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- The **Himalayan serow** is restricted to the Himalayan region at altitudes between 2,000 metres and 4,000 metres.
- They are found in eastern, central, and western Himalayas, but **not** in the Trans Himalayas (Karakoram, Ladakh, Zaskar and Kailash mountain ranges).
- Himalayan serows are **herbivores**.
- Conservation Status:

IUCN Red List	Vulnerable
CITES	Appendix I
WPA, 1972	Schedule I

About Manas National Park, Assam:

- It is remarked as
 - a UNESCO Natural **World Heritage site**,
 - a **Project Tiger reserve**,
 - an **elephant** reserve,
 - a **biosphere reserve** in Assam, India.
- It is contiguous with the Royal Manas National Park of Bhutan.
- River: **Manas** river flows through the park
 - It is a major **tributary of Brahmaputra** river.
 - The **Manas river** serves as an international border between India and Bhutan.
- Key Fauna: Elephants, Rhinoceros, Gaurs, Asian water buffaloes, barasingha, Tigers, Asian golden cats, dholes, golden langurs, **Assamese macaques**, slow loris, **hoolock gibbons**, **smooth-coated otters**, sloth bears, barking deers, hog deers, black panthers, sambar deers, **chitals**, etc.

Environment

Himalayan Serow

Why in News?

For the first time, a Himalayan serow was spotted in Assam's Manas Tiger Reserve.

About Himalayan Serow:

- A Himalayan serow resembles like a cross between a goat, a donkey, a cow, and a pig.
- It is a medium-sized mammal with a large head, short limbs, long, mule-like ears, and a coat of dark hair on its body.
- There are many species of serows, and **all** of them are found in Asian countries.
- Habitat:



- **Endemic Species:** Assam roofed turtle, hispid hare, golden langur and pygmy hog.

Science and Technology

Starlink Space Internet

Why in News?

Elon Musk's SpaceX aims to launch its satellite internet service, Starlink, in India by 2022. The company has started accepting pre-booking for its services in select Indian locations.

About Starlink Project:

- The Starlink network is one of the several ongoing efforts to beam data signals from space.
- Under the project, the company intends to set up a constellation of nearly 12,000 satellites in **Low Earth Orbit**.
- The firm aims to provide reliable space-based internet services at low cost to the world.

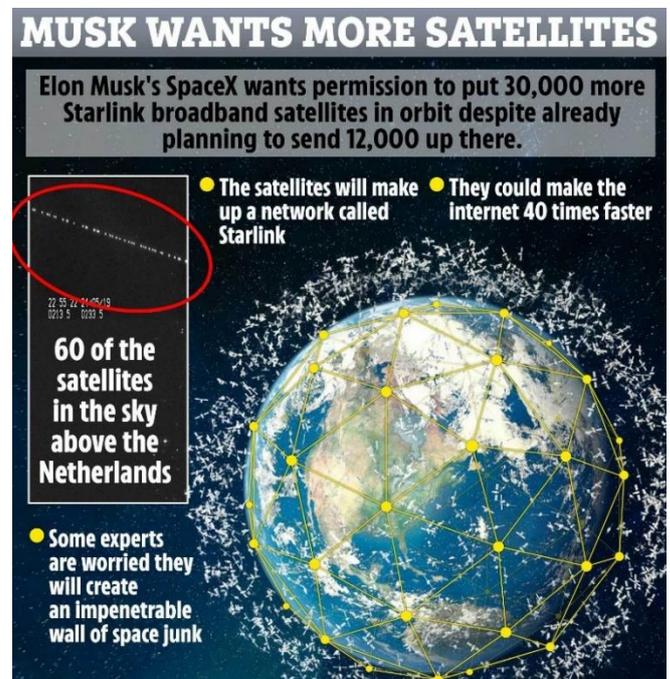
About Present Space Internet Systems:

- Most of the present space-based Internet services use satellites in **geostationary** orbit.
 - Geostationary orbit is located at a height of 35,786 km over the Earth's surface, directly above the Equator.
 - Satellites in this orbit complete one revolution of the Earth in the same time that the earth rotates once on its axis.
 - Thus, from a point on earth the satellite in a geostationary orbit appears stationary.
- Advantage: The signals from one such satellite can cover roughly **a third of the planet**, hence three to four satellites would be enough to cover the entire Earth.

- Disadvantage: The transmission from a satellite in geostationary orbit has a very high latency due to longer distance from earth.
 - Latency is a measure of **delay in network** i.e., it measures the time taken for data to get to its destination across the network.

About Space Internet with Low Earth Orbit:

- The LEO extends to 2,000 km above the surface of Earth.
- Due to presence of satellite at a lower height from Earth's surface, latency reduces to low values.
- The signals from satellites in space can overcome geographical obstacles faced by fibre-optic cables or wireless networks.
- However, large number of satellites required can lead to:
 - Increased Space Debris
 - Difficulty in Space Studies as these can alter incoming lights from distant objects.



Economy

National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

Why in News?

Recently in a paper published by NITI Aayog has recommended reducing the rural and urban coverage under the NFSA, 2013 to 60% and 40%, respectively.

About NFSA:

- It aims to provide food and nutritional security by ensuring access to adequate quantities of **quality** food at **affordable** prices to people.
- Coverage:
 - 75% of the rural population
 - Upto 50% of the urban population for receiving subsidized food grains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).
- Overall, NFSA caters to 67% of the total population of India.
- Eligibility:
 - **Priority Households** to be covered under TPDS, according to State government's guidelines.
 - Households that are covered under existing **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)**.
- It includes provisions for
 - existing AAY households,
 - pregnant women and lactating mothers
 - children upto 14 years of age, etc

Polity and Governance

National Human Rights Commission

Why in News?

The NHRC has issued notices to the Odisha and Chhattisgarh govt. over the action taken on rehabilitation of people displaced by the construction of the Hirakud dam over the Mahanadi river about six decades ago.

About NHRC:

- **Members:**
 - Chairman (Retd. Supreme Court Chief Justice or Judge), and
 - Seven other members (of which three are ex-officio members)
- **Appointed by:** President, on recommendation of high-powered committee headed by **Prime Minister**.
- **Selection Committee Members:**
 - The Prime Minister (chairperson)
 - The Home Minister
 - The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha
 - The Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha
 - The Speaker of the Lok Sabha
 - The Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha
- **Tenure of Service:** The Chairperson and the members are appointed for **3 years** or till the age of **70 years**, whichever is earlier.
- They are eligible for **re-appointment in NHRC**, but not under any other central or state government.

Key Takeaways:

- NHRC can **investigate** grievances pertaining to the violation of human rights either **suo moto or after receiving a petition**.
- It has the power to interfere in **any judicial proceedings** involving allegation of violation of human rights.
- It can **visit any jail** or any other institution under the control of government to see the living conditions of the inmates and to make recommendations.
- It can review the safeguards provided under the **constitution** or any **statute** for the protection of the human rights and can recommend appropriate measures.
- It has the powers of a **civil court**.

- It can recommend to **both the central and state governments** to take suitable steps to prevent the violation of Human Rights in the country.
- It submits its **annual report** to the **President** who causes it to be laid before each House of Parliament.

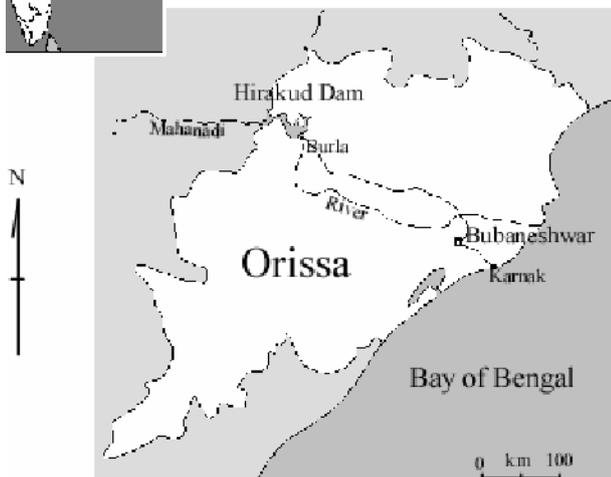
Places in News

Hirakud Dam

- It was the first hydro power commissioned in 1956.
- It is built across river Mahanadiriver.
- It is used for:
 - Irrigation
 - Power Generation
 - Flood Control

Mahanadi River

- The Mahanadi River system is the third largest in peninsular India after that of Godavari and Krishna.
- Catchment Area extends to states of:
 - Chhattisgarh,
 - Madhya Pradesh,
 - Odisha,
 - Jharkhand
 - Maharashtra.
- It originates from Bastar hills in Chhattisgarh to the south of Amarkantak.



News in Short

Channapatna Toys

- These are a particular form of **wooden toys** manufactured in the town of Channapatna, Karnataka.
- It is protected as a geographical indication (GI) under the WTO.
- Their manufacture goes back at least 200 years and their origin is traced to the era of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan in the 18th century.
- The toys are coloured with vegetable dyes and colours, devoid of chemicals and hence are safe for children.

