



SC Considers Lifting the Ban on Transmission Lines through GIB Habitats

Why in News?

Recently, the Supreme Court agreed to **release over 67,000 sq km area** for setting up lines for **transmission of solar power generated in Rajasthan and Gujarat** but said **13,000 sq km area must remain undisturbed** as it's the core habitat of the **endangered bird**, [Great Indian Bustard](#).

Key Points

- The Union government order banning overhead power cables for transmission of solar energy plants in 80,000 square km area is **unimplementable**.
- Further suggested **a balance** between **encouraging solar energy generation** to reduce emissions from coal-fired thermal power plants and all-out steps to do everything possible **to save the GIB from getting extinct**.

The Great Indian Bustard



- Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*) , the **State bird of Rajasthan**, is considered **India's most critically endangered bird**.
- It is considered the **flagship grassland species**, representing the health of the grassland ecology.
- Its population is confined mostly to **Rajasthan and Gujarat**. Small populations occur in **Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh**.
- **Threat:**
 - The bird is under constant **threats due to collision/electrocution with power transmission lines, hunting** (still prevalent in Pakistan), habitat loss and alteration as a result of widespread agricultural expansion, etc.
- **Protection Status:**
 - **International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List (IUCN):** Critically Endangered
 - **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):** Appendix 1
 - **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):** Appendix I
 - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I

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