1. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species

Why in News?

- Recently, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has added about 1,840 new species to its updated Red List of Threatened Species.

About IUCN Red List of Threatened Species:

- It is the world's most comprehensive inventory of the global conservation status of plant and animal species. **It defines the extinction risk of species assessed.**
- It has nine categories extend from NE (Not Evaluated) to EX (Extinct).
- The categories such as Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) and Vulnerable (VU) species are considered to be threatened with extinction.
- It uses a set of five quantitative criteria to assess the extinction risk of a given species.
  - ✓ The rate of population decline
  - ✓ The geographic range
  - ✓ Whether the species already possesses a small population size
  - ✓ Whether the species is very small or lives in a restricted area and
  - ✓ Whether the results of a quantitative analysis indicate a high probability of extinction in the wild.

About IUCN:

- It is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations.
- It has observer and consultative status at the United Nations and plays a role in the implementation of several international conventions on nature conservation and biodiversity.

2. National Energy Conservation Day

Why in News?

- Recently, National Energy Conservation Day is being celebrated on 14th December 2019.

About:

- It is celebrated every year by Ministry of Power in association with Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).
- In order to recognise the efforts of industry and other establishments towards promoting energy efficiency, on this Day, Ministry of Power organizes National Energy Conservation Awards event every year.

- The National Energy Conservation Awards Programme recognizes the energy efficiency achievements in 56 sub sectors across industry, establishments and institutions.

About BEE:

- It is a statutory body under Ministry of Power
- It is mandated to implement policy and programmes in the area of energy efficiency and conservation.

Objective:

- To reduce energy intensity in our country by optimizing energy demand and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) which are responsible for global warming and climate change.

3. 'Magnitude of substance use in India'-Report

Why in News?

- Recently, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has published a report named "Magnitude of substance use in India".

Key Findings of the Report:

- The report states that there has been a huge raise of opioid drugs in Punjab and Kerala compared to previous year.
- Kerala comes only second to Punjab in the number of arrests in crimes related to opioid drugs.
- The new types of opioids that are in rise in recent period are buprenorphine, nitrazepam, Phenegran, Diazepam, Mandrax, Amphetamine, Morphine, Pentazocine and Pseudoephedrine.

4. DISHA Act

Why in News?

- The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly Friday passed the Andhra Pradesh DISHA Bill, 2019 (Andhra Pradesh Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2019).

About:

- It has prescribed the death penalty for rape crimes where there is adequate conclusive evidence. Provision is given by amending Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

- It also prescribes life imprisonment for other sexual offences against children and includes Section 354 F and 354 G in IPC.
- In cases of harassment of women through social or digital media, it states two years imprisonment for the first conviction and four years for second and subsequent convictions. For this, a new Section 354 E will be added in IPC, 1860.
- It envisages the completion of investigation in seven days and trial in 14 working days, where there is adequate conclusive evidence, and reducing the total judgment time to 21 days from the existing four months.
- The period for disposal of appeal cases has been reduced to three months. Amendments are being made in Section 374 and 377 of Code of Criminal Procedure Act, 1973.
- The government will constitute special police teams at the district level to be called District Special Police Team to be headed by DSP for investigation of offences related to women and children.

5. Jangubai Cave Temple and the Kaplai Caves

Context:

- The Jangubai Cave Temple and the Kaplai Caves are considered as a pilgrimage site by aboriginal tribes like Gond, Pradhan and Kolam which are located at Maharashtra - Telangana border.

About Kolam Tribe:

- The Kolam tribe (or in their own language, Kolavar) is a scheduled tribe of Maharashtra. They also live in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh.
- They have a language of their own (Kolami) which belongs, like Gondi, to the intermediate group of Dravidian languages.
- They are monogamous and follow Hinduism.
- Recently in 2018, the Government has identified Katkaria (Kathodia), Kolam and Maria Gond as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is administering the scheme "Development of PVTGs" for the overall development of PVTGs. This scheme is flexible and enables the States to focus on areas that they consider is relevant to PVTGs and their socio-cultural environment.

About Gond Tribe:

- The Gonds tribe is spread over Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Bihar, and West Bengal.
- Their main concentration is in forest and hilly areas between the Vidhyans and Satpura.

About Pardhan Tribe:

- The Pardhan is a subgroup of the tribal Gond people who live in central India.
- The large majority of the Pardhan live in the Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.
- The primary language of the Pardhan people is their own Pardhan language. Some Pardhan also speak Hindi, Marathi and Gondi.
- The traditional occupation of the Pardhan is that of being singers and musicians at festivals and important life ceremonies.

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