

### Why in News?

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021.

### About

- Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021 **amend the 2016 rules**.
- The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of the identified **single-use plastic** will be **prohibited** with **effect from the 1st July, 2022**.
- The ban will **not apply to commodities made of compostable plastic**.
- For banning other plastic commodities in the future, other than those that have been listed in this notification, the government has **given industry ten years** from the date of notification **for compliance**.
- The permitted thickness of the plastic bags, **currently 50 microns**, will be **increased to 75 microns** from 30th September, 2021, and **to 120 microns** from the 31st December, 2022.
- Plastic bags with higher thickness are **more easily handled** as waste and have **higher recyclability**.
- Legal Framework for Banning Plastic → Currently, the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, **prohibits** manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of carry bags and plastic sheets **less than 50 microns in thickness** in the country.
- Implementing Agency → The **Central Pollution Control Board**, along with **state pollution bodies**, will monitor the ban, identify violations, and impose penalties already prescribed under the **Environmental Protection Act, 1986**.

### 👉 Compostable Plastics:

- Instead of using plastic made from petrochemicals and fossil fuels, compostable plastics are derived **from renewable materials** like **corn, potato**, and **tapioca starches, cellulose, soy protein**, and **lactic acid**.
- These are **non-toxic** and **decompose** back into carbon dioxide, water, and biomass when composted.

## 13. Greater Adjutant Storks (Garuda)

### Why in News?

In a first, Bihar has decided to tag greater adjutant storks (*Leptoptilos dubius*) with GPS trackers to monitor their movement as a part of efforts to conserve them.

### About

- Scientific Name → **Leptoptilos dubius**.
- Habitat →
  - Once found across **South and Southeast Asia**, the Greater Adjutant is one of the most threatened stork species in the world.
  - There are only three known breeding grounds – **one in Cambodia** and **two in India (Assam and Bihar)**.
- Protection Status →
  - IUCN Red List: **Endangered**
  - Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972: **Schedule IV**.
- The English name of the **stork**, which has a **large wedge-shaped bill** and a **prominent neck pouch**, is derived from its **stiff soldier-like gait**.
- Significance →
  - Religious Icon → They are considered the **mount of Vishnu, one of Hinduism's prime deities**.
  - Helpful for Farmers → They help farmers by **killing rats and other farm pests**.
- Threat → The estimated Global Population of Greater Adjutant Storks (around 800- 1,200) has **fallen** over the years largely **due to the ingestion of plastic**.