. The OIP would serve as a medium of exchange between the informant or legal representative and the SEBI.
 - An informant would have to voluntarily submit original information pertaining to any violation of insider trading laws to the OIP, through a VID form. He has to reveal his identity at the time of submission of the VID form.
 - In case, the information is submitted through a legal representative, the identity of the informant is not required to be revealed at the time of submission of VID form. However, the identity of the informant would be required to be revealed prior to payment of reward, if any.

Note

- **Insider Trading**
 - It is the act of trading, directly or indirectly, in the securities of a publicly listed company by any person, **who may or may not be managing the affairs of such company, based on certain information**, not available to the public at large, that can influence the market price of the securities of such company.
 - SEBI through **SEBI (Prohibition of Insider Trading) Regulations, 2015** and by making amendments to the Regulations and issuance of Circulars from time to time, regulates Insider Trading.
 - According to PIT Regulations, it is prohibited to pass Unpublished Price Sensitive Information (UPSI) for a purpose other than legitimate purposes.
- **Whistleblowing**
 - According to the Companies Act, 2013, whistleblowing is an action aimed at drawing the attention of stakeholders to instances of unethical practices in an organization.
 - A whistleblower can be anyone who chooses to expose wrong practices and has evidence to support the allegations. They can be either from within or outside the organization—such as current and former employees, shareholders, external auditors, and lawyers.
 - In India, whistleblowers are protected by the **WhistleBlowers Protection Act, 2014**. The law provides for the protection of their identity and also has strict norms to prevent their victimization.

Source: TH

North-East Monsoon Ends with 30% Surplus Rain

Why in News

India witnessed a 30% surplus in total rainfall during the Northeast **monsoon** in 2019.

October to December is recognised as the period for **Northeast monsoon** by the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**.

Key Points

In 2019, the **Southwest monsoon withdrew late** so there was a delay for the onset of the northeast monsoon. Despite this, southern peninsula received **normal or above-normal rainfall** during the three months.

- Rainfall during these three months was evenly distributed, both spatially and temporally, with every week recording normal rainfall throughout the season.
- 2019 witnessed the **rare meteorological coincidence** of the northeast monsoon making its onset on the same day as the southwest monsoon withdrew officially.

Two Monsoons of India

- The **south-west monsoon (summer monsoon)** blows from sea to land after crossing the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, and the Bay of Bengal.
 - It brings most of the rainfall in the country, approximately 75% of India's annual rainfall.
 - It gets its name from the direction in which it travels, from the **southwest to the northeast**.
- The **northeast monsoon (winter monsoon)** blows from land to sea.
 - During this period, rainfall is experienced over **southern states**, mainly **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh along with some parts of Telangana and Karnataka**.
 - In areas around **Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand** and along the **northeast**, precipitation during this period reported is either in the form of **rainfall or snowfall**.
 - It can be noted that many other parts of the country, like the **Gangetic plains and northern states**, also receive **rain in November and December** but this is **not due to the northeast monsoon**.
 - It is caused mainly by the **Western Disturbances**, an eastward-moving rain-bearing wind system that originates beyond Afghanistan and Iran, picking up moisture from as far as the Mediterranean Sea, even the Atlantic Ocean. In the higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, the precipitation is often in the form of snow.
 - The northeast monsoon does not have anything to do with northeast India. It derives its **name from the direction** in which it travels, **from the northeast to the southwest**.

India Meteorological Department

- It was established in **1875**.
- It is an agency of the **Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India**.
- It is the principal agency responsible for **meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology**.

Reduced Tiger Mortality in 3 Years

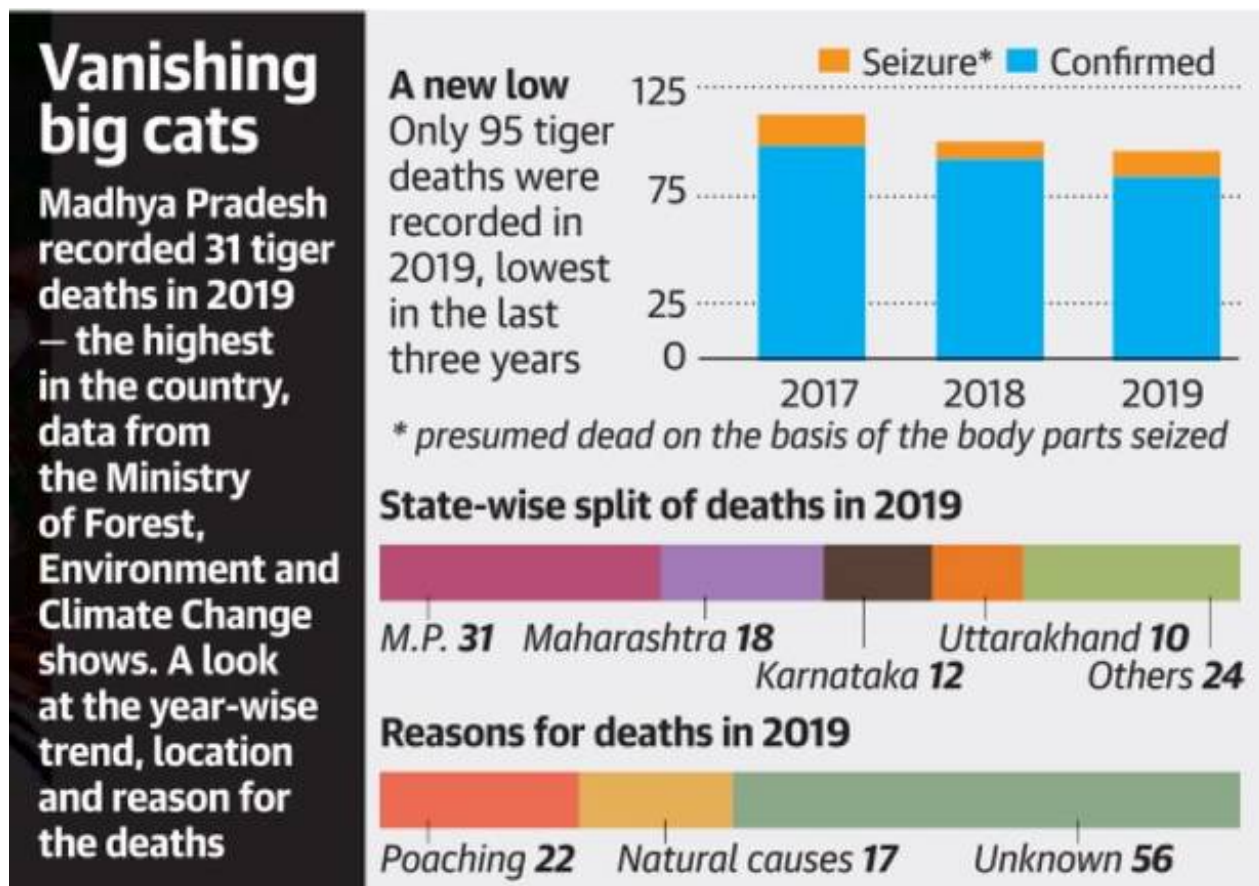
Why in News

According to the Ministry of Forest Environment and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the number of tiger deaths in 2019 has **decreased for the first time in three years**.

- The number of tiger deaths recorded in previous years are 122 (2016), 115 (2017), 100 (2018) and 95 (2019).
- Decreasing tiger mortality has emerged parallelly with the increasing numbers of tigers in the country.

The **tiger census report (2019)**, reported an **increase** in the number of tigers compared to 2014.

Key Points



- **Numerics:**
 - For 2019, 84 cases of tiger deaths and 11 cases of seizures (a tiger is presumed dead on the basis of body parts seized by authorities) are reported in the country.
 - **Madhya Pradesh**, which has the **highest number of tigers** in the country (526, as per the last census), has recorded the **highest number of tiger deaths (31)** followed by **Maharashtra (18), Karnataka (12) and Uttarakhand (10)**.
 - Deaths were also recorded **from non-tiger bearing states like Gujarat**, where a tiger had strayed into the State and died.
- **Reason:**
 - **Poaching** is the **main reason** for tiger deaths in the country followed by other natural reasons.
 - The data on tiger mortality also confirms **22 cases** of poaching in the country.
- **Location:**
 - Tigers are **most vulnerable** when they are **outside reserves** as they are not under surveillance.
 - Almost over **70% of cases** of poaching have been reported **outside tiger reserves**.
- **Use of Technology:**

The reduced tiger mortalities are due to usage of technology for surveillance, good management of tiger reserves and a lot of awareness and education programmes on tiger conservation.

M-STriPES (Monitoring System for Tigers-Intensive Protection & Ecological Status) patrolling app is deployed and used in every tiger reserve.

Source: TH

107th Indian Science Congress

Why in News

Recently, the Prime Minister has inaugurated **107th Indian Science Congress**.

It is scheduled to take place between January 3-7, at the **University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Bengaluru, Karnataka**.

Key Points

- The **theme** of the congress for **2019** is **“Science & Technology: Rural Development”**.

- Indian Science Congress is a major focal point for scientists, researchers and academicians interested in various aspects of scientific discoveries and technologies.
- The **previous (2019) session 106th edition** was held at **Lovely Professional University (LPU)** in **Jalandhar, Punjab**.

Indian Science Congress

- The Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) owes its origin to the foresight and initiative of two British Chemists, namely, Professor J. L. Simonsen and Professor P.S. MacMahon.
- The first meeting of the Congress was held from January 15-17, 1914 at the premises of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

Source: ET

Young Scientists Laboratories

Why in News

Recently, the Prime Minister has launched **5 Young Scientists Laboratories** of **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.

- DRDO Young Scientist Laboratories (DYSLs) are located in **five** cities viz, **Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad**.
DRDO already has 52 labs.
- Each lab will work on key advanced technology of importance to the development of futuristic defence systems viz, Artificial intelligence, Quantum technologies, Cognitive technologies, Asymmetric technologies and Smart materials.
It can be noted that **N Chandrasekaran Committee** was constituted by the **Ministry of Defence** in **2018** to study the **use and application of artificial intelligence (AI) in the military**.
- It aims to empower the youth by giving them decision making powers and challenging research opportunities.

Source: PIB
