Crocodile Catfish

Why in News?

Crocodile catfish, a rare fish species was discovered.

- **Crocodile Catfish** – It is one of the ***largest freshwater catfish species*** in Asia.
- **Discovered in** – Bahini River, Guwahati, Assam.
- **Taxonomy**
  - **Scientific name** – Bagarius suchus.
  - **Family** – Sisoridae.

> ***Sisoridae*** *is the largest family of Asian catfishes, found throughout the southern arc of the Asian continent.*

- It is known as Asian giant river catfish, crocodile goonch catfish or giant devil catfish.
- **Size** – 70 centimeters (28 inches).
- **Distribution –** South and Southeast Asia, including countries like India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Thailand.
- **Habitat** – Fast-flowing rivers, turbulent rapids, boulders, large rocks, submerged roots, and debris.
- **Morphology** – It has a long, cylindrical body with a broad head, a wide mouth, typically dark brown or black in colour, and have irregular patches or spots on its body.
- The dorsal fin is long and extends almost the entire length of the back.



- **Sexual Dimorphism**
  - **Males –** Typically slimmer than females and may have slightly more pronounced coloration.

- **Characteristics** – It habitats the rivers characterized by *strong currents, rocky substrates, and cooler water temperatures.*
- It best fed in the evening or at night when they are most active.
- **Diet** – It is a *carnivorous predator* feed on smaller fish, crustaceans, and invertebrates.
- Its overfeeding lead to poor water quality and health issues.
- **Threat to aquatic ecosystem** – It is an ***invasive species***, threatens the local aquatic ecosystem by depleting native fish populations and disturbing the natural balance.
- **Conservation Status**
    - **IUCN List** – Near Threatened (NT).

References

1. Northeast Now| Discovery of Rare Crocodile Catfish
2. Monesteraquarium| Crocodile Goonch Catfish
3. Aqua-Fish| Crocodile Catfish

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