

SANSKRITI IAS DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Maldharis

The Indian Express

Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel announces scheme to relocate Maldharis from lions' 'second home'

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel on Thursday announced a scheme for the voluntary relocation of Maldharis (semi-nomadic pastoralists) from the...



Why in News: The Gujarat government has announced a **voluntary relocation scheme** for Maldharis from **Barda Wildlife Sanctuary** in Porbandar and Devbhumi Dwarka districts, as the area is being developed as a **second home for Asiatic lions**.

Community and Livelihood

- **Maldharis** are a **semi-nomadic pastoralist community** mainly found in Gujarat's **Banni grasslands**, **Gir Forest** and parts of Rajasthan.
- The term **Maldhari** means **"keeper of livestock"**, reflecting their traditional dependence on cattle, sheep, goats and camels.
- Their livelihoods include **milk, ghee, wool and artisanal crafts**, which are traded in local markets.



Socio-Cultural Features

- **Women** play an important role in livestock rearing and are particularly known for traditional **embroidery and artistic skills**.
- Maldharis traditionally speak **Kachchi in the Sindhi dialect**.
- The community is predominantly **Muslim**, with around **90%** belonging to Muslim communities and the remainder mainly Hindu.

Chamkharchhu-I Hydropower Project

Adani

Adani Power and Druk Green Power to set up the 770 MW Chamkharchhu-I Hydropower Project in Bhutan

Adani Power, India's leading private power producer, and Druk Green Power Corp. Ltd. (DGPC), Bhutan's state-owned generation utility,...



Why in News: **Adani Power** and Bhutan's state-owned **Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC)** signed a Shareholders Agreement to develop the **770 MW Chamkharchhu-I Hydroelectric Project** in Bhutan.

Geographical and Technical Profile

- The project is a **770 MW run-of-river hydropower project** on the **Chamkharchhu River** in **Zhemgang district of central Bhutan**.
- Major components include a **108-metre concrete gravity dam**, a **19.2-km headrace tunnel** and an **underground powerhouse**.
- The project will operate under the **Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT)** model with a **30-year concession** from commercial operation.

Energy and Regional Significance

- The project is expected to help Bhutan meet its **peak winter electricity demand**.
- Surplus electricity can be **exported to India during summer**, strengthening India–Bhutan energy cooperation.

Ownership and Partnership

- The project follows a **49:51 equity partnership**, with **Adani Power holding 49%** and Bhutan's **DGPC holding 51%**.
- The arrangement represents cooperation between an Indian private power company and Bhutan's state-owned power utility.

SME Growth Fund

PM India

Cabinet approves Commitment of Rs.10,000 Crore towards establishment of the SME Growth Fund for direct equity investments in Small and Medium Enterprises to create...

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, today approved the Government of India's commitment of Rs.10,000 crore...



Why in News: The **Union Cabinet** approved the Government of India's commitment of **₹10,000 crore** towards establishing the **SME Growth Fund (SGF)**.

Institutional Design

- The **SME Growth Fund** aims to provide **growth-oriented capital** to India's **Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)**.
- It will operate as a **direct equity investment fund** of ₹10,000 crore in the form of an **Alternative Investment Fund (AIF)**.
- The fund is intended to support enterprises at critical **growth and expansion stages**.



Sectoral and Geographical Focus

- A major share of the fund is expected to support **manufacturing-focused SMEs**.
- It will also target SMEs located in **industrial clusters in Tier-II and Tier-III cities**.
- The fund will cover sectors such as **manufacturing, services, technology and innovation-driven strategic value chains**.

Economic Significance

- The initiative is expected to facilitate **advanced technology adoption, productivity improvement and manufacturing-capacity expansion**.
- It seeks to strengthen the **export competitiveness** of Indian enterprises.
- It can support **regional industrial development, local supply chains and quality employment generation**.

Integrated Transport & Logistics Authority

THE HINDU

Cabinet clears apex body to handle roads, rail, ports as one network

The Union Cabinet on Tuesday (October 6, 2026) approved a Special Purpose Vehicle — the Integrated Transport & Logistics Authority (ITLA)...



Why in News: The **Union Cabinet** approved the establishment of the **Integrated Transport and Logistics Authority (ITLA)** as a specialised institutional mechanism for integrated transport and logistics planning.

Institutional Mandate

- **ITLA** will function as an apex institution for **research, planning, project appraisal, monitoring, impact assessment and policy support** in transport and logistics.
- It will prepare a **National Transport Master Plan** with a planning horizon of **10 years or more**.
- The plan will cover **roads, railways, ports and shipping, civil aviation, inland waterways, coastal shipping, urban mobility and logistics**.



Project Appraisal and Coordination

- ITLA will assess short-term **sectoral plans of around five years** and annual plans of transport ministries for alignment with the National Transport Master Plan.
- It will undertake technical appraisal of **Government of India infrastructure projects costing ₹500 crore or more**.

- It will monitor and conduct impact assessments of transport and infrastructure projects exceeding ₹500 crore.

Data-Driven Logistics Governance

- The **National Transport Data Repository (NTDR)** will integrate data from **GSTN e-way bills, FASTag, Vahan, GPS-based systems and urban traffic-management systems**.
- Integrated datasets will support **freight-flow analysis, origin-destination analysis, project monitoring and impact assessment**.
- ITLA will assist in reviewing and updating the **National Logistics Policy, 2022**.

Policy and Innovation Role

- ITLA is intended to promote **multimodal infrastructure planning** across transport sectors.
- It will support **research and innovation** in transport and logistics.
- The institutional framework seeks to reduce fragmented sectoral planning and improve **logistics efficiency and coordination**.

Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve

The Hindu

Two cheetahs released into tiger reserve, their third habitat in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav released two cheetahs in the Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve in Sagar district on Wednesday...



Why in News: Madhya Pradesh plans to establish its **third cheetah habitat** at **Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve (VDTR)**, formerly known as **Nauradehi**, with the first pair of cheetahs scheduled for release.

Location and Landscape

- VDTR spans **Sagar, Damoh and Narsinghpur districts** of Madhya Pradesh.
- It incorporates the **Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary and Durgavati Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- The reserve covers about **2,339 sq km** and lies on a plateau forming part of the **upper Vindhyan range**.
- It belongs to the **Deccan Peninsula biogeographic region**.

River Systems

- The reserve straddles parts of the **Narmada and Yamuna river basins**.

- The **Kopra, Bamner and Bearma** rivers are major rivers of the protected area and are tributaries of the **Ken River**.
- Smaller streams from the southern part of the reserve drain towards the **Narmada River**.

Biodiversity Profile

- The dominant vegetation is **dry deciduous forest**, with **Teak, Saja, Dhaora, Ber and Amla** among important flora.
- Fauna include **tiger, leopard, wolf, jackal, Indian fox, striped hyena, Nilgai, Chinkara, Chital, Sambar and Blackbuck**.
- The reserve is among the remaining strongholds of the **White-rumped Vulture and Indian Vulture**, both **critically endangered raptors**.

Historical and Conservation Significance

- The reserve is named after **Rani Durgavati**, the queen of the **Gondi people**.
- **Singorgarh Fort** is located within the reserve.
- Its extensive grasslands and diverse landscape make it suitable for expanding India's **cheetah conservation landscape**.

Press Council of India

The Indian Express

Press Council of India operating at half strength, without a single working journalist or newspaper editor

THE COUNTRY'S key media watchdog, Press Council of India (PCI), has been operating at half its sanctioned strength for nearly a year now and...



Why in News: The **Press Council of India (PCI)** has reportedly been functioning at around **half its sanctioned strength** for nearly a year and without a serving working journalist or newspaper editor.

Legal and Institutional Status

- The **Press Council of India** is a **statutory, quasi-judicial and autonomous authority**.
- It was re-established in **1979** under the **Press Council Act, 1978**.
- Its core objectives are protecting **freedom of the press** and maintaining and improving standards of newspapers and news agencies.

Composition

- The Chairman is generally a **retired Supreme Court judge** and is nominated by a committee comprising the **Rajya Sabha Chairman, Lok Sabha Speaker and an elected representative from the Council**.
- The Council has **28 members**, including representatives of working journalists, newspaper owners/managers and the news-agency sector.

- **13 members** represent working journalists, including **6 editors and 7 other working journalists**.
- **5 members** represent Parliament, with **3 nominated by the Lok Sabha Speaker and 2 by the Rajya Sabha Chairman**.

Quasi-Judicial Functions

- PCI helps newspapers maintain their **independence** and develops a **code of conduct** for journalists and newspapers.
- It reviews developments that may restrict the **supply and dissemination of news of public interest**.
- It can review cases involving **foreign assistance to newspapers or news agencies** when referred by the Central Government.
- It adjudicates complaints against the Press concerning **journalistic ethics** and complaints by the Press regarding interference with **press freedom**.

Additional Representation

- Newspaper owners or managers have **6 representatives**, covering large, medium and small newspapers.
- **1 member** represents the news-agency sector.
- **3 members** representing education, law and literature are nominated respectively through the **UGC, Bar Council of India and Sahitya Akademi**.

Bubonic Plague

 The Economist

The plague may have escaped from a lab in Siberia

A researcher's death at a Siberian plague research institute sparks global concern about potential lab leaks and Russia's biological weapons...



Why in News: **Bubonic plague** remains an important zoonotic disease topic because of its association with the bacterium **Yersinia pestis**, transmission through infected fleas and its historically high mortality.

Causative Agent and Nature

- Plague is an infectious **zoonotic disease** caused by the bacterium **Yersinia pestis**, which commonly occurs in small mammals and their fleas.
- **Bubonic plague** is characterised by swollen lymph nodes called **buboes**.
- The disease historically caused the **Black Death**, which killed millions of people in medieval Europe.

Transmission and Symptoms

- **Y. pestis** is mainly transmitted through the bite of **infected fleas** associated with rodents and other animals.

- Transmission can also occur through **direct contact with infected tissues** or inhalation of **infected respiratory droplets**.
- The usual incubation period for bubonic plague is around **2–8 days**.
- Common symptoms include **sudden fever, chills, headache, body pains and swollen lymph nodes**.

Mortality and Treatment

- Untreated bubonic plague can have a **case-fatality ratio of around 30–60%**.
- Untreated pneumonic plague is considered **almost invariably fatal**.
- Plague can be treated with antibiotics such as **ciprofloxacin, levofloxacin, moxifloxacin, gentamicin and doxycycline**.
- Early diagnosis and antibiotic treatment are therefore critical for preventing fatal outcomes.

Major Clinical Forms

- **Bubonic plague** primarily affects the lymphatic system and produces characteristic buboes.
- **Septicemic plague** occurs when the infection spreads throughout the bloodstream and body.
- **Pneumonic plague** occurs when the lungs are infected and can spread through respiratory droplets.

Other Important News of the day

Places News

in

Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

Earth.Org

How Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam Is Redefining Nile Basin Geopolitics

As climate impacts worsen and the Nile Basin population heads toward one billion, the power struggle over river has reached a turning point.



Why in News: The full operation of the **Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)** has intensified the longstanding dispute among **Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan** over the use of Nile waters.

Geographical Profile

- GERD is located in Ethiopia's **Benishangul-Gumuz region**, near the border with Sudan.
- It is built on the **Blue Nile**, one of the principal tributaries of the **Nile River**.
- The project was formerly known as the **Millennium Dam**.
- Construction began in **April 2011**.

	Engineering and Capacity ➤ GERD has an installed capacity of 6.45 GW, making it the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa. ➤ Its main dam is a 170-metre-high roller-compacted concrete (RCC) gravity dam. ➤ A 5-km secondary rockfill dam with a concrete facing is also part of the project. ➤ Its reservoir covers around 1,875 sq km and can store up to 74 billion cubic metres of water. Power Generation ➤ The project has 16 generating units, each with a capacity of 375 MW. ➤ The reservoir is situated in a deep gorge, giving it a relatively small surface area compared with its large storage volume. ➤ The project is owned by Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCO). Geopolitical Dimensions ➤ Egypt and Sudan have expressed concerns that GERD could reduce the quantity and predictability of Nile water available downstream. ➤ The dispute links water security, sovereignty, hydropower development and transboundary river governance. ➤ GERD is therefore a major example of tensions between upstream development interests and downstream water-security concerns.
Environment	Nameri Tiger Reserve DD News Assam's Nameri Tiger Reserve gets global recognition for conservation practices The Nameri Tiger Reserve in Assam has received global recognition for conservation of big cats and protected forest management,...  Why in News: The tiger population in Nameri Tiger Reserve, Assam, has increased from 3 to 12 in three years, indicating a significant improvement in its tiger population. Geographical Setting ➤ Nameri Tiger Reserve is in the northern part of Sonitpur district of Assam.

	➤ Its northern boundary adjoins Pakke Tiger Reserve of Arunachal Pradesh. ➤ The reserve was formed from Nameri National Park, Sonai-Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary, Naduar Reserve Forest and Balipara Reserve Forest. Riverine and Forest Ecosystem ➤ The area is drained by the Jia Bhoroli River and tributaries such as Diji, Dinai, Doigurung, Nameri, Dikorai and Khari. ➤ The Jia Bhoroli is famous for the Golden Mahseer, popularly called the "Tiger of Indian rivers." ➤ Vegetation includes tropical evergreen, semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forests, along with cane brakes and grasslands. ➤ Important flora includes Hollong, Nahor, Simul, orchids and medicinal plants. Wildlife Significance ➤ Important fauna include leopard, clouded leopard, wild dog and Asian elephant. ➤ The increase in tiger numbers strengthens the conservation significance of this transboundary landscape adjoining Arunachal Pradesh.
Defence	M51.3 Missile THE HINDU France test-fires new nuclear-capable missile: Defence Ministry France tests its new M51.3 nuclear-capable missile from a submarine, fire unarmed, observed by Macron, amid Europe's rising security...  Why in News: France conducted the first test firing of the M51.3 nuclear-capable ballistic missile from a nuclear-powered submarine. Missile Profile ➤ M51.3 is a submarine-launched intercontinental ballistic missile (SLBM) developed by France. ➤ It was developed by ArianeGroup and entered service on 24 October 2025. ➤ It represents a further evolution of the M51 missile family. Technical Characteristics ➤ The missile is a three-stage, solid-propellant system weighing over 50 tonnes and measuring about 12 metres. ➤ It is equipped with TNO-2 oceanic nuclear warheads.

	➤ Public estimates place the range of the wider M51 family at around 9,000 km or more, while the latest variant is reported to have greater reach. ➤ Its navigation system uses, among other systems, Europe's Galileo satellite navigation system. Strategic Significance ➤ The M51.3 is being considered for France's next-generation SNLE 3G strategic nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines. ➤ These submarines are expected to progressively replace the Le Triomphant-class submarines after 2035. ➤ The system strengthens France's sea-based nuclear deterrence and its nuclear triad component based on ballistic missile submarines.
Science and Technology	 1st or 2nd test 3rd test (underwater) Advanced High-Altitude Parachute  PIB <u>DRDO Conducts Maiden Live Jump of Advanced High-Altitude Parachute</u> Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted the maiden live jump of the Advanced High-Altitude Parachute (AHAP) at one of...  Why in News: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted the maiden live jump of the indigenous Advanced High-Altitude Parachute (AHAP) at Nyoma (Mudh DZ), Ladakh. Technology and Development ➤ AHAP is a static-line parachute system designed for the mass drop of paratroopers. ➤ It was designed and developed by DRDO's Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE), Agra. ➤ The system was manufactured by Ordnance Parachute Factory (OPF), Kanpur. ➤ It was certified by the Centre for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC), RCMA Kanpur. Operational Capabilities ➤ The parachute provides multiple deployment modes for operational flexibility. ➤ It has an operational altitude capability of up to 18,000 feet.

	➤ Its rate of descent is designed according to the tactical requirements of Indian defence forces operating in high-altitude terrain. High-Altitude Defence Relevance ➤ High-altitude static-line jumps are challenging because of high opening shock and increased rate of descent. ➤ Indigenous AHAP technology can strengthen India's airborne troop deployment capability in difficult mountainous terrain.
	CEMILAC ➤ CEMILAC is the certification agency of DRDO responsible for military aircraft and airborne-system certification. ➤ Its airworthiness functions are implemented through 14 Regional Centres of Military Airworthiness (RCMAs). ➤ CEMILAC and RCMAs certify airborne products developed by DRDO laboratories, government agencies, ordnance factories, defence PSUs and private industries.

Uttar Pradesh in News

Uttar Pradesh Secures Nearly ₹90,000 Crore MoUs with Japanese Companies

Indianmasterminds

Uttar Pradesh: Japanese Companies Sign ₹90,000-Crore MoUs as Kashi-Kyoto Ties Deepen

Uttar Pradesh has secured nearly ₹90000 crore in Japanese investment MoUs, strengthening manufacturing, technology and economic ties.



Why in News: Uttar Pradesh has secured **nearly ₹90,000 crore** worth of investment MoUs with Japanese companies to promote industrial development and manufacturing.

Economic Cooperation

- Investments target manufacturing, infrastructure, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, green hydrogen and technology.
- The partnership aims to promote technology transfer, employment generation and industrial growth.

Cultural Diplomacy

- The **Kashi-Kyoto connection** reflects cultural ties between Varanasi (India) and Kyoto (Japan).
- The **Abe Memorial Corridor in Kashi** commemorates former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

- The vision **"Kashi se Kyoto tak, aastha se arthvyavastha tak"** links cultural ties with economic development.

Defence Industrial Development

- The Uttar Pradesh **Defence Industrial Corridor** comprises **six nodes: Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Agra, Aligarh and Chitrakoot.**
- Japanese cooperation can strengthen defence manufacturing, industrial investment and strategic partnerships.