

Gibbons

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Gibbons

The **conservation status** of India's **Gibbons** was recently a cause for concern at the **Global Gibbon Network (GGN)** held on **gibbons** in China.



[ref-physics world]

About the Gibbons:

- Gibbons is the **smallest** and **fastest** of **all apes** native to the **southeastern** part of **Asia**.
- Found in **eastern Bangladesh** to **Northeast India** to southern **China** and **Indonesia** (including the islands of **Sumatra, Borneo** and **Java**).
- Gibbons belongs to the **family Hylobatidae**.
- It is also known as the **lesser apes**.
- **Habitat**: tropical and subtropical forests
- The **hoolock gibbon** is **unique** to India's **northeast**.
 - It is one of **20 species** of **gibbons** on Earth.
- Like all **apes**, they are extremely **intelligent**, tailless, with **distinct personalities** and strong family bonds.
- All **20 species** of Gibbons are at a high risk of **extinction**.
- Since **1900**, gibbon distribution and populations have **declined**, with only **small populations** living in **tropical rainforests**.

About the Global Gibbon Network:

- GGN aimed to safeguard **Asia's unique natural heritage** — the **singing gibbon** and their **habitats**, by promoting participatory conservation **policies, legislations, and actions**.

Hoolock gibbons in India:

- The hoolock gibbon was characterised by their **vigorous vocal displays**, from **Assam** in **1834**.
- The **hoolock gibbon** faces threat primarily from the **felling of trees** for **infrastructure projects**.
- The **northeast** was earlier presumed to contain **two species** of the ape-

- The **eastern hoolock** gibbon (***Hoolock leuconedys***) found in a specific region of **Arunachal Pradesh**.
- The **western hoolock** gibbon (***Hoolock hoolock***) distributed elsewhere in the northeast.
- **Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB)** in **2021** had proved through **genetic** analysis that there is **only one species** of ape in India.
 - Two populations of the **western hoolock gibbon** and the **eastern hoolock gibbon** had split **1.48 million years ago**.
 - The gibbon's divergence from a **common ancestor** occurred **8.38 million years ago**.
 - CCMB is an Indian fundamental **life science research** establishment in **Hyderabad** that operates under the aegis of the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research**.

Conservation status of Gibbons:

- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**) categorises-
 - The **western** hoolock gibbon as **endangered**
 - The **eastern** hoolock gibbon as **vulnerable**
- **The Wildlife Protection Act 1972**: Schedule 1