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1 Invasive Alien Species (Source: The Hindu)

An invasive alien species is a non-native (exotic) species to a specific ecosystem whose introduction causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health.

- **Key Characteristics:** High growth rate, rapid reproduction, high dispersal ability, and a lack of natural predators in the new environment.

Key Invasive Species in India

- **Flora:** Lantana camara, Water Hyacinth, Prosopis juliflora etc.
- **Fauna:** African Apple Snail, Fall Armyworm, African Catfish, etc.

Impact of Invasive Alien Species

- **Biodiversity Loss:** Outcompetes native species for food and space, leading to localized extinctions. Altered forest structures lead to a decline in herbivores (e.g., Chital, Elephant).
- **Economic Loss:** Damages agricultural yield, increases management costs, and affects livelihoods dependent on forest produce and fisheries.
- **Disruption of Food Webs:** Degrades the natural prey base in protected reserves, forcing predators like tigers and leopards into fringe villages.
- **Health Risks:** Species like Parthenium induce dermatological and respiratory issues, while stagnant water trapped by water hyacinth breeds disease vectors like mosquitoes.

Global Initiative to Control Invasive Species

- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):** Calls on contracting parties to prevent the introduction of, control, or eradicate alien species that threaten ecosystems.
 - **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework:** Specifically aims to eliminate or reduce the impacts of invasive alien species by at least 50% by 2030.

National Initiative to Control Invasive Species

- **Biological Diversity Act, 2002:** Empowers the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) to regulate and advise the Central Government on managing risks associated with exotic species.
- **Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Act, 2022:** Introduces provisions allowing the Central Government to regulate or ban the import, possession, and proliferation of invasive alien species.

2 South China Sea (Source: The Hindu)

- **Location:** An arm of the western Pacific Ocean that borders the Southeast Asian mainland.
- **Border Countries:** Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Straits**
 - **Taiwan Strait:** South China Sea and East China Sea
 - **Luzon Strait:** South China Sea and Philippine Sea
- **Disputed Islands**
 - **Spratly Islands:** This archipelago is claimed in whole or in part by China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei.
 - **Paracel Islands:** China claims these islands, as does Vietnam and Taiwan.
 - **Scarborough Shoal:** Both China and the Philippines claim this feature.





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3 Representation of the People Act, 1950 (Source: The Indian Express)

Enacted by parliament to deal with the electoral system of the nation at the national and state levels.

Provisions

- Allocation of seats in the House of the People, the State Legislative Assemblies, and the State Legislative Councils.
- Delimitation of Parliamentary, Assembly, and Council Constituencies.
- Election officers include the chief electoral officers, district election officers, and electoral registration officers.
- Electoral rolls for Parliamentary, Assembly, and Council constituencies.
- Manner of filling seats in the Council of States to be filled by representatives of union territories.
- Local authorities for purposes of elections to the State Legislative Councils.
- Barring the jurisdiction of civil courts.

ECINET

- **What is it?:** ECINET is a unified digital platform launched by the Election Commission of India (ECI) that integrates over 40 existing ECI apps and portals (including Voter Helpline, cVIGIL, and Suvidha 2.0) into a single, comprehensive service for voters, candidates, and election officials.
- **Key Features:** Provides a single sign-on experience for services like voter registration, electoral roll searches, e-EPIC downloads, and grievance redressal. It is accessible via desktop and mobile apps in English and 22 scheduled languages.
- **Recent Update:** ECINET now requires applicants to provide details of their parents' status in the last Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls — down to the polling booth number and the individual elector's serial number on that roll.