

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Arabian Black Electric Ray

Research Matters

Meet the Arabian Black Electric Ray, a new electric ray species discovered deep in the Arabian Sea

Researchers have described a new species of electric ray, named the Arabian Black Electric Ray (*Tetronarce ramanamurthyi*), discovered in the...



Why in News

- Researchers discovered a new electric ray species, **Arabian Black Electric Ray** (*Tetronarce ramanamurthyi*), in the north-eastern Arabian Sea.

Geographical and Biological Significance

- **Distribution:** It is the first confirmed record of the genus *Tetronarce* in the **northern Indian Ocean**.
- **Evolutionary significance:** It forms an independent evolutionary lineage, distinct from other known electric rays.
- **Identification:** It has a dark bluish-black or brown upper surface, a whitish belly and no skin bumps (**papillae**) around its breathing openings (**spiracles**).

Key Characteristics of Electric Rays

- **Classification:** Electric rays are **cartilaginous fishes** capable of producing electric shocks.
- **Morphology:** They have flattened bodies and enlarged pectoral fins fused to their heads.
- **Habitat:** They occur in tropical, subtropical and temperate marine waters, including shallow waters.
- **Feeding:** These **mesopredators** use electric discharges to stun smaller prey.

Scientific Significance

- **Scientific name:** *Tetronarce ramanamurthyi*.
- **Ecological role:** Electric rays contribute to marine food webs by preying on smaller animals.

Zavodovski Island

Why in News

- The **British Antarctic Survey (BAS)** reported

The Indian Express

World's largest chinstrap penguin colony sees 63% decline in 14 years

Imagine a remote island so crowded with penguins that they cover its rocky shores. Now, imagine nearly two-thirds of its chinstrap penguin...



an approximately **63% decline in breeding chinstrap penguins over 14 years** on Zavodovski Island.

Geographical and Geological Features

- **Location:** It is an uninhabited volcanic island in the **Traversay Islands subgroup of the South Sandwich Islands**, in the South Atlantic Ocean.
- **Volcanic feature:** **Mount Curry** is a basaltic stratovolcano with a lava platform extending eastward from two parasitic cones.
- **Ecological importance:** The island hosts the world's largest penguin colony and distinctive terrestrial flora and fauna.

Chinstrap Penguin: Biological Profile

- **Scientific name:** *Pygoscelis antarcticus*.
- **Distribution:** It inhabits islands and coastal areas of the Southern Pacific and Antarctic Oceans.
- **Identification:** A narrow black band beneath its head resembles a chinstrap.
- **Alternative names:** It is also called the **ringed, bearded and stonecracker penguin**.
- **Diet and behaviour:** It feeds mainly on **Antarctic krill** and breeds in large, social colonies.

Conservation Significance

- **IUCN Red List: Least Concern.**
- **Environmental indicator:** The decline in breeding numbers highlights the need to monitor changes in Antarctic ecosystems and marine food chains.

Sakharov Prize

 Euronews

EU Parliament awards Sakharov Prize to ICC in rebuke of US sanctions

The European Parliament has awarded the Sakharov Prize to the International Criminal Court in a show of support after the US imposed...



Why in News

- The **International Criminal Court (ICC)** and its officials won the European Union's **2026 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought**.

Institutional Background

- **Awarding institution:** The prize is awarded annually by the **European Parliament** during its plenary session.
- **Establishment:** It was established in **1988**, with the inaugural award jointly given to **Nelson Mandela and Anatoli Marchenko**.

- **Namesake:** It is named after **Andrei Sakharov**, a Soviet physicist and political dissident.
- **Award amount:** It carries an endowment of **€50,000** and an official citation.

Objectives and Significance

- **Core purpose:** It recognises individuals, groups and organisations contributing to human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- **Areas covered:** These include **freedom of thought, freedom of expression, minority rights and international law**.

International Criminal Court (ICC)

- **Legal foundation:** The ICC was established under the **Rome Statute**, which entered into force on **1 July 2002**.
- **Nature:** It is a permanent, independent international criminal court that prosecutes individuals accused of serious international crimes.
- **Jurisdiction:** Its four core crimes are **genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression**.
- **Membership:** **125 States Parties** while **India, China, Israel, Russia and the United States** as non-parties.

Institutional Composition

- **Judges:** The Court has **18 judges**, elected for non-renewable terms of **nine years**.
- **Presidency:** It consists of the President and two Vice-Presidents, elected from among the judges.
- **Functions:** It represents the Court externally and oversees the organisation of judicial work.

India Ports and Shipping Review (IPRD) 2026

TH The Hindu

Navy to host Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue in New Delhi from November 3

The Indian Navy will host the 2026 edition of the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) in New Delhi from November 3 to 5, bringing together...



Why in News: The **Indian Navy** will host the **Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) 2026** from **3–5 November 2026** at the Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi.

Key Details

- **Theme:** Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Organiser:** Indian Navy, in association with the **National Maritime Foundation (NMF)**.

- **Participation:** Experts from **18 countries**.
- **Objective:** Translate India's maritime cooperation framework into practical, actionable regional initiatives.

Strategic Significance

- IPRD supports the **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)**, launched at the **14th East Asia Summit in Bangkok in November 2019**.
- It advances India's maritime vision of **MAHASAGAR — Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions**.
- It promotes scientific cooperation, information-sharing and regional responses to climate change, maritime supply-chain vulnerabilities and threats to critical infrastructure

Three Indian Sites Added to UNESCO Tentative List



Active Volcanoes To Ancient Ruins, 3 Indian Sites Added To UNESCO Tentative List

India has added three diverse sites to UNESCO's World Heritage Tentative List, taking them a step closer to potential global recognition.



Why in News: Three Indian sites were added to the **UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List**, taking India's total to **81 sites**.

Newly Added Sites

- **Baratang Karst-Mud Volcano Complex:** Located on **Baratang Island** in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, it features limestone caves, karst formations and active mud volcanoes.
- **Andaman Subduction Volcanoes:** Includes **Narcondam and Barren Islands**; the region reflects the subduction of the Indian Plate beneath the Burma microplate. **Barren Island** has an active volcano.
- **Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape:** Located in Sirpur, Mahasamund district, Chhattisgarh, on the eastern bank of the **Mahanadi River**. Historically known as Shripur, it flourished under the **Sharabhapuriya and Panduvamshi dynasties** and contains Hindu, Buddhist and Jain heritage, including temples and Buddhist monasteries.

UNESCO World Heritage Framework

- The **Tentative List** is an inventory of sites a country may nominate for World Heritage status; inclusion does **not** mean a site is already inscribed on the World Heritage List.
- The **World Heritage Convention was adopted in 1972**.
- UNESCO recognises **cultural, natural and mixed** World Heritage sites.

Other Important News of the day

Places News

in

Azerbaijan

 News On AIR

India, Azerbaijan Agree to Strengthen Security and Economic Cooperation

External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar discussed cross-border terrorism, security and common threats with his Azerbaijani counterpart,...



Why in News

- India's External Affairs Minister met Azerbaijan's leadership to reset bilateral relations following tensions linked to Azerbaijan's alignment with Pakistan during **Operation Sindoor**.

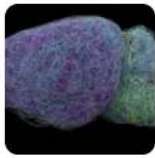
Geographical Features

- **Location:** Azerbaijan lies at the junction of **Eastern Europe and Western Asia**, along the southern flanks of the **Caucasus Mountains**.
- **Eastern boundary:** The **Caspian Sea**, the world's largest inland body of water, lies to its east.
- **Land borders:** It borders **Russia** in the north, **Georgia** in the northwest, **Armenia** in the west and **Iran** in the south.
- **Highest peak:** **Mount Bazardüzü** is the country's highest mountain and the highest peak of the Greater Caucasus Range.
- **Major rivers:** The **Kura, Aras and Alazani** are important rivers.



	Political and Historical Background ➤ Capital: Baku, known for its modern architecture and historic Old City. ➤ Government: Azerbaijan is a presidential republic. ➤ Independence: It declared independence in 1918, came under Soviet control in 1920, became a separate Soviet republic in 1936, and regained independence in 1991. ➤ Climate: The country has varied climatic conditions- nine of the world's eleven climate zones. Economic and Social Profile ➤ Natural resources: The economy relies heavily on petroleum and natural gas, alongside gold, copper, iron, silver, titanium and manganese. ➤ Services sector: Information and communication services and tourism contribute to employment. ➤ Currency: Azerbaijani manat (AZN). ➤ Language: Azerbaijani, a Turkic language, is the principal language. ➤ Religion: More than 90% of the population is Muslim. Regional and Strategic Linkages ➤ Nagorno-Karabakh: Relations with Armenia have been affected by the long-running conflict over this region. ➤ Geopolitical relevance: Its location between Russia, Iran, the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea gives it strategic importance for energy and connectivity. ➤ India's relations: Recent diplomatic engagement reflects efforts to manage differences and maintain bilateral communication.
Environment	Two New Plant Species  India Today NE <u>Two new plant species discovered in Arunachal's Changlang district</u> Researchers have identified two new plant species in Arunachal Pradesh's Changlang district, adding to the rich but still incompletely...  Why in News ➤ Researchers discovered two new plant species, Ophiorrhiza shidiensis and Ophiorrhiza pema, in Changlang district, Arunachal Pradesh.

	Botanical Classification and Identification ➤ Family: Both belong to Rubiaceae, commonly known as the coffee, madder or bedstraw family, comprising over 13,150 species. ➤ Ophiorrhiza shidiensis: It is a perennial herb growing up to one metre, with pale-green leaf undersides and tubular flowers ranging from white to rose-pink. ➤ Ophiorrhiza pema: It resembles <i>Ophiorrhiza himadrica</i> but has taller growth, larger leaves, distinctive leaf margins and light-pink to purplish flowers. Regional and Scientific Significance ➤ Local connection: <i>Ophiorrhiza shidiensis</i> is named after Shidi, the traditional name for Gandhigram used by the Lisu (Yobin) community. ➤ Biodiversity: The discoveries highlight Arunachal Pradesh's botanical diversity and the importance of documenting lesser-known plant species.
Defence	Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)  Telangana Today PM Modi hails ITBP's valour and selfless service on Raising Day Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted Indo-Tibetan Border Police personnel on their Raising Day, praising their valour, determination and...  Why in News ➤ The Prime Minister extended greetings to Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) personnel on its Raising Day. Organisational Profile ➤ Administrative control: The ITBP is a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). ➤ Establishment: It was raised in 1962, following the Sino-Indian War, to strengthen security along India's border with the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. ➤ Border responsibility: It guards approximately 3,488 km of the India-China border, from the Karakoram Pass in Ladakh to Jachep La in Arunachal Pradesh. ➤ Headquarters: New Delhi.

	➤ Leadership: It is headed by a Director General. ➤ Motto: “Shaurya–Dridhata–Karma Nishtha”, meaning valour, determination and devotion to duty. Legal and Institutional Evolution ➤ Initial legal basis: The ITBP was initially raised under the Central Reserve Police Force Act. ➤ Dedicated legislation: Parliament enacted the Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force Act, 1992. ➤ Rules: Rules under the Act were framed in 1994. ➤ Institutional status: In 2004, the ITBP became a full-fledged CAPF under the MHA. Operational Capabilities ➤ Mountain warfare: Personnel receive specialised training in mountaineering, skiing and tactical combat. ➤ High-altitude deployment: The force operates in remote and difficult Himalayan environments. ➤ Disaster management: It contributes to disaster response and relief operations. ➤ Strategic role: Its deployment strengthens border surveillance and operational preparedness along the India-China frontier.
Science and Technology	Locus Coeruleus (LC)  Science Daily <u>Scientists discover a hidden messaging system deep inside the brain</u> A tiny region deep within the brain has surprised scientists by revealing a remarkably sophisticated communication system.  Why in News ➤ Research in mice found that the locus coeruleus sends targeted neural signals rather than broadcasting the same chemical message throughout the brain. Location and Biological Functions ➤ Anatomical location: The locus coeruleus is a small nucleus of nerve cells in the pons, part of the brainstem. ➤ Pons: It acts as a connection between the cerebrum and cerebellum. ➤ Name: <i>Locus coeruleus</i> means “blue place” in Latin.

- **Neurotransmitter:** It is the brain's primary source of **norepinephrine (noradrenaline)**.
- **Functions:** Norepinephrine regulates attention, learning, alertness, heart rate, mood and responses to stress.

Major Findings of Recent Research

- **Earlier understanding:** Scientists believed the locus coeruleus broadcast broadly similar norepinephrine signals throughout the brain.
- **New evidence:** Brain imaging, neural recordings, genetic techniques and behavioural experiments revealed distinct communication pathways.
- **Targeted signalling:** Different neuron groups respond to different experiences and communicate with specific nervous-system regions.
- **Regional connections:** The **dorsal portion** primarily connects to the cerebral cortex and forebrain, while the **ventral portion** mainly signals the brainstem and spinal cord.

Medical and Research Applications

- **Mental health:** Norepinephrine pathways are relevant to attention, mood, depression, anxiety and **ADHD**.
- **Alzheimer's disease:** Locus coeruleus neurons are among the earliest brain cells to deteriorate in this disease.
- **Therapeutic potential:** Mapping specialised pathways may help develop targeted treatments with fewer unwanted effects.

Uttar Pradesh in News

Uttar Pradesh Approves ₹56.26 Crore Industrial Incentives

 Indian Masterminds

UP Approves ₹56.26 Crore Incentives for Four Industrial Units in Four Regions

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh government has approved financial incentives worth ₹56.26 crore for four industrial units to support industrial...



Why in News: Uttar Pradesh approved **₹56.26 crore in incentives for four industrial units** under the **Post-COVID-19 Accelerated Investment Promotion Policy, 2020**.

Incentive Allocation

- **JK Cement:** ₹10.11 crore for January–March 2026.
- **Britannia:** ₹12.77 crore for July 2025–March 2026.
- **Kanodia Cement:** ₹7.41 crore for October 2025–March 2026.
- **Ankur Udyog:** ₹25.97 crore for October 2025–June 2026.

Policy Features

- The policy prioritises industrial development in **Madhyanchal, Purvanchal and Bundelkhand**.
- Eligible benefits include **net State GST reimbursement, capital-interest subsidy and electricity-duty exemption**.
- **Invest UP** is the nodal agency, while the Empowered Committee meeting was chaired by Chief Secretary **S.P. Goyal**.

Objectives

- The policy seeks to attract investment, generate employment and promote balanced regional development.
- It also aims to support industrial recovery and reduce migration by creating local livelihood opportunities.