

Need for Conservation of Hoolock Gibbons

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance

Why in News?

Addressing 30th Congress of the International Primatological Society (IPS) at Antananarivo in Madagascar, Indian representative underscored the urgency of a national-level Project Gibbon, noting its severe habitat loss.

- **Issue** - Cases of local extinction have already been observed in fragmented forest patches of the northeast
- **Action plan Modelled on** - Project Tiger or Project Elephant.
- **Aim** - To promote the western hoolock gibbon as a flagship species to generate broader public and policy support for effective conservation.
- **Conservation actions** - This including the restoration of degraded habitats, creation of ecological corridors.
 - Scientific research
 - Capacity building for forest staff
 - Community engagement.

Hoolock Gibbons

- Hoolock Gibbon is ***India's only ape species.***
- It is also known as '**Hoolocks or White browed Gibbons**' and *2nd largest of the Gibbon species.*
- It is among the of the world's 25 most endangered primates from Asia.
- **Family** - Hylobatidae.
- **Physical attributes** - Size 60 to 90 cm weigh 6 to 9 kg.
- **Diet** - Mainly of fruits, insects and leaves.
- **Behaviour** - Live together in *monogamous* pairs, *stake out a territory.*
 - Calls serve to locate family members and ward off other gibbons from their territory.
- **Geographical distribution** - Extending from Assam to Myanmar, some populations (in each case few hundred animals), also in the eastern Bangladesh and in southwest China.
 - **In India** - Restricted to the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River and east of the Dibang River across 7 northeastern States - Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura.
- ***Diurnal and arboreal*** (living in tress), brachiating through the trees with their long arms.

- **Causes for habitat loss** - Encroachment,
 - Unregulated resource extraction
 - Infrastructure development
 - Tea plantations, shifting cultivation

- Fragmentation, hunting, and the illegal wildlife trade.
- **Conservation status**
 - IUCN - Endangered
 - WPA, 1972 - Schedule 1.

Quick facts

Other species

- Banka slow loris (*Nycticebus bancanus*),
- Sangihe tarsier (*Tarsius sangirensis*)
- Pig-tailed langur (*Simias concolor*)
- Myanmar snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus strykeri*)
- Tapanuli orangutan (*Pongo tapanuliensis*).

References

1. [The Hindu| Need for Conservation of Hoolock Gibbons](#)
2. [npcb.nagaland.gov.in| Hoolock Gibbons](http://npcb.nagaland.gov.in/HoolockGibbons)

