

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

18-09-2026

Global Gender Gap Index 2026

TH The Hindu

India's rank on Global Gender Gap Index unchanged at 131; Iceland retains top spot

India retained the 131st rank on the Global Gender Gap Index 2026 released by the World Economic Forum on Wednesday (September 16, 2026),...



Why in News: The **WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2026** ranked India **131st among 145 economies**.

Key Findings

- India closed **64.5%** of its gender gap, while global parity reached **69.2%**.
- **Iceland** ranked first with **93% parity**, followed by Finland and Norway.
- India recorded **41.2% parity** in economic participation and **96.6%** in educational attainment.
- Professional and technical role parity in India increased from **26.6% in 2006 to 49.9% in 2026**.

The Global Gender Gap Index 2026 rankings

Rank	Country	Gender gap closed	Gender gap score	Change in score versus 2025
1	Iceland		0.930	0.005
2	Finland		0.872	-0.006
3	Norway		0.867	-0.006
4	Namibia		0.845	0.034
5	United Kingdom		0.842	0.004
6	New Zealand		0.826	0.001
7	Sweden		0.825	0.006
8	Australia		0.819	0.027
9	Germany		0.817	0.013
10	Ireland		0.814	0.013

Legend: Europe, Eastern Asia and the Pacific, Sub-Saharan Africa

Source: World Economic Forum (2026), Global Gender Gap Report 2026

Index Dimensions

- The index covers **Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment**.
- India closed **24.5%** of its political empowerment gap and ranked **67th globally** in this dimension.

Vasai Fort

TOI The Times of India

Outrage after immersed Ganesh idols found 'dumped' near jetty at Vasai Fort

Outrage in Vasai after Ganesh idols from artificial immersion ponds were found near Vasai Fort jetty; police and civic body probe,...



Why in News: Vasai Fort in **Maharashtra** came into the news after Ganesh idols immersed in an artificial pond were allegedly found dumped near its jetty.

Location and Historical Background

- **Vasai Fort**, also known as **Bassein Fort**, is located at Vasai in the northern suburbs of **Mumbai, Maharashtra**.
- The fort overlooks the **confluence of the Ulhas River**.
- **Bahadur Shah** built the Bassein Fort in the **1530s**.
- The **Portuguese** conquered the fort soon after and developed it into a fortified settlement.
- Portuguese control continued until **1739**, when the **Maratha army under Chimaji Appa** captured it.

Architectural Features

- The fort covers approximately **110 acres** and is surrounded by the sea on three sides.
- Its landward side is protected by a **strategic moat**, while its walls extend for about **4.5 km**.
- The fort contains **11 bastions** and remains of churches, archways and Portuguese-style structures.
- Three old churches are identifiable within the fort, including a southern chapel with a **barrel-vaulted ceiling**.

Indravati Tiger Reserve

 Hindustan Times

Indravati Tiger Reserve to reopen to tourists after four decades from Nov 1 | India News

The Indravati reserve was established under Project Tiger in 1983, but prolonged left wing extremism (LWE) kept large parts of the reserve...



Why in News: **Indravati Tiger Reserve** in Bastar, Chhattisgarh, is scheduled to reopen for organised wildlife tourism on **1 November**, after nearly four decades.

Geographical and Ecological Setting

- The reserve is located in **Chhattisgarh** and forms part of the **Indravati landscape** along with **Bhairamgarh and Pamed Wildlife Sanctuaries**.
- The **Indravati River** forms its northern and western boundary and also marks the **Chhattisgarh–Maharashtra interstate boundary**.

- The reserve has connectivity with **Kawal Tiger Reserve** in Telangana, **Tadoba** in Maharashtra and **Kanha** in Madhya Pradesh.

Flora and Fauna

- Major vegetation types include **Southern Moist Mixed Deciduous Forest** with and without teak and **Southern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forest**.
- Important flora includes **teak, achar, karra, kullu, shisham, semal, haldu, arjun, bel and jamun**.
- The reserve supports one of the last populations of **wild buffalo**, the state animal of Chhattisgarh.
- Other fauna include **tiger, leopard, gaur, blackbuck, nilgai, sambar, chital and sloth bear**.

Fiji Declares National HIV Emergency

*** BBC

Fiji declares HIV a national emergency as cases surge

Fiji has declared a national emergency as HIV cases surge, and is expanding access to testing, treatment and prevention services.



Why in News: Fiji declared a **National HIV Emergency** after a **12-fold rise in new HIV infections between 2010 and 2025**, prompting expanded testing and treatment.

Scale and Drivers

- Around **9,100 people** were living with HIV in **2025**, in a population of under one million.
- **Injecting drug use** accounted for over **42%** of cases with a known transmission mode, while **sexual transmission** accounted for more than half.
- Only **22%** of people living with HIV accessed **antiretroviral treatment (ART)** in 2025.
- **Limited testing, stigma and discrimination** are major barriers to diagnosis and treatment.

Government Response

- Fiji is expanding **free HIV testing and treatment** along with preventive services.

- A **needle and syringe programme** is planned for people who inject drugs, with legislative amendments under consideration.
- **Community organisations and peer workers** will support vulnerable groups and help reduce stigma.

HIV: Key Facts

- **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)** attacks the immune system, particularly **CD4 cells**.
- Untreated HIV can progress to **Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)**.
- HIV spreads through **sexual fluids, infected blood, contaminated needles**, and **mother-to-child transmission**.
- HIV is **not transmitted through ordinary social contact** such as hugging or handshaking.

Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana



Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)

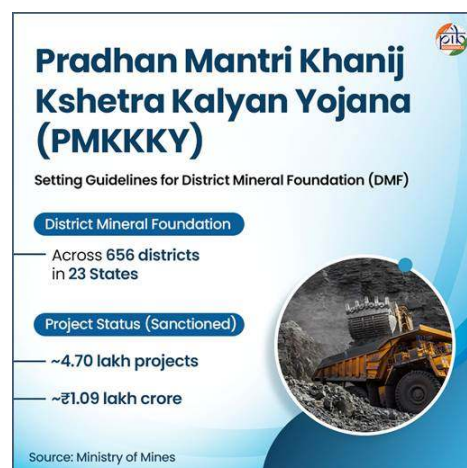
Press Information Bureau (PIB) is the nodal agency of the Government of India to disseminate information to the print and electronic media...



Why in News: The **Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)** aims to improve welfare and infrastructure in **mining-affected areas** through funds generated by **District Mineral Foundations (DMFs)**.

Objectives and Institutional Framework

- **PMKKKY was launched in 2015** to support people and areas affected by mining operations.
- It seeks to complement existing **Central and State Government schemes** in mining-affected areas.
- It aims to mitigate mining-related impacts on **environment, health and socio-economic conditions**.



- It also seeks to ensure **sustainable livelihoods** for affected communities.
- The scheme is implemented by **District Mineral Foundations (DMFs)** using funds accruing to them.
- The **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957** requires States to incorporate PMKKKY into their **DMF rules**.

Fund Allocation

- At least **60% of DMF funds** are allocated to **High Priority Areas** such as drinking water, environmental protection, pollution control, healthcare, education, and welfare of women and children.
- Up to **40%** may be used for **Other Priority Areas** such as physical infrastructure, irrigation, energy and watershed development.

Vaitarna River

Why in News: Two teenagers drowned in the **Vaitarna River** in Maharashtra's **Palghar district** while attempting to make a social-media reel.

Hindustan Times

[Two teenage boys drown while making reels in Vaitarna River | Mumbai news](#)

PALGHAR: A reel-making outing during the ongoing Ganeshotsav holiday took a fatal turn for two teenage friends in Wada, Palghar district,...

Origin and Course

- The Vaitarna is a **west-flowing river** located north of Mumbai and south of the Tapi River.
- It originates from the southern slopes of the **Triambak-Anjaneri Hills** near Trimbakeshwar in **Nashik district**.
- The hills form part of the **Sahyadri/Western Ghats** and are also associated with the origin of the **Godavari River**.
- The river flows westward for about **154 km** before draining into the **Arabian Sea**.
- It flows through **Nashik, Palghar and Thane districts**.

Economic Significance

- The Vaitarna system and its associated dams provide **over 60% of Mumbai's water supply** according to the source.

Hydrological Features

- **Jhow and Wadhiv islands** lie in its estuary, while **Arnala Island** lies off its mouth.

- About **98% of the basin's annual rainfall** occurs during the **Southwest Monsoon from June to October**.
- Major tributaries include **Alvand, Tansa, Pinjal, Surya, Dahanu and Ganjai** rivers.

Sanjay Gandhi National Park

The Indian Express

When you visit Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Bijalee won't be there

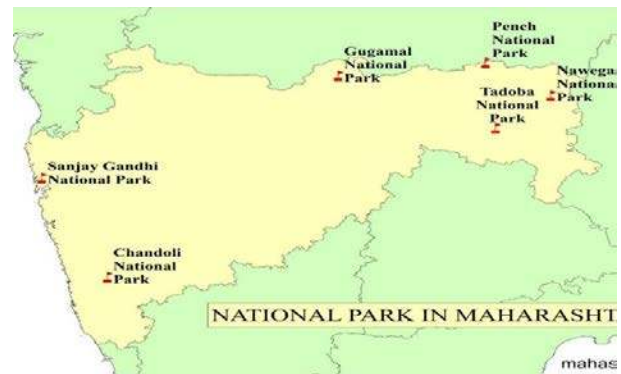
Bijalee, an 18-year-old tigress and one of the major crowd-pullers at Mumbai's Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP), has died due to...



Why in News: The death of **Bijalee**, an 18-year-old tigress, reduced the tiger count in **Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP)** to **11**.

Location and Historical Background

- SGNP is located near **Borivali in northern Mumbai, Maharashtra**, and covers about **103 sq km**.
- The park occupies roughly **20% of Mumbai's geographical area** and is among the large national parks located within city limits.
- It was earlier known as **Krishnagiri National Park**, renamed **Borivali National Park in 1974** and **Sanjay Gandhi National Park in 1981**.



Cultural and Geological Features

- The **Kanheri Caves** inside the park were an important **Buddhist learning and pilgrimage centre**.
- The caves were excavated in a large **basaltic rock outcrop** and contain viharas, stupas and prayer halls.
- The park also contains a **Jain Temple, Tulsi Lake** and **Vihar Lake**.

Biodiversity

- Important flora includes **kadamba, teak, karanj, shisham, acacia, ziziphus and euphorbia**.

- **Karvi/Karvy** is notable for flowering once in **seven years**.
- Fauna includes **leopard, sambar, chital, barking deer, rusty-spotted cat, hyena, civets, porcupine, langur and bonnet macaque**.
- The park supports around **251 bird species** and a wide diversity of butterflies.

Other Important News of the day

Places News

Djibouti Joins Artemis Accords

NASA (.gov)

NASA Welcomes Djibouti as Newest Artemis Accords Signatory

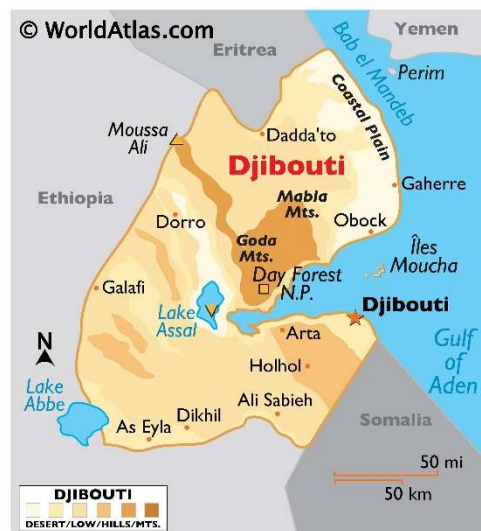
The Republic of Djibouti became the 72nd nation and eighth African country to sign the Artemis Accords during a ceremony Monday at NASA...



Why in News: **Djibouti** became the **72nd country and eighth African nation** to sign the **Artemis Accords** at a ceremony held at **NASA Headquarters, Washington**.

Geographical Significance

- Djibouti is an **East African country in the Horn of Africa**.
- It lies near the triple junction of the **Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and East African Rift systems**.
- It borders **Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia**.
- Its coastline provides access to the **Red Sea and Gulf of Aden**.



Physical Geography

- **Djibouti City** is the capital of the country.
- The country has a **dry tropical climate** with high temperatures and evaporation.
- **Mount Moussa Ali**, at about **2,028 m**, is its highest point.

	➤ The Danakil Depression is a prominent harsh landscape in the country. ➤ Djibouti has no major permanent rivers, while wadis or temporary watercourses occur during rainy periods. Natural Resources ➤ Major natural resources include salt, petroleum, gold, clay, marble, pumice, gypsum and diatomite.
Environment	Leopardus Tilcayo  The New York Times <u>New Species of Cat Discovered for First Time in a Century</u> The species, called a tilcayo, is smaller than a house cat and lives in the cloud forests of the Andes Mountains in Bolivia.  Why in News: Researchers identified Leopardus tilcayo, a new tiger-cat species in Bolivia, representing the first new cat species identified in over a century according to the source. Species Profile ➤ Leopardus tilcayo belongs to the Leopardus genus of small felines native to South America. ➤ The species was found in Bolivia's Yungas forest, a humid mountainous forest region. ➤ Local communities call the cat Tilcayo. ➤ It measures about 46 cm in length and weighs around 1.4 kg. ➤ It has light-brown fur with irregular rosettes.  Yungas Forest ➤ The Yungas forest, also called Nuboselva or Selva Tucumano-Oranense, is a distinctive mountain-forest ecosystem. ➤ It lies along the eastern edge of the Andes and extends from Venezuela to Argentina.

	➤ The ecosystem supports over 200 tree species, 80 fern species, 100 mammal species and 500 bird species. ➤ It also contains around 30 species of toads and frogs, including endemic species.
Defence	Patriot Missile System  Business Insider  <u>GM Is Making Parts for Patriot Missiles Now</u> General Motors is adding missile parts to its manufacturing résumé. On Thursday, major defense contractor Lockheed Martin announced that GM... Why in News: Lockheed Martin received critical components from General Motors for Patriot interceptors amid efforts to increase production. System Profile ➤ Patriot stands for Phased Array Tracking Radar for Intercept on Target and is a mobile surface-to-air missile (SAM) system. ➤ Developed by the US defence company Raytheon Technologies, it can intercept aircraft, tactical ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. ➤ It is operated by the US Army and is used by 19 countries. Operational & Technical Features ➤ Patriot was first used in combat during the 1991 Gulf War and later during the 2003 Iraq War. ➤ A battery includes phased-array radar, engagement control station, power equipment and up to eight launchers, with four missiles per launcher. ➤ Its radar has a range of over 150 km and can track up to 100 targets simultaneously. ➤ Track-Via-Missile (TVM) provides mid-course guidance corrections.

	Interceptor Variants ➤ PAC-2 uses a blast-fragmentation warhead, while PAC-3 uses hit-to-kill technology. ➤ Depending on the variant, interceptors can reach altitudes exceeding 24 km.
Science and Technology	Doppler Weather Radar Why in News: India's 51st state-of-the-art Doppler Weather Radar  News On AIR  Union Minister Jitendra Singh Announces Doppler Weather Radar for J&k's Doda Union Minister Jitendra Singh Announces Doppler Weather Radar for J&k's Doda ... Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has announced the establishment... Radar was virtually inaugurated at Sambalpur, Odisha, by the Union Minister of State for Earth Sciences. Principle and Functioning ➤ A Doppler Weather Radar (DWR) uses the Doppler Effect to obtain velocity information about atmospheric targets. ➤ The radar emits radio waves, which scatter when they strike objects such as raindrops and return partly to the radar. ➤ The return time helps determine the distance and location of precipitation, while Doppler information provides movement and velocity. Radar Bands ➤ The India Meteorological Department (IMD) commonly uses S-band, C-band and X-band weather radars. ➤ X-band radar is particularly used for detecting thunderstorms and lightning. ➤ C-band radar is useful for cyclone tracking. Weather Applications ➤ DWRs help track weather systems and cloud bands and estimate rainfall over a coverage area of about 500 km. ➤ Doppler observations improve monitoring of precipitation and movement of severe weather systems.

Uttar Pradesh in News

Allahabad HC on SC/ST Act

Law Trend

Every Insult or Intimidation of SC/ST Person Is Not an Offence Under SC/ST Act; Act Must Be Shown to Be Motivated by Caste Identity: Allahabad High Court

The dispute originated from an incident on June 18, 2017, inside Police Station Kharkhoda, District Meerut. Smt. Saroj alleged that after...



Why in News: The **Allahabad High Court** held that merely belonging to an **SC/ST** is insufficient to attract the **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989**.

Court's Observation

- The alleged offence must satisfy the **specific statutory ingredients** of the Act.
- In a **Ghaziabad property dispute**, the Court found no material showing caste-based abuse or humiliation.
- The accused was discharged from offences under the **SC/ST Act**, while other alleged offences such as cheating continued.

SC/ST Act, 1989

- The Act aims to prevent atrocities against **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**.
- It provides for **Special Courts, relief and rehabilitation** of victims.
- For relevant caste-based offences, the required **caste-related connection** must be established.