

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

17-10-2026

MURUD-JANJIRA FORT

Mid-Day

Months after monsoon closure, Murud Janjira Fort reopens ahead of tourist season

Maharashtra Historic Murud Janjira Fort in Raigad has reopened to tourists after a five-month closure during monsoon, bringing relief to...



Why in News?

The historic **Murud-Janjira Fort** in Maharashtra's Raigad district has reopened after monsoon-related safety and cleaning work.

Geographical and Historical Significance

- It is an **island fort in the Arabian Sea**, off Murud village in Raigad district, Maharashtra.
- The fort's history dates to the **15th century**, when the **Siddi rulers**, people of African origin, established a powerful naval base.
- The name *Janjira* is believed to derive from the Arabic word *Jazeera*, meaning island.
- **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Sambhaji** attempted to capture the fort but failed, earning it the title "**Unconquerable Janjira.**"
- Its construction reportedly used a mixture of **lead, sand and gul**.
- The fort historically contained **572 cannons**; the largest is **Kalaal Bangdi**.
- It contained palaces, officers' quarters, a mosque, **two natural freshwater lakes** and a deep well.



KAILADEVI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

WWF India

New study finds Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary as a key stronghold for tiger recovery and wildlif

Jaipur, Rajasthan: A new study by WWF-India, in collaboration with the Rajasthan Forest Department, highlights Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary...



Why in News?

A study by **WWF-India and the Rajasthan Forest Department** has highlighted the sanctuary's importance for wildlife conservation and tiger recovery.

Location and Physical Features

- Located in **Karauli district, Rajasthan**, the sanctuary covers approximately **674 sq. km** and was established in **1983**.
- It forms the northern extension and buffer zone of **Ranthambore Tiger Reserve**, connecting it with the Chambal region through a wildlife corridor.
- Its landscape comprises rugged hills, deep gorges called **khos**, and dry deciduous forests.
- The **Banas River** lies along its western edge, while the **Chambal River** lies to the southeast.

Biodiversity and Conservation

- Major vegetation includes **dhok, khair and tendu** trees.
- Fauna include **Bengal tigers, leopards, sloth bears, Indian grey wolves, striped hyenas, jackals, nilgai, chinkara, sambar and chital**.
- It supports **over 200 bird species**, including kingfishers and peafowl.
- Community-led forest protection committees called **kulhadi bandh panchayats** discourage the carrying of axes into forests.
- The **Kaila Devi Temple** within the sanctuary is an important pilgrimage site.

GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOOD (GLOF) WARNING SYSTEM



The New Indian Express

Himachal's Ghepan Lake gets India's first Glacial Lake Outburst Flood warning system

The newly installed system comprises a buoy-based lake monitoring station, an automated weather station and a glacier vision unit.



Why in News?

India's first **GLOF early warning system** has reportedly been installed at **Ghepan Ghat glacial lake** in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul and Spiti district.

Components and Working

- The system was developed by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)** under a pilot project funded by the **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)**.
- It consists of a **floating buoy**, an **Automatic Weather Station** and a **two-camera glacier vision unit**.
- The buoy transmits data every **10 minutes** under normal conditions and is designed to transmit emergency information within **30 seconds**.

- The weather station records **14 environmental parameters**, while the cameras monitor changes in the lake and its surroundings.
- The components are interconnected through a **supercomputer-based analytical platform**.

Disaster Management Significance

- A **Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF)** occurs when a glacial lake suddenly releases large volumes of water, causing potential downstream flooding.
- Early warnings can support **risk assessment, evacuation, public awareness and disaster preparedness**.
- The system is particularly important for vulnerable Himalayan settlements and infrastructure.

NEW CENTIPEDE SPECIES



[Scientists discover 3 new centipede species in southern India | Tap to know more | Inshorts](#)

Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India ZSI and Malabar Christian College have described three new centipede species of the genus...

Why in News?

Researchers discovered three new centipede species from South India: ***Rhysida quadrispinosa***, ***Rhysida coorgensis*** and ***Rhysida neyyarensis***.

Newly Discovered Species

- ***Rhysida quadrispinosa*** has four ventrolateral spines on the prefemur of its ultimate leg and **18 antennal articles**.
- ***Rhysida coorgensis*** is named after **Coorg, Karnataka**, where the specimen was first collected; it has distinctive back-plate sutures and coxopleural spines.
- ***Rhysida neyyarensis*** is named after **Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala**, and has a distinctive arrangement of tarsal and tibial spurs.
- These species are distinguished by morphological features, particularly the spines and structures of their legs.



Key Facts About Centipedes

- Centipedes are arthropods belonging to the class **Chilopoda**; they are **not insects**.
- They inhabit damp places such as leaf litter, soil, under rocks, beneath bark and inside rotting logs.

- Their segmented bodies have antennae, respiratory openings called **spiracles**, and generally one pair of legs per segment.
- They are predators whose first pair of legs is modified into venom-delivering structures called **forcipules**.

NATIONAL SECURITY GUARD (NSG)

DD News

PM Modi Extends Greetings to NSG Personnel on Raising Day

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday extended greetings to personnel of the National Security Guard (NSG) on its Raising Day,...



Why in News?

The Prime Minister extended greetings to the **National Security Guard (NSG)** on its Raising Day, recognising its counter-terrorism capabilities.

Establishment and Organisation

- The NSG is India's specialised **counter-terrorism force**, popularly known as the **"Black Cats."**
- It was raised in **1984**, following Operation Blue Star and the assassination of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- It was established under the **National Security Guard Act, 1986**, and functions under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- Its headquarters is in **New Delhi**, and its motto is **"Sarvatra Sarvottama Suraksha."**
- It was modelled on specialised forces such as the **UK's Special Air Service (SAS)** and Germany's **GSG 9**.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Its tasks include **counter-terrorism, hostage rescue, hijacking response, bomb disposal, post-blast investigation and specified VIP security duties**.
- It is intended for deployment in exceptional situations rather than routine replacement of state police or other security forces.
- Its operational philosophy emphasises a **swift strike and immediate withdrawal**.

Structure and Specialised Capabilities

- The NSG has two principal components: the **Special Action Group (SAG)** and the **Special Ranger Group (SRG)**.
- The SAG is the offensive assault component, staffed by personnel deputed from the **Indian Army**.

- The SRG draws personnel from **Central Armed Police Forces and state police**, supporting perimeter security, logistics and other operations.
- The NSG has specialised bomb-disposal, explosive-detection and electronic-countermeasure capabilities.
- Its **National Bomb Data Centre (NBDC)** collects and analyses information on terrorist bombing incidents and shares relevant findings with law-enforcement agencies.

PALMYRA PALM TREE

bl. BusinessLine

India exports organic palmyra jaggery powder from Tamil Nadu to Bulgaria

India has exported a consignment of 1.755 tonnes of organic 'Palmyra' jaggery powder from Erode district of Tamil Nadu to Varna, Bulgaria,...



Why in News?

India exported **1.755 tonnes of organic Palmyra jaggery powder** from **Erode district, Tamil Nadu, to Varna, Bulgaria**.

Botanical Features and Growing Conditions

- The Palmyra palm is also called **sugar palm, toddy palm or fan palm**.
- It is native to **tropical Africa** but is cultivated and naturalised throughout India.
- It is commonly planted as a **windbreak on plains** and can grow from sea level up to approximately **800 metres**.
- It tolerates varied soils, including sandy, red, black and alluvial soils.
- It is suited to semi-arid regions receiving less than approximately **750 mm annual rainfall**.
- It is primarily propagated through **seeds**.

Economic and Cultural Uses

- Sweet sap, commonly called **toddy**, is obtained by tapping the tip of the inflorescence and can ferment naturally within hours after sunrise.
- Palmyra sap is used in traditional beverages and food products, while its jaggery is used as a sweetener.
- The tree supplies **wood, fruits, sap, stems, petioles and leaves** for food, furniture, construction and handicrafts.
- The **Nadar community** has traditionally depended on the Palmyra palm for livelihoods.
- Export of organic Palmyra jaggery demonstrates the potential of traditional products in international markets.

USTAD BISMILLAH KHAN YUVA PURASKAR

ANI News

Singer Inder Jeet conferred with Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2024 for contribution to folk music

Himachal Pradesh folk singer, lyricist, composer and actor Inder Jeet has been conferred the prestigious Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar...



Why in News?

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism is set to confer the **Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar for 2024 and 2025** on **106 young artists** in New Delhi.

Award Framework

- The award was instituted by the **Sangeet Natak Akademi in 2006**.
- It recognises young artists generally up to **40 years of age** and is **not awarded posthumously**.
- A recipient cannot receive the same award again in another field or category.
- Awardees receive **₹25,000, a Tamrapatra and an Angavastram**.

Fields of Recognition

- The award covers **music, dance and theatre**.
- It also recognises traditional, folk and tribal performing arts, including puppetry.
- Contributions to **scholarship in the performing arts** are also eligible.

Ustad Bismillah Khan: Key Facts

- Born on **21 March 1916** in **Dumraon, Bihar**, he was a legendary **shehnai player**.
- He received the **Bharat Ratna in 2001**.
- His other honours included the **Padma Shri (1961), Padma Bhushan (1968) and Padma Vibhushan (1980)**.
- His achievements helped establish the shehnai as a prominent instrument in Indian classical music.

PRADHAN MANTRI ANUSUCHIT JAATI ABHYUDAY YOJANA (PM-AJAY)

Organiser

PM-AJAY records 18,093 Adarsh Grams, 785 student hostels completed across India

The Centre has declared 18,093 villages as Adarsh Grams under the Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY), with more than...



Why in News?

As of **8 September 2026**, **18,093 villages** had been declared Adarsh Grams under PM-AJAY.

Objectives and Institutional Framework

- **PM-AJAY** aims at the socio-economic upliftment of **Scheduled Castes (SCs)**.
- Launched in **FY 2021–22**, it is implemented by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.
- It merged three earlier schemes: **Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY)**, **Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP)** and **Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)**.
- It is **100% centrally funded**, although states and Union Territories may provide additional resources.

Major Components

- **Adarsh Gram Development:** Upgrades infrastructure and services in SC-majority villages.
- **Grants-in-Aid:** Supports socio-economic development projects at state and district levels.
- **Infrastructure and Hostels:** Supports essential facilities, hostels and residential schools in eligible areas and institutions.
- **Livelihood Support:** Promotes skill development, employment, income-generating projects and asset creation for livelihoods.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Supports assessment of scheme implementation.

Eligibility and Implementation

- Eligible **Scheduled Caste individuals below the poverty line** may receive benefits under livelihood and skill-development programmes.
- For infrastructure grants, villages with **50% or more SC population** are eligible under the scheme.
- States submit **Annual Action Plans (AAPs)** through the PM-AJAY portal to receive central funds.
- Planning is decentralised, enabling projects to be prepared and approved at state and district levels.
- The scheme links **village infrastructure, education and livelihood support** to improve socio-economic conditions.

Other Important News of the day

**Places
News**

in

BENIN



News On AIR

India and Benin hold high-level talks to strengthen bilateral cooperation across key sectors

India and Benin have held high-level talks in Porto-Novo to strengthen bilateral cooperation across defence, health, agriculture,...



Why in News?

India and **Benin** held high-level talks in **Porto-Novo** to strengthen cooperation in defence, health, agriculture and economic sectors.

Location and Geographical Features

- Benin is a country in **West Africa**, with **Porto-Novo** as its capital.
- It borders **Niger and Burkina Faso to the north, Nigeria to the east and Togo to the west.**
- Its southern coastline lies along the **Bight of Benin**, part of the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean.
- It has a generally **hot, humid tropical climate.**

Physical Geography and Resources

- The **La Terre de Barre Plateau** is an important geographical feature.
- The **Atakora Mountains** lie in the northwest and form part of the Togo Mountain system.
- **Mount Sokbaro**, approximately **658 metres** high, is the country's highest point.
- The **Niger and Ouémé rivers** are major rivers.
- Important mineral resources include **limestone, marble and gold.**

India–Benin Relations

- Recent bilateral discussions focused on defence, healthcare, agriculture and economic cooperation.
- Engagement supports stronger **India–Africa relations** and South-South cooperation.

Environment

SPOT-BELLIED EAGLE-OWL

 The New Indian Express

Rare spot-bellied eagle-owl found in Kozhikode

Spotting the species in Janakikadu carries high conservation importance, as it establishes the first verified photographic evidence for...



Why in News?

The **spot-bellied eagle-owl** was reportedly documented for the first time in **Kozhikode, Kerala**.

Habitat and Distribution

- Its scientific name is ***Ketupa nipalensis***; it is also known as the **forest eagle-owl**.
- It occurs in the **Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia**, inhabiting tropical and subtropical forests, woodlands and savanna-like habitats.
- Its Indian distribution includes Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand and several northeastern states.

Conservation Status

- The species is classified as **Least Concern (LC) on the IUCN Red List**.
- New location records help improve understanding of its distribution and habitat requirements.

Physical Features and Behaviour

- It is a large bird of prey measuring approximately **50–65 cm**, with a wingspan of up to **1.7 metres**.
- Its upper body is chocolate brown with white spots, while its cream-coloured underside has prominent black spots.
- It has long ear tufts measuring **63–76 mm**, a curved yellowish beak and feathered legs.
- It is primarily **nocturnal, solitary and territorial**, and is known for human-like calls.