

---

## **1. NATO**

### **Why in News?**

- NATO will seek meaningful discussions with Moscow early next year to address tensions amid a Russian military build-up on Ukraine's border.

### **About:**

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of April 4, 1949, by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.
- A key provision of the treaty, the so-called Article 5, states that if one member of the alliance is attacked in Europe or North America, it is to be considered an attack on all members. That effectively put Western Europe under the "nuclear umbrella" of the US.
- NATO has only once invoked Article 5, on September 12, 2001 following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in the US.
- As of 2019, there are 29 member states, with Montenegro becoming the latest member to join the alliance in 2017.
- France withdrew from the integrated military command of NATO in 1966 but remained a member of the organization. However, it resumed its position in NATO's military command in 2009.
- The U.S. has recently announced that it would cut its contribution to NATO's operating budget.

## **2. Black-Browed Albatross**

### **Why in News?**

- A study has recently provided evidence of the effect of environmental conditions on the longevity of relationships — among a population of albatrosses

### **Highlights:**

- It's Scientific Name is *Thalassarche melanophris*
- They are a member of the albatross family Diomedidae, the 'tube-noses', related to shearwaters, petrels, and fulmars.
- It is the most common and Widespread Albatross.

- The name for this large seabird comes from the dark black plumage above their eyes.
- Albatrosses are true marine birds, traversing the oceans in the southern hemisphere, returning to land only to breed.
- They are found anywhere in the south Atlantic and circumpolar in the southern hemisphere. It can travel further to the north with cold currents.
- During September and October, these birds breed on south Atlantic islands such as South Georgia and the Falkland Islands, South Sandwich, and the Cape Horn islands.
- Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals, Fishing & harvesting aquatic resources, Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases are the threats for albatross
- It's Protection Status is IUCN: Least Concern

### 3. Gavialis Gangeticus

#### Why in News?

- The Department of Punjab Forest and Wildlife Preservation, in collaboration with the World-Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF-India) has recently released a lot of 24 gharials (*Gavialis Gangeticus*) into the Beas Conservation Reserve.

#### Highlights:

- The gharial reintroduction in the Beas Conservation Reserve is an ambitious programme of the Punjab government
- Gharials, sometimes called gavials, are a type of Asian crocodilian distinguished by their long, thin snouts. Crocodilians are a group of reptiles that includes crocodiles, alligators, caimans, and more.
- India has three species of Crocodilians namely:
  - Gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*): IUCN Red List- Critically Endangered
  - Mugger crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*): IUCN- Vulnerable.
  - Saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*): IUCN- Least Concern.
- All the three are listed on Appendix I of CITES and Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. **Exception:** Saltwater Crocodile populations of Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea are included in Appendix II of CITES.
- Population of Gharials are a good indicator of clean river water.
- Increased river pollution, dam construction, massive-scale fishing operations and floods.
- Illegal Sand Mining and Poaching

---

#### 4. Humanitarian Trust Fund

##### Why in News?

- Recently, a meeting of foreign ministers from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) agreed to establish a humanitarian trust fund to address the growing economic crisis in Afghanistan which has left millions facing hunger over the winter.

##### Highlights

- The fund will be set up under the Islamic Development Bank to channel aid to Afghanistan in coordination with other groups.
- Allowing Afghanistan access to its financial resources would be pivotal to preventing economic collapse and said realistic pathways to unfreezing billions of dollars in frozen central bank reserves should be explored.
- The meeting also called on the international community to provide urgent and sustained humanitarian aid to Afghanistan as well as to the main countries housing Afghan refugees.
- The United Nations (UN) has also set up a special trust fund to provide urgently-needed cash directly to Afghans through a system that taps into donor funds frozen since the Taliban takeover in August
- It was set up with the aim of injecting liquidity into Afghan households in a bid to permit them to survive the upcoming winter and remain in their homeland.
- Germany is a first contributor to the fund. It had pledged 50 million euros (USD58 million) for it. Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is the second largest intergovernmental organisation after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states.
- It is the collective voice of the Muslim world. It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.
- It was established upon a decision of the historical summit which took place in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco on the 25th of September 1969.
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.