New Species in Andaman

Why in News

Recently a group of scientists has reported a new genus of treefrog from the **Andaman Islands** called **Striped Bubble-nest frog.**

Key Points

- **Biological name:** *Rohanixalus vittatus*

  - The new genus **'Rohanixalus'** is **named** after **Sri Lankan taxonomist** Rohan Pethiyagoda.
- Striped Bubble-nest frog belongs to the genus of the Old World treefrog family **Rhacophoridae.**
- This is the first report of a tree frog species from the Andaman Islands.
- **Bodily Features**

  - Small and slender body **(2-3 cm long).**
  - A **pair** of **contrastingly coloured lateral lines** on either side of the body. Minute brown speckles scattered throughout the upper body.
  - Light green-coloured eggs laid in **arboreal** bubble-nests.

    - Arboreal means living in trees or related trees
  - They are also known as Asian Glass Frog or see through frogs.

    - While the general background coloration of most glass frogs is primarily **lime green,** the abdominal skin of some members of this family is **translucent** (allowing light to pass through). The internal viscera, including the heart, liver, and gastrointestinal tract, **are visible through this translucent skin, hence the common name.**
  - The genus has several unique behavioural traits:

- **Maternal egg attendance:**

    - The female (mother) attends the egg clutches until hatching and assists in release of the tadpoles into the water.
    - During the **first three days** after egg laying, the **female sits over the eggs** and produces a **gelatinous secretion** with which she glazes (covers) the egg mass through **clockwise movement of her legs.** This behaviour provides **necessary moisture to the eggs laid on exposed leaf surfaces** and protects them from **insect predation.**
- **Community egg attendance:**

    - A large number of egg clutches **(over 50)** of different developmental stages on a single leaf or plant. **Multiple females** usually attend such clutches in a behaviour termed as **'community' egg attendance.**
- Frequent **male-male combats** involving pushing, kicking and dislodging to **mate with a female.**

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