

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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English Channel

Deccan Chronicle

Over 170 Migrants Rescued After Boat Catches Fire During Channel Crossing

It was one of the largest rescue operations reported since records began in 2018 of such dangerous sea journeys from France to the United...



Why in News

- Recently, French coastguards rescued 170 migrants after a boat caught fire in the English Channel.

Geographical Profile

- The English Channel (La Manche) is a narrow arm of the Atlantic Ocean separating southern England from northern France.
- It connects with the North Sea through the Strait of Dover, whose narrowest width is 34 km.
- It is about 563 km long, covers nearly 75,000 sq. km, and is the smallest shallow sea on Europe's continental shelf.



Strategic Importance

- It is among the world's busiest shipping routes, carrying nearly 20% of global maritime trade.
- It has served as Britain's natural defence during the Norman Conquest (1066), Napoleonic Wars, World Wars, Dunkirk Evacuation (1940) and Normandy Landings (1944).
- Major ports include Dover, Portsmouth, Southampton (UK) and Calais, Cherbourg, Le Havre (France).

Channel Tunnel

- The Channel Tunnel (Chunnel) connects Folkestone (England) with Coquelles near Calais (France) by rail.
- It is 50 km long, including the world's longest undersea tunnel section (37.8 km), and is the only fixed link between Great Britain and mainland Europe.

Rhine River

 mint

Ships can't move and power plants shut down as drought saps Europe's rivers

A drought is wreaking havoc along Europe's rivers. In Romania, authorities set off an explosion beside a river in a bid to divert...



Why in News

- Water levels in the Rhine River recently fell below the previous record set in 2018, disrupting European freight transport.

Course and Physical Features

- The Rhine is the longest river in Western Europe and the 12th longest in Europe, with a length of 1,232 km.
- It originates in the Swiss Alps and flows through Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France, and the Netherlands before entering the North Sea at Rotterdam.
- It forms part of the natural border between Germany and France and drains about 185,000 sq. km.



Geographical Significance

- Major tributaries include the Aare, Moselle, Tamina, Erft, Wiese, Plessur, Rotach, and Rein da Tuma.

- **Rhine Falls** near Schaffhausen (Switzerland) is Europe's largest waterfall.
- The **Upper Middle Rhine Valley** in Germany is renowned for its **castles, vineyards**, and **Lorelei Rock**.

Economic Importance

- The Rhine is **Europe's most important commercial waterway**, supporting trade among **Switzerland, France, Germany**, and **the Netherlands**.
- Around **58 million people** live in its basin, and nearly 20% of the world's chemical industry is located along the river.

Clouded Leopard

Pib.gov.in

On International Clouded Leopard Day, India Strengthens Conservation through Dedicated Conservation Action Plan for the Wild Cat

On the occasion of International Clouded Leopard Day, India has reaffirmed its commitment to the conservation of one of Asia's most elusive...



Why in News

- India has launched the **Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan (CAP)** on the occasion of **International Clouded Leopard Day**.

Distribution and Features

- The **Clouded Leopard (Neofelis nebulosa)** is a **Vulnerable** wild cat found from the **Himalayas** to mainland Southeast Asia and **southern China**.
- In India, it occurs in **Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya**, and **Tripura**.
- It inhabits **tropical forests**, is **arboreal and nocturnal**, and is recognised by its **cloud-shaped markings** and **long balancing tail**.
- The **Sunda Clouded Leopard (Neofelis diardi)** occurs in Sumatra and **Borneo**.

Conservation Action Plan

- The **CAP** has been prepared under the **Government of India–GEF–UNDP** initiative.
- It focuses on **habitat restoration**, **forest connectivity**, **scientific monitoring**, and **community participation**.
- The plan identifies **14 priority conservation landscapes** across **Northeast India**.
- It promotes camera traps, occupancy surveys, genetics, environmental DNA (eDNA), and **transboundary cooperation** with neighbouring countries.

Asan Conservation Reserve

THE Hindu

10 km radius buffer for mining extends to all wetland reserves, says SC

The Supreme Court orally clarified on Tuesday (August 4, 2026) that a direction banning mining activities within a 10 km radius of the Asan...



Why in News

- The **Supreme Court** clarified that the **10 km mining restriction** around the **Asan Conservation Reserve** should apply to other **wetland conservation reserves** for parity.

Location and Protection Status

- Asan Conservation Reserve is located in **Dehradun, Uttarakhand**, at the confluence of the **Asan** and **Yamuna** rivers.
- It covers **444.4 ha** and comprises the **Asan Barrage** and the wetland created after damming the river in **1967**.
- It was declared a **Conservation Reserve** under **Section 36A of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** in 2005.
- It became **Uttarakhand's first Ramsar Site** in **2020** and is also an **Important Bird Area (BNHS & BirdLife International)**.

Ecological Importance

- The reserve lies on the **Central Asian Flyway** and supports **330 bird species**, including **Baer's pochard**, **White-rumped Vulture**, **Egyptian Vulture**, **Steppe Eagle**, and **Marbled Teal**.
- It is an important wintering site for the **Ruddy Shelduck** and supports **78 invertebrates**, **49 fish**, **4 amphibians**, **1 reptile**, and **20 mammal species**.
- The **Endangered Golden Mahseer (Tor putitora)** uses the wetland as a key **feeding, migration, and spawning** habitat.

MSME Sustainable (Zero Defect Zero Effect – ZED) Certification Scheme

DD News

Over 6.7 lakh MSMEs certified under ZED initiative to enhance global competitiveness

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is promoting quality-driven and environmentally sustainable manufacturing through...



Why in News

- The **Ministry of MSME** is promoting sustainable manufacturing through the **MSME Sustainable ZED Certification Scheme**.

Scheme Overview

- The scheme promotes **quality manufacturing**, **resource efficiency**, and **environmentally sustainable production** in **MSMEs**.
- It follows the **Zero Defect–Zero Effect (ZED)** principle and is implemented by the **Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises**.

Key Features

- MSMEs receive **Bronze, Silver, or Gold** certification based on performance.



- Women-owned MSMEs are eligible for **100% subsidy** on certification costs since **11 November 2023**.
- Financial support includes up to **75% (₹50,000)** for testing and certification, **₹2 lakh** for consultancy, and **₹3 lakh** for cleaner technologies.
- **Twenty-two States and UTs** have integrated **ZED** into their industrial policies.

Significance

- The scheme improves **global competitiveness, quality standards,** and **green manufacturing** in India's MSME sector.

National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS)

 The Indian Express

Scientists discover 14 new gut bacteria species in Indian tribal communities

Scientists at BRIC–National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS), Pune, have identified 14 previously unknown bacterial species and nearly 200...



Why in News

- A study by **NCCS** identified nearly **200 previously undocumented microbial strains**, highlighting the need for an **Indian microbiome map**.

Institutional Profile

- NCCS is an autonomous institution under the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science & Technology**.
- It is located at **Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune**, and was renamed **NCCS** in **1996** after evolving from **NFATCC (1988)**.

Mandate and Research

- Its core functions include serving as the **National Cell Repository**, conducting **cell biology research**, and providing teaching and training.

- Research areas include Cancer Biology, Immunology, Microbiology, Bioinformatics, Omics, Neurobiology, and Stem Cell Biology.
- It addresses diseases such as cancer, infections, metabolic disorders, and supports regenerative medicine.

National Significance

- NCCS hosts the DBT-funded National Centre for Microbial Research for collection and distribution of microbial cultures.
- It maintains the third-largest microbial collection in the world, supporting research across India.

Other Important News of the day

Places in
News

Kazakhstan

Why in News

- The Chief Election Commissioner of India recently met Kazakhstan's Ambassador in New Delhi.

Geographical Profile

- Kazakhstan is a transcontinental country, located mainly in Central Asia with a small part in Eastern Europe.
- Its capital is Astana, and it borders Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.
- It is bounded by the Caspian Sea to the west and the Aral Sea to the south.

Physical Features

- The country comprises plains, plateaus, deserts, and mountain ranges.



	• Mount Khan Tengri (6,995 m) is the highest peak, while the Tien Shan and Altai are the major mountain systems. • Major rivers include the Ural and Irtysh, and the Kazakh Steppe is the world's largest dry steppe. Strategic Importance • Kazakhstan is the world's largest producer of uranium, making it significant for the global nuclear energy sector.
Environment	Pseudecheneis likimroensis  Mongabay India A newly-described fish sheds light on a biodiversity blind spot Nagaland is an important hotspot of freshwater biodiversity in the Eastern Himalaya and Indo-Myanmar region. A new catfish species has been...  Why in News • A new catfish species, Pseudecheneis likimroensis, has been discovered in Nagaland. Species Profile • It is a freshwater rheophilic catfish named after the Likimro River. • Locally, it is called "Nupedro" by the Chir Naga community and is also known as "Jetfighter". • It feeds on insects, larvae, and organisms attached to rocks and usually spawns in shallow river stretches. Adaptations • It has a dorso-ventrally flattened body and adhesive structures that help it survive in fast-flowing hill streams.

	Likimro River - The river originates near Mount Saramati, the highest peak of Nagaland. - It joins the Tizu River, which flows into Myanmar, merges with the Chindwin River, and finally becomes part of the Irrawaddy River System.
Health	African Swine Fever  Pib.gov.in <u>Indigenous African Swine Fever (ASF) Vaccine Developed by ICAR Bolsters India's Biosecurity</u> Indigenous African Swine Fever (ASF) Vaccine Developed by ICAR Bolsters India's Biosecurity. Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh...  Why in News - ICAR–National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (ICAR-NIHSAD), Bhopal has developed India's first indigenous MA-104 Cell Line-Based Live Attenuated African Swine Fever vaccine. Disease Profile African Swine Fever (ASF) is a highly contagious viral disease of domestic pigs and wild boar caused by the African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV) of the Asfarviridae family. - It causes high fever, haemorrhages, and mortality that can reach 100%. Control Measures - There is no specific treatment for ASF, making strict biosecurity and culling the primary control measures. - Commercial ASF vaccines are available in Vietnam, while India's indigenous vaccine marks a major step towards disease control.

	- It is not a zoonotic disease and does not infect humans or other livestock. Distribution and Transmission - Originally confined to sub-Saharan Africa, ASF now occurs across Europe, Asia, and Africa. - India reported its first outbreak in 2020 in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, and it has since spread to several States and UTs. - The virus spreads through infected pigs, contaminated feed, pork products, fomites, and soft ticks in some regions. - ASFV survives for long periods on clothes, equipment, vehicles, and processed pork products.
Science and Technology	Nitrosamines  Down To Earth <u>Hidden Carcinogens: How Nitrosamines in Food, Water and Drugs Threaten Health</u> Explore how nitrosamines—hidden in packaged foods, drinking water, pharmaceuticals and tobacco—pose long-term cancer risks.  Why in News - Recently, nitrosamines were detected in packaged foods, pharmaceuticals, industrial products, and water, raising health concerns. Formation and Properties Nitrosamines (N-nitrosamines) are organic compounds containing the functional group N-N=O. - They form when amines react with nitrites/nitrates under acidic conditions, heat, or oxidising agents. - They can develop during food processing, storage, cooking, and even in the human stomach.

Sources and Health Impact

- Human exposure occurs through food, drinking water, pharmaceuticals, tobacco products, inhalation, and skin contact.
- NDMA (N-Nitrosodimethylamine) is one of the major nitrosamine contaminants found in water.
- Nitrosamines are carcinogenic compounds, and prolonged exposure increases cancer risk.

Regulatory Significance

- Their presence has led to stricter monitoring of food safety, drug quality, and drinking water standards.

Uttar Pradesh in News

Bagh Mitra Initiative



News On AIR

International Tiger Day: Uttar Pradesh strengthens tiger conservation through Bagh Mitra initiative

International Tiger Day is being observed today, with various programmes scheduled to be organised at the Ranipur Tiger Reserve in Uttar...



Why in News

- On International Tiger Day, the Uttar Pradesh Government highlighted the success of the Bagh Mitra Initiative in strengthening tiger conservation and reducing human-wildlife conflict.

Key Features

- The initiative was launched in Pilibhit in 2019 by the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department.
- In October 2023, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the Bagh Mitra App to improve coordination between local communities and forest officials.

- Villagers living within 5 km of forest areas are selected and trained as Bagh Mitras.

Role of Bagh Mitras

- They promptly report sightings of tigers or other wild animals straying outside forests.
- Their timely information enables rapid intervention by the Forest Department, reducing human-wildlife conflict.
- The initiative promotes community participation in wildlife protection and conservation.

Conservation Significance

- Uttar Pradesh's tiger population increased to 205 in the 2022 All India Tiger Estimation, from 173 (2018), 117 (2014), 118 (2010), and 109 (2006).
- The initiative has been appreciated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Mann Ki Baat as a model of community-based conservation.
- It supports the twin objectives of tiger conservation and peaceful human-wildlife coexistence.