Maharashtra Budget 2025 | Maharashtra | 12 Mar 2025

Why in News?

The Maharashtra Finance Minister presented the **Rs 7-lakh-crore budget for 2025-26** in the Assembly, **emphasizing industrial growth, infrastructure development, and job creation.**

Key Points

- **Budget Outlay and GSDP Share:**
  - The total budget outlay constitutes 14.17% of the estimated **Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)** of Rs 49.4 lakh crore.
  - This is lower than the 14.8% of GSDP allocated in the 2024-25 Revised Estimates, making this budget smaller than the previous one.
- **Fiscal Deficit Reduction:**
  - The government has **lowered the fiscal deficit to 2.7% of GSDP**, down from 2.9% in the 2024-25 Revised Estimates, by budgeting lower spending.
- **Industrial Policy and Job Creation:**
  - The Finance Minister announced plans to introduce an **industrial policy for 2025.**
  - The policy aims to attract Rs 40 lakh crore in investments and generate 50 lakh jobs over the next five years.
- **Decline in Capital Expenditure:**
  - Capital expenditure is projected to fall by 14.5% in 2025-26, from Rs 1,09,031.5 crore in the current fiscal to Rs 93,165.5 crore.
  - Its share in the total budget outlay has been reduced to 13.3%.
- **Ladki Bahin Yojana Allocation:**
  - The scheme has been allocated Rs 36,000 crore, which is 21% lower than the current fiscal's allocation.
- **Government's Five-Point Agenda:**
  - The State Chief Minister stated that the budget is based on **five key focus areas:**
    - Agriculture
    - Industry
    - Infrastructure
    - Employment
    - Social Welfare

Ladki Bahin Yojana

- The scheme aims to **rehabilitate, economically develop, and empower women** aged 21 to 65 years by disbursing Rs 1,500 per month.
- Up to December 2024, the total disbursement under the scheme amounted to Rs 17,505.90 crore.

New Frog Species in Maharashtra | Maharashtra | 12 Mar 2025

Why in News?

Researchers from Maharashtra have discovered a new endemic frog species, *'Minervarya ghatiborealis'* **at Mahabaleshwar.**
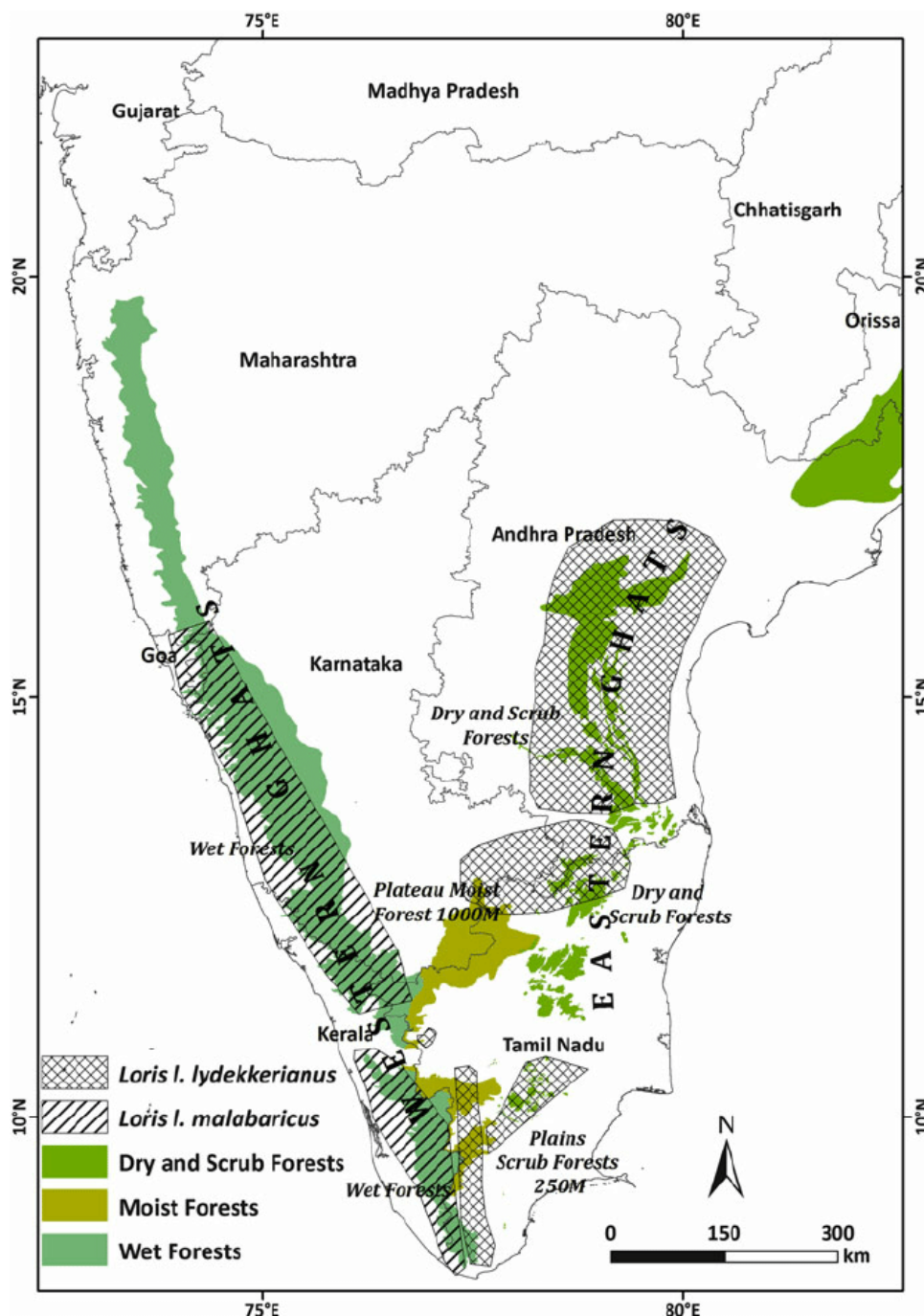
- They **included it in the genus Minervarya**, commonly known as the **'Cricket frog'**. The **international journal Zootaxa** has published their study on this species.

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Key Points

- **Etymology and Meaning:**
  - The species' name combines **the Sanskrit word 'Ghati' (Western)** and **the Latin word 'Borealis' (Northern).**
  - It translates to **'from the north-western Ghats'**, reflecting its habitat.
- **Distinctive Features:**
  - Frogs of the Minervarya genus have **parallel lines on their abdomens**, making them easy to identify.
  - They **nest near standing water or small springs.**
  - Their **calls resemble nightingale sounds**, a unique trait among frogs.
    - **Male frogs** of this species produce **distinct breeding calls**, which set them apart from other Minervarya species.
- **Conservation Importance:**
  - The need for continuous conservation efforts in **the Western Ghats** was emphasized.
  - **The Mahabaleshwar Plateau** is now recognized as a key area for endemic species, requiring enhanced conservation measures.

The Western Ghats

- **About:**
  - These are the **mountain ranges** running parallel **along the western coast of India starting from Gujarat and ending in Tamil Nadu.**
  - Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are the six Indian states covered by Western Ghats.
  - The mountain range is also a **"Hottest Hotspot"** of biodiversity.
  - The Ghats are often called the **Great Escarpment of India** and are also a **UNESCO World Heritage Site.**
  - **High Biodiversity and Endemism** are special features of Western Ghats along with the presence of Evergreen Forests.
- **Significance:**
  - The Ghats **influence the Indian monsoon weather patterns** that mediate the warm tropical climate of the region.
  - They **act as a barrier to rain-laden monsoon winds** that sweep in from the south-west.
  - Western Ghats are **home to tropical evergreen forests, as well as to 325 globally**

threatened species.
- Plateaus **are the dominant landscapes in the Western Ghats**, significant because of the predominance of endemic species.

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