

## Prelim Bits 23-02-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### Purple Frog

The recently announced Tamil Nadu Endangered Species Conservation Fund (TNESCF) in 2024 includes Purple frog among other species.

**Tamil Nadu Endangered Species Conservation Fund (TNESCF)** with a corpus of Rs. 50 crore, will cover rare, endangered, threatened, and lesser-known species like pangolin, otter, Nilgiri marten, slender Loris, lion-tailed macaque, and dugong.

- It is also known as **pignose frog**, a soil-dwelling frog that belongs to the Nasikabatrachidae family.
- **Native** - Endemic to the Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- Anamalai hills is one of its prime habitats but occur in higher numbers in the Western Ghat mountains in Kerala.
- **2 types in Tamil Nadu**
  - **Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis** - 1<sup>st</sup> seen in 2003 in Idukki, Kerala.
  - **Nasikabatrachus bhupathi** - 1<sup>st</sup> seen near Srivilliputhur Grizzled Giant Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary in 2017.
- **A Living fossil** - It has similarities to the Sooglossidae family of frogs in Seychelles, supporting the Gondwana landmass hypothesis.
- It is also believed to have co-existed with dinosaurs.
- **Subterranean life** - It remains underground for almost a year except for 2-3 weeks during the monsoon as it comes out to mate.
- **Features** - A bloated body, pointed snout and stout limbs, while the tadpoles have a sucker-like mouth which helps them stick onto the rocks in the fast-flowing streams.
- When out, they become prey to owls, the water snake among others.
- The females lay 3,000 to 4,000 eggs, which develop into tadpoles in 7 to 8 days and the tadpoles become froglets in 100 to 130 days.



- **Major threats** - Habitat loss, road networks, use of pesticides in plantation areas like Valparai and climate change.
  - Lack of rain after they lay eggs, the egg-laying sites will become dry, leading to destruction of eggs.
  - Heavy rain with landslips can also damage their habitats.
- **Protection status**
  - **IUCN Red List** - Near Threatened, since 2020.
  - **Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Act, 2022** - Schedule I

*According to initial assessments, the Purple Frog ranked 4 on the 'EDGE (Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered) of Existence' priority amphibians list collated by the Zoological Society of London.*

## Reference

[The Hindu| TNESCF to conserve Purple Frog](#)

## Sub-national Climate Fund

*Goa to be 1<sup>st</sup> state in India to get Subnational Climate Fund (SCF) with the support of World Bank.*

- A *global blended finance* initiative to develop mid-size climate resilient infrastructure & nature-based solutions.
- **Aims** - To catalyse *climate mitigation and adaptation solutions* at the subnational level through a transformative finance model.
- To *attract public & private investment*, to deliver certified climate & Sustainable Development impacts and Nature-based Solutions.
- **Fund Manager** - Pegasus Capital, accredited by the GCF.
- **Technical Assistance Manager** - IUCN.
- **Anchor Investor of Concessional Capital** - Green Climate Fund (GCF)

*The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the world's largest dedicated fund*

helping developing countries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, set up by the UN system.

- **Need** - 70% of known climate solutions are located within the boundaries of subnational authorities.
- To overcome project-level barriers and limitations in attracting private investment.
- **The opportunities** - Sustainable energy solutions, waste and water management, urban development solutions and sustainable agriculture.
- **Target impact** - Enable access to clean & affordable *energy and water*.
- *Reduce CO2 emissions*, combat domestic and ambient pollution.
- Support *education, economic growth* through reliable electricity and create jobs.
- Support a *circular economy* and sustainable use of resources.
- Sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified *ecosystems*.
- Provide *human well-being* and biodiversity benefits.
- **Significance** - It presents a positive disruptive solution on how subnational climate projects should be structured, de-risked, and funded.



1.8bn

KWh/y RE production



20,000

direct jobs created



17m

citizens with improved living conditions



80m

T CO2 eq. reduction

## References

1. [Times of India| Goa to get Subnational Climate fund](#)
2. [Subnational. Finance| Sub-national Climate Fund](#)

## Paruveta Utsavam

*The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) is making efforts to secure UNESCO recognition for the annual 'Paruveta' festival as an 'intangible cultural heritage'.*

- It is an **annual mock hunting festival**, celebrated at Sri Narasimha Swamy temple in Ahobilam *in Andhra Pradesh*.
- **Origin** - Legend says that the incarnation of Lord Vishnu as Narasimha, the man-lion, in Ahobilam got married to Maha Lakshmi, who was reborn as Chenchulakshmi, a tribal girl.
- Chenchu tribes consider Ahobila Narashima as their brother-in-law and the tradition is inviting him home on Makar Sankranti.
- **Festival** - It starts with the *tribals shooting 2 arrows* at the palanquin, which is taken to the *32 Chenchu tribal villages* surrounding Ahobilam town for a *duration of 40 days*.
- Chenchus take 'Narasimha Deeksha' by wearing yellow robes and 'Tulasi Mala' and observe celibacy during this period.

Unlike other *Paruveta*, *Ahobilam utsav* is the only tradition conducted for a 'mandala' (40 days).

- **Symbol of communal harmony** - The temple staff stay in these hamlets for the entire period, indicating the presence of a casteless society in the past, with no hint of untouchability.
- **Tribal link** - By 'Guru Parampara', the temple is governed by the 600-year-old Ahobila Mutt, which encouraged this tribal festival to spread Srivaishnavism among the folk tribes.

**The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)** was founded in 1984 in New Delhi as a registered society to spearhead heritage awareness & conservation in India.

**Intangible cultural heritages** encompass traditions, festivals, and skills passed down from ancestors through generations. The Sangeet Natak Academy is the designated nodal agency for deliberations to [UNESCO](#) in this regard.

## References

1. [The Hindu| Efforts to get UNESCO tag for Paruveta Utsav](#)
2. [Times of India| Origin of Ahobilam Paruveta Utsavam](#)

## UAE's Golden Visa

Dubai introduces 5-year multiple-entry visa for Indians.

- A **long-term residence visa** that enables foreign talent to live, work, or study in the UAE
- **Aim** - To further *bolster travel between India and Dubai*, to foster sustained *economic collaborations* and encourage tourism and business ties.

*In 2023, Dubai welcomed 2.46 million overnight visitors from India, a 25% increase from the pre-pandemic era. With exceptional 34% year-on-year growth, India continued to be the number one source market with the highest number of international visitors from a single country.*

- **Covers 7 emirates** - It includes Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm Al Quwain.
- **Benefits** - *6 month entry visa* with multiple entries, leading to residency issuance.
- *Renewable 5 or 10-year* long-term residence visa.
- No requirement for a local sponsor.
- Ability to stay outside the UAE for over 6 months without losing residency status.

- *Option to sponsor* family members, including spouses and children.
- Freedom to sponsor any number of domestic workers.
- Provision for *family members to remain* in the UAE under the visa.
- It also allows investors *to invest in public investments* for the issuance of a 10 year self-sponsored residency permit without the need for a sponsor or host residing in the country.
- **Significance** - It enables the tourists to contribute significantly to the *UAE's diversification strategy*, reduce reliance on oil, boost sectors like technology, education, health, and fortify its position as a global business and talent hub.

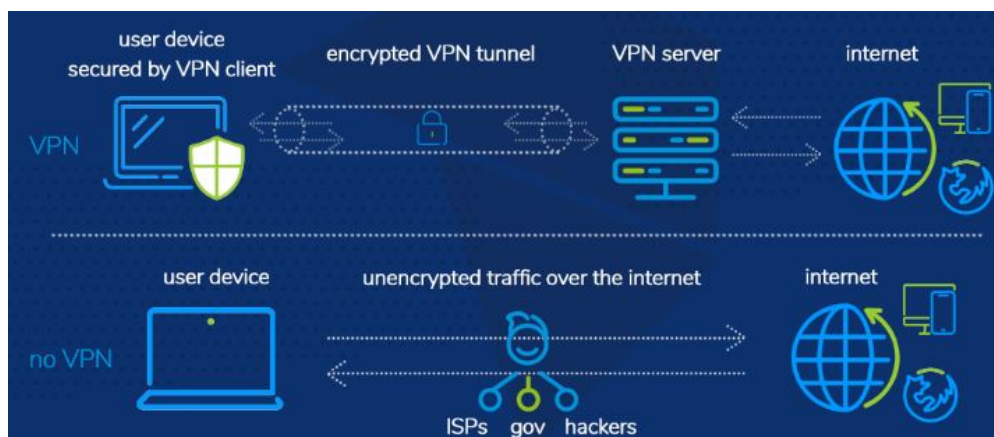
## References

1. [The Indian Express| Dubai's 5 year multiple entry Visa for Indians](#)
2. [The Indian Express| UAE's Golden Visa](#)

## Virtual Private Network (VPN)

Mumbai cops arrested a 21 year old student who allegedly sent threatening emails by masking his IP address using a Virtual Private Network service.

- **VPN** - Virtual Private Network
  - **Virtual** - No physical cables are involved.
  - **Private** - No one else can see your data or browsing activity.
  - **Networked** - Multiple devices work together to maintain an established link.
  - **Working** - It establishes a *digital connection* between your computer and a *remote server owned by a VPN provider*, creating a *point-to-point tunnel* that encrypts your personal data, masks your IP address.



- **Secure your data** - VPN *scrambles personal data into code* and renders it unreadable to anyone without an encryption key.
- **Bypass censorship and surveillance** - *Location spoofing* allow users the ability to circumvent firewalls and view blocked websites.
- **Prevent tracking** - It *masks your IP address*, prevents Internet service providers (ISP's) tracking, and keeps your personal data private.

Name	Connection Method	Use Case
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<b>Client-to-Site VPN (Remote Access VPN)</b>	Connect to a private network or 3 <sup>rd</sup> party server	For remote workers to access company files over a private connection (or) for users who wish to browse the public Internet securely
<b>Site-to-Site VPN</b>	Network connects to another network via LAN, WAN	For organizations to link their internal networks across multiple sites in different locations securely
<b>VPN Applications</b>	Connect to a private network from smartphone	For mobile users while on the go, or while experiencing an unstable Internet connection

## References

1. [The Indian Express| Misuse of VPN](#)
2. [Microsoft| Virtual Private Network](#)

