

# **The Hindu**

## **Front Page**

### **Rhino reintroduction a hit in Assam reserve (Page no. 1)**

#### **GS Paper 3, Environment**

The one-horned rhinos of western Assam's Manas National Park, bordering Bhutan, are expected to have high life expectancy and significant growth in population, the 14th Assam rhino estimation census has revealed.

But on the flip side, the 500-sq.-km park does not have "a wider representation of calves and subadults" to sustain the population structure unless it is supplemented through conservation translocations.

Manas, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a tiger reserve, had about 100 resident rhinos prior to 1990, but a prolonged ethno-political conflict thereafter took a heavy toll with extremist groups known to have traded the horns of the herbivores for weapons.

A rhino reintroduction programme under the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 was started in 2006.

This entailed the translocation of rhinos from Kaziranga National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary besides orphans hand-reared at the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation at Kaziranga.

The current rhino population in the park was estimated at 40 after the census on April 1 and 2.

## **Editorial**

### **An enduring agreement bridging India-Pakistan ties (Page no 6)**

#### **GS Paper 2, International Relation**

The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) is an established water-distribution treaty between India and Pakistan to use water in the Indus and its tributaries.

In the words of former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower, the treaty has since its existence in 1960, served as "one bright spot ... in a very depressing world picture that we see so often", resolving the long-standing differences between India and Pakistan since Partition.

Following the 118th meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) comprising the Indus Commissioners of India and Pakistan held on May 30-31, 2022 in New Delhi, it is important to reflect on the struggles and the high stakes that the two countries have experienced to ensure a long-lasting treaty on the one hand and the lessons that can be drawn to address multiple concerns pending in the region on the other.

Struggles and stakes After years of arduous negotiations, the Indus Waters Treaty was signed in Karachi on September 19, 1960, by then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and then Pakistani President Ayub Khan, negotiated by the World Bank.

The treaty establishes a cooperative mechanism for exchanging information between the two countries regarding the use of the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) allocated to Pakistan and the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) allocated to India.

However, the treaty also underlines provisions allowing each country to use the rivers allocated to the other for certain purposes such as irrigation and hydroelectricity.

The Permanent Indus Commission, which has a commissioner from each country, oversees the cooperative mechanism and ensures that the two countries meet annually (alternately in India and Pakistan) to discuss myriad issues emerging from the treaty.

This year, the commission met twice, in March in Islamabad, Pakistan, and then in New Delhi, in May.

## **Explainer**

### **The Indian patent regime and its clash with the U.S. norms (Page no. 9)**

#### **GS Paper 3, Science and Tech**

A patent is an exclusive set of rights granted for an invention, which may be a product or process that provides a new way of doing something or offers a new technical solution to a problem. The Indian Patent Act of 1970 governs Indian patents.

India has gradually aligned itself with international regimes pertaining to intellectual property rights. It became a party to the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement following its membership to the World Trade Organisation on January 1, 1995.

India is also a signatory to several IPR related conventions, including the Berne Convention, which governs copyright, the Budapest Treaty, the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, and the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), all of which govern various patent-related matters.

An interesting point is that the original Indian Patents Act did not grant patent protection to pharmaceutical products to ensure that medicines were available at a low price. Patent protection of pharmaceuticals were re-introduced after the 2005 amendment to comply with TRIPS.

Last month, the U.S. released its yearly Special 301 report, its annual review highlighting the state of intellectual property rights protection in different countries which are its trading partners around the world.

In its India section, the report highlighted a range of issues in domains ranging from copyright and piracy to trademark counterfeiting and trade secrets, saying that India “remained one of the world’s most challenging major economies with respect to protection and enforcement of IP.”

It said patent issues continued “to be of particular concern in India,” highlighting the threat of patent revocations, lack of presumption of patent validity and narrow patentability criteria as issues which “impact companies across different sectors.”

## **World**

**Thailand becomes first Asian country to legalise Marijuana. (Page no. 14)**

**(GS Paper 2, International Relation)**

Thailand legalised the growing of marijuana and its consumption in food and drinks, the first Asian country to do so, with the aim of boosting its agriculture and tourism sectors but smoking pot is still against the law.

Shoppers queued up at outlets selling cannabis-infused drinks, sweets and other items as advocates of the plant welcomed the reform in a country that has long had a reputation for strict anti-drug laws.

Among those at the front of the queue at one Bangkok shop was to buy his first ever legal marijuana.

Thailand, which has a tradition of using cannabis to relieve pain and fatigue, legalised medicinal marijuana in 2018.