Baboons

Why in News?

Recently, #JusticeForRaygun widely shared on social media due to encounters between baboons and people in Pretoria.

> *A young male baboon named **Raygun** burned to death by the teenagers in Africa.*

- **Scientific name –** Papio.
- **Baboons** – They are ***world's largest monkeys***, and there are 5 different species of baboons.
    - **5 species** – Olive, Yellow, Chacma, Guinea, and Sacred baboon
- **Habitat** – Savanna, woodlands, bushlands, mountains, tropical forests and semi-arid regions.
- **Distribution** – Dry regions of *Africa and Arabia*.
- **Morphology** – Long bodies, not including substantial tails of varying lengths, large head, cheek pouches, dog-like noses and powerful jaws.
- Long snout, sharp canines, red (or black) backside, thick fur and its colour varies depending on the species.



- **Sexual Dimorphism**
    - **Males** – They are largest species, but females are only half this size.
    - They have a thick coat of fur, especially around their chest and head, where they have thick manes.
- **Uniqueness** – It doesn't have a prehensile (gripping) tail, meaning their tails are not used as a hand.
- **Behaviour** – Highly social, intelligent, travel in large noisy troops, and communicating by calls.
- **Diet** – They are *omnivorous* feed on fruits, grasses, seeds, eggs, insects, bark, roots,

birds, rodents, antelopes and sheep.

- **Threats**:
  - Hunted for their skins
  - Overgrazing
  - Agricultural expansion
  - Irrigation projects
  - Overall human settlement growth.
- **Conservation status**
  - **IUCN status** – Least concern.
  - **CITES –** Appendix II.

References

1. Down to Earth| Baboons and Human Fear
2. National Geographic| Baboons
3. AFW| Baboons

