



# drishti

## News Analysis (17 Nov, 2020)

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### Conflict in Ethiopia

#### Why in News

The Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed has vowed to continue the military operation in the **Tigray region** amid concerns it could descend into civil conflict.



#### Key Points

- **Military Operation:** Abiy has declared war on the country's Tigray region, which is ruled by the powerful **Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)**, in response to its attack on a federal military base in Tigray.

- **Background:**

- After becoming Ethiopia's Prime Minister in April 2018, **Abiy Ahmed** reached out to the political opposition, ushered democratic reforms, lifted curbs on the media and made peace with Eritrea - moves that won him the **Nobel Peace Prize in 2019**.

**Eritrea is a sworn enemy of the TPLF**, which shares a long border with the Tigray region.

- He also **removed TPLF from senior government positions**. His push to concentrate more power in the hands of the government alienated the TPLF further.

Abiy has formed a new political coalition, the Prosperity Party, all constituents of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), except the TPLF, joined the new platform.

- When the **federal government postponed the general elections** in August to 2021 citing the **coronavirus pandemic**, **Tigray politicians** accused him of a power grab and **held elections**, in September, in the region, in defiance of the government.
- Rising tensions led to an attack on the military base.

- **Tigray People's Liberation Front:**

- It is a **militia-turned-party**, which was part of the coalition that brought an end to the military dictatorship in 1991.

- TPLF leader **Meles Zenawi** took over as the interim President in 1991 and **became the first elected Prime Minister** in 1995.
- He is largely seen as the **architect of the country's ethno-federal system** and remained in power till 2012.

- It had played a **dominant role in the country's ruling coalition**, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF - put together by Zenawi).

- Though the EPRDF **contains regional political parties** such as the Amhara Democratic Party, the Oromo Democratic Party and the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement, the **TPLF remained the dominant political force**.

The **Tigray people make up roughly 6% of the population**, while the **Oromos have a 34% share and the Amharas 27%**.

The Oromos **have alleged marginalisation** and called for better representation.

- Over the years, the government led by the EPRDF, was **accused of being increasingly authoritarian** and there were **frequent mass protests in the regions**.
- In 2018, the **EPRDF chose Abiy**, a former military intelligence officer, to lead the government amid growing protests and a political deadlock.

- **Abiy's Stand:** Abiy, the country's **first Oromo leader**, claimed that his actions are not driven by ethnic calculations but rather **aimed at addressing the historic power imbalance in the country** and making **peace with the neighbours**.
- **Implications:**
  - TPLF has fired rockets into Eritrea from Tigray, **threatening a wider regional war in the Horn of Africa**.  
Horn of Africa houses the countries of **Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia**.
  - Rebels also **fired rockets into the neighbouring Amhara region**. Even if Abiy is serious about keeping the operation short, it could **spill out of control given the underlying complexities of the conflict**. The TPLF has thousands of fighters under their command.
  - Also, the Tigray region **shares a border with Sudan**. The TPLF enjoyed good relations with Sudan's ousted dictator Omar Bashir.
    - Sudan has an **unresolved border dispute with Ethiopia**. If Sudan's new rulers keep the old links with the TPLF active and the border open for the rebels, the conflict could go on.
    - Earlier this year, in the midst of Ethiopia's long-standing conflict with Egypt over the construction of the **Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam** over the Blue Nile, Sudan had already found itself forcefully involved in the spat.
  - There have also been **reports of atrocities targeting civilians by both sides**. Many have even fled to Sudan.

## India-Ethiopia Relations

- **Ethiopia is one of the largest recipients of long term concessional credit from India** in Africa.  
Lines of Credit worth **more than USD1 billion** have been sanctioned to Ethiopia for sectors such as rural electrification, sugar industry and railways.
- **Tele-Education and Tele-Medicine services** under the **Pan African e-network Project** was launched in Addis Ababa in July 2007.  
The Tele-Education project has been replicated by the Ethiopian side and linkages established between the Addis Ababa University and the Indian Institutes of Technology at Delhi and Kanpur.
- **Bilateral trade** between Ethiopia and India stood at USD 1.28 billion in 2018-19, out of which Indian exports to Ethiopia were USD 1.23 billion and imports were USD 55.01 million.
  - There are **more than 586 Indian companies in Ethiopia** employing more than 55,000 people with licensed investment of over USD 4 billion.
  - About 58.7% of Indian investments are in the manufacturing sector, followed by agriculture (15.6%).

- Indian Mission has been **celebrating the International Day of Yoga** in Addis Ababa. Mission held **[email protected]** celebrations in Addis Ababa (Oct 2020).

## Way Forward

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- Abiy can reach out to regional political leaderships, especially the TPLF, find common ground, and run the country peacefully by restoring the balance between ethnicities and regions and decentralising the federal government.
- The protection of civilian safety and security is essential. The **African Union** can play a role in this.

## Source: TH

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## Article 32 of the Constitution

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)**, during a hearing of a plea, said that the court is trying to discourage petitions filed under Article 32.

### Key Points

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- **CJI's View:** CJI noted that there is a **spate of Article 32 petitions** and reiterated that the **High Court can also uphold fundamental rights (under article 226)**.

- **Article 32 of the Constitution (Right to Constitutional Remedies):** It is a **fundamental right**, which states that individuals have the right to approach the **Supreme Court (SC)** seeking enforcement of other fundamental rights recognised by the Constitution.
  - The SC has **power to issue directions or orders or writs** for the enforcement of any of the fundamental rights. The writs issued may include **habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, certiorari and quo-warranto**.
  - The right to move the SC **shall not be suspended except** as otherwise provided for by the Constitution. Thus, the Constitution provides that the President can suspend the right to move any court for the enforcement of the fundamental rights during a **national emergency (Article 359)**.
  - In case of the enforcement of Fundamental Rights, the **jurisdiction of the SC is original but not exclusive**. It is **concurrent with the jurisdiction of the high court under Article 226**.
    - **Original**, because an aggrieved citizen can **directly go to the SC, not necessarily by way of appeal**.
    - **Concurrent** means when the Fundamental Rights of a citizen are violated, the aggrieved party **has the option of moving either the high court or the Supreme Court** directly.
  - Since the **right guaranteed by Article 32** (ie, the right to move the SC where a fundamental right is infringed) is in itself a **fundamental right**, the **availability of alternate remedy is no bar to relief under Article 32**.
  - However, the SC has ruled that **where relief through the high court is available under Article 226**, the aggrieved party should **first move the high court**.
  - In the **Chandra Kumar case (1997)**, the SC ruled that the **writ jurisdiction of both the high court and the Supreme Court** constitute a part of the **basic structure** of the Constitution.
- **Counter-Argument:**
  - Even as the **SC underlines the powers of the high courts**, it has in the past **transferred cases to itself from the high courts**.  
Most recently, the SC transferred the case involving land use for the national capital's **Central Vista project** to itself from the Delhi High Court. Incidentally, the petitioners had not sought such a transfer.
  - When such transfers are made, the petitioners **lose a stage of appeal** that would otherwise have been available had the high courts heard and decided the case.
  - Recently, the SC also conveyed its concerns that in many matters involving personal liberty, the **High Courts are not exercising their jurisdiction as constitutional courts**.

## Article 226 of the Constitution

- Article 226 of the Constitution **empowers a high court to issue writs** including habeas corpus, mandamus, certiorari, prohibition and quo warranto **for the enforcement of the fundamental rights of the citizens and for any other purpose.**

The phrase 'for any other purpose' refers to the **enforcement of an ordinary legal right**. This implies that the **writ jurisdiction of the high court is wider than that of the SC**.

This is because the **SC can issue writs only for the enforcement of fundamental rights and not for any other purpose**, that is, it does not extend to a case where the breach of an ordinary legal right is alleged.

- The high court can issue writs to any person, authority and government **not only within its territorial jurisdiction but also outside its territorial jurisdiction** if the cause of action arises within its territorial jurisdiction.

**Source: IE**

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## UAE Issues Golden Card Visa

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** has approved the issuance of a **10-year golden card visa** for more professionals, including PhD holders, physicians, engineers as well as graduates from certain universities.

**Golden Visa is citizenship by investment or residency by investment program.** It is **directed to wealthy foreign nationals** who want to acquire residency in a certain country by investing a substantial amount of money or by purchasing a property.

## Key Points



- **UAE's Golden Card Visa:**

- It grants **10-year residency** to these visa holders and their families.
- **Eligibility:**
  - All holders of doctorate degrees, medical doctors and computer, electronics, programming, electrical and biotechnology engineers.
  - Those with specialised degrees in **artificial intelligence (AI)**, **big data** and **epidemiology**, as well as **high school students** living in the UAE who rank top in the country and students from certain universities with a **Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.8 or higher**.
- The changes will take place from **1<sup>st</sup> December 2020**.

- **Background:**

- Foreigners in the UAE usually have **renewable visas valid for only a few years tied to their employment**.
- In **May 2019**, the UAE **started granting 5 and 10-year renewable visas** to certain foreign investors, entrepreneurs, chief executives, scientists and outstanding students, under the **Golden Card scheme**.
  - The scheme offers unprecedented benefits to the cardholders and their families while creating an attractive environment for business and growth.
  - It attracts greater foreign investment and stimulates the local economy, making it more efficient and attractive for investors.
  - It also increases the UAE's competitiveness and reaffirms the country's position as a global incubator.
- The government in the past couple of years has made its **visa policy more flexible, offering longer residencies** for certain types of investors, students and professionals.

- **Reasons Behind the Move:**

- The UAE's economy has been hit hard by the **Covid-19 pandemic** and **low oil prices**, **prompting many expatriates to leave**. The move **intends to bring them back** now and keep the “talented people and great minds” in the Gulf country and **help in nation-building**.
- It will **attract talented professionals from various fields** of expertise and further **encourage innovation, creativity and applied research**, adding to the appeal of a career in the UAE for the world’s brightest minds.

- **Significance for India:**

- It would **attract more Indian professionals and businessmen** to the Gulf nation and **strengthen the India-UAE Relations**.  
The **Indian expatriate community is reportedly the largest ethnic community in the UAE**, constituting roughly **about 30%** of the country's population, which has played a major **role in the economic development** of the UAE.
- It will also **facilitate the return of Indians who want to resume work** after the **relaxation of Covid-19-related restrictions**, for which **India had requested the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** in early November 2020.

## **Recent Developmental Events in the UAE**

- In **March 2019**, the **46<sup>th</sup> session of the Council of Foreign Ministers** of the **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**, was held in Abu Dhabi where India was invited as a guest of honour.

The UAE hosted the event and had strongly defended the decision to invite India despite Pakistan’s strong objection and threat to boycott the event.

- In **February 2020**, the UAE issued an operating licence for the **Arab world's first nuclear power plant**, paving the way for it to start production in 2020.
- **UAE Mars Mission:** In **July 2020**, the UAE launched a **Mars probe named Amal** (Hope) from Japan, marking the Arab world’s first interplanetary mission.
- In **September 2020**, the UAE signed the **Abraham Accord with Israel and Bahrain**, which is the first Arab-Israeli peace deal in 26 years.

**Source: TH**

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## **Sex Ratio and India**

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### **Why in News**

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According to the **2018 report** on “vital statistics of India based on the Civil Registration System”, **Arunachal Pradesh** recorded the **best sex ratio at birth** in the country while



**Manipur** recorded the **worst sex ratio at birth**.

- The report was published by the **Registrar General of India**.
- **Sex ratio at birth** is number of females born per thousand males. It is an **important indicator to map the gender gap of a population**.

### **Registrar General of India**

- Registrar General of India was founded in 1961 by the Government of India under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- It arranges, conducts and analyses the results of the demographic surveys of India including **Census of India** and Linguistic Survey of India.
- The position of Registrar is usually held by a civil servant holding the rank of Joint Secretary.
- **Civil Registration System (CRS)** in India is the unified process of continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the vital events (births, deaths, stillbirths) and characteristics thereof. The data generated through a complete and up-to-date CRS is essential for socio-economic planning.

### **Key Points**

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- **Arunachal Pradesh** recorded **1,084 females** born per thousand males, followed by Nagaland (965), Mizoram (964), Kerala (963).
- The **worst sex ratio was reported in Manipur** (757), Lakshadweep (839) and Daman & Diu (877), Punjab (896) and Gujarat (896).
- Delhi recorded a sex ratio of 929, Haryana - 914.
  - The ratio was **determined on the basis of data provided by 30 States and Union Territories** as the requisite **information** from six States namely **Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal is not available**.
  - **Major states** are states with populations 10 million and above as per the 2011 Census.
- The **Sample Registration System (SRS)** Report 2018 shows that **sex ratio at birth in India**, declined marginally from **906 in 2011 to 899 in 2018**.
  - Contrary to popular perception, **India's sex ratio at birth declined even as per capita income increased nearly 10 times over the last 65 years**, according to an IndiaSpend analysis of government data.
  - This could be because rising income, which results in increased literacy, makes it easier for families to access sex-selective procedures.

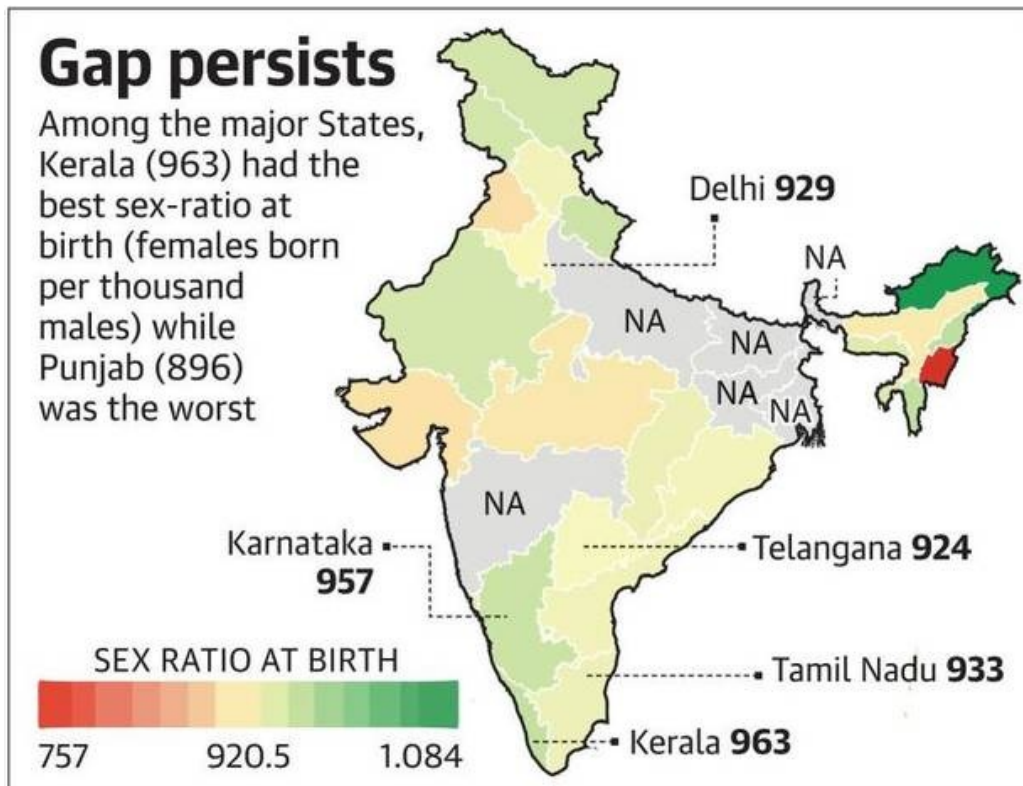
- **Issues Related to Lower Sex Ratio at Birth:**

- **Gender-imbalance:**

- **Prof. Amartya Kumar Sen**, in his world famous article “**Missing Women**” has statistically proved that during the last century, 100 million women have been missing in south Asia.
- This is due to discrimination leading to death, experienced by them **from womb to tomb in their life cycles**.
- An adverse child sex ratio is also reflected in the distorted gender makeup of the entire population.

- **Distortion in the Marriage System:**

- Adverse ratio results in a gross imbalance in the number of men and women and its inevitable impact on marriage systems as well as other harms to women.
- In India, some villages in Haryana and Punjab have such poor sex ratios that men “**import**” **brides** from other States. This is often accompanied by the exploitation of these brides.
- There are concerns that skewed sex ratios lead to more violence against both men and women, as well as human-trafficking.



## Way Forward

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- **Bringing Behavioural Change:**

Increasing female education and economic prosperity help to improve the ratio. In this pursuit, the government's **Beti-Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign** has achieved remarkable success in bringing behavioural change in the society.

- **Sensitizing Youth:**

- There is an urgent need to reach young people for reproductive health education and services as well as to cultivate gender equity norms.
- For this, the services of **Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)** can be leveraged, especially in rural areas.

- **Stringent Enforcement of Law:**

- India must implement the **Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994** more stringently and dedicate more resources to fighting the preference for boys.
- In this context, the **Drugs Technical Advisory Board decision** to include ultrasound machines in the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 is a step in the right direction.

**Source: TH**

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## **Inflation Data: October 2020**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the wholesale price inflation data for the month of October 2020 was released.

The wholesale price-based inflation is measured by **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)**.

### **Key Points**

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- **Wholesale Inflation:**

- **Wholesale price inflation** increased to the highest level in eight months, reaching **1.48% in October 2020**, compared with **0% in October 2019** and **1.32% in September 2020**.

It was driven by manufactured items as per the data released by the **commerce and industry ministry**.

- The **manufactured product group inflation** hit a 19-month high of **2.1%**, and **core inflation** accelerated to the highest level in 18 months at **1.7%**.
- Core Inflation excludes volatile goods from the basket of commodities tracking Headline Inflation. These volatile commodities mainly comprise food and beverages (including vegetables) and fuel and light (crude oil).

**Core inflation** = Headline inflation – (Food and Fuel) inflation

- **Implication:**

- Increase in core inflation suggests improvement in demand conditions, which have improved after the Covid-19 related lockdown was lifted.
- As a large part of this is due to festival related demand, it will be too early to term this as a general recovery.

## **Inflation**

- Inflation refers to the rise **in the prices of most goods and services** of daily or common use, such as food, clothing, housing, recreation, transport, consumer staples, etc.
- Inflation measures the average price change in a basket of commodities and services over time.
- Inflation is indicative of the **decrease in the purchasing power** of a unit of a country's currency. This could ultimately lead to a deceleration in economic growth.
- However, a **moderate level of inflation is required in the economy** to ensure that production is promoted.
- In India, inflation is primarily measured by two main indices — **WPI (Wholesale Price Index) and CPI (Consumer Price Index)** which measure wholesale and retail-level price changes, respectively.

## **Wholesale Price Index**

- It measures the changes in the prices of goods sold and traded in bulk by wholesale businesses to other businesses.
- Published by the **Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- It is the most widely used inflation indicator in India.
- Major **criticism** for this index is that the general public does not buy products at wholesale price.
- The **base year** of All-India WPI has been revised from 2004-05 to 2011-12 in 2017.

**Source: TH**

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## **Vulture Action Plan**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** launched a **Vulture Action Plan 2020-25** for the conservation of vultures in the country.

## Key Points

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- **Background:**
  - Vulture numbers saw a decline as much as **90%** in some species in India since the 1990s in one of the most drastic declines in bird populations in the world.
  - Between the 1990s and 2007, numbers of three presently **critically-endangered species**, the **Oriental white-backed, long-billed and slender-billed vultures** decreased massively with **99%** of the species having been wiped out.
  - The number of **red-headed vultures**, also **critically-endangered** now, declined by **91%** while the **Egyptian vultures** by **80%**.
  - The decline in vulture populations came into limelight in the mid-90s..
  - **Reason for decline:**
    - The **cause of the decline** was established as **diclofenac, a veterinary nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) in 2004**, which is used to treat pain and inflammatory diseases such as gout in carcasses that vultures would feed off.
    - Just 0.4-0.7% of animal carcasses contaminated with diclofenac was sufficient to decimate **99%** of vulture populations.
  - The **MoEFCC** released the **Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2006** with the **Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)** banning the veterinary use of diclofenac in the same year.

- **Objectives of the Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020-2025.**
  - **Drug control:**
    - To ensure minimum use of **Diclofenac**.
    - To **Prevent the poisoning** of the principal food of vultures, the cattle carcasses, with veterinary **NSAIDs**, by ensuring that sale of veterinary **NSAIDs** is regulated and is disbursed only on prescription and by ensuring that treatment of livestock is done only by qualified veterinarians.
    - To carry out **safety testing** of available **NSAIDs** on vultures and to develop new ones which do not affect vultures.
    - To ensure that **DGCI** must institute a system that automatically removes a drug from veterinary use if it is found to be toxic to vultures.
      - Such a system would ensure that drugs other than **diclofenac** that are toxic to vultures like **aceclofenac** and **ketoprofen** are banned for veterinary use.
  - **Upscaling conservation:**
    - To establish **Additional Conservation Breeding Centres** along with **Vulture Conservation Centres** with samples and information collected from the wild analysed and stored at these centres.
    - To implement the **Vulture Safe Zone programme** at eight different places in the country where there are existing populations of vultures.
    - To launch conservation plans for the **Red-headed and Egyptian vultures**, with breeding programmes for both.
    - To declare a **Vulture Safe Zone** only when **no toxic drugs** are found in undercover pharmacy and cattle carcass surveys, for two consecutive years, and the vulture populations are stable and not declining.
    - To build **Four rescue centres** for different geographical areas like Pinjore in the north, Bhopal in ventral India, Guwahati in Northeast and Hyderabad in South India.

- **Other Efforts:**

- **National:**

- The **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)** and **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)** also established the Vulture Conservation Breeding Programme.
- A **Vulture Care Centre (VCC)** was set up at Pinjore, Haryana in 2001 to study the cause of deaths of vultures in India.

The **Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre in Pinjore is the world’s largest facility** within the state’s Bir Shikargah Wildlife Sanctuary for the breeding and conservation of Indian vulture species.

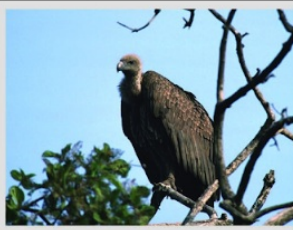


- **International: SAVE (Saving Asia’s Vultures from Extinction)**

- The consortium of like-minded, regional and international organizations, created to oversee and coordinate conservation, campaigning and fundraising activities to help the plight of south Asia’s vultures.
- **Objective:** To save three critically important species from extinction through a single programme.
- **SAVE partners:** Bombay Natural History Society, Bird Conservation Nepal, RSPB (UK), National Trust for Nature Conservation (Nepal), International Centre for Birds of Prey (UK) and Zoological Society of London.

## Vultures in India

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- India is home to nine species of **vultures**, but most of them face the danger of extinction.
- The nine species of vultures & their **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** status are:

Sr. No.	Name of the Vulture Species	IUCN status	Pictorial Representation
1.	Oriental White-backed Vulture (Gyps Bengalensis)	<b>Critically Endangered</b>	
2.	Slender-billed Vulture (Gyps Tenuirostris)	<b>Critically Endangered</b>	
			

3.	Long-billed Vulture (Gyps Indicus)	<b>Critically Endangered</b>	
4.	Egyptian Vulture (Neophron Percnopterus)	<b>Endangered</b>	
5.	Red-Headed Vulture (Sarcogyps Calvus)	<b>Critically Endangered</b>	
6.	Indian Griffon Vulture (Gyps Fulvus)	<b>Least Concerned</b>	
7.	Himalayan Griffon (Gyps Himalayensis)	<b>Near Threatened</b>	
8.	Cinereous Vulture (Aegypius Monachus)	<b>Near Threatened</b>	
9.	Bearded Vulture or Lammergeier (Gypaetus Barbatus)	<b>Near Threatened</b>	



### **Why vultures should be protected:**

- The scavenging lifestyle that gives them a bad reputation is, in fact, that makes them so important for the environment, nature and society.
- Vultures feeding on dead animals help **areas getting rid of carcasses** that, otherwise, would provide foul smells and scenery for a much longer period hence also known as **nature's cleanup crew**.
- Vultures also play a valuable role in keeping wildlife **diseases in check**.

**Source: IE**

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