

May - 22

TNPSC BITS

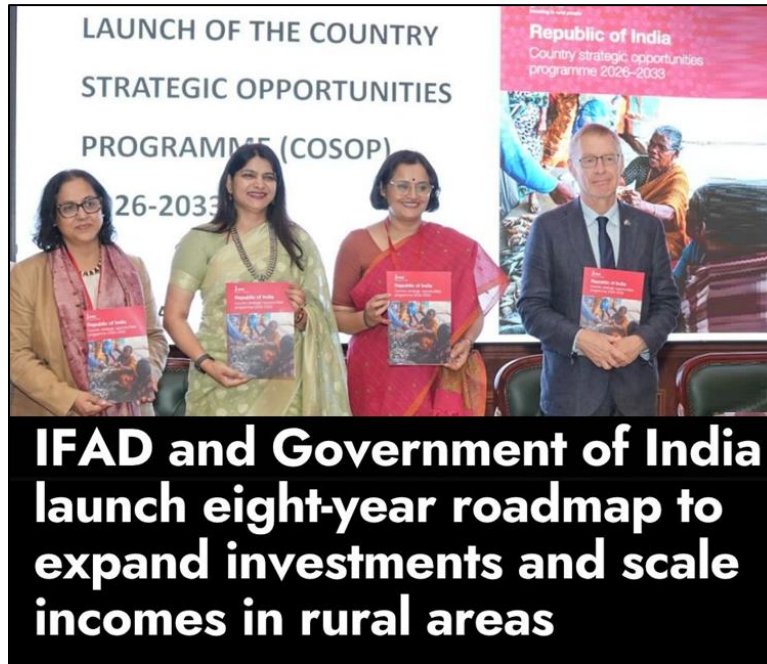
- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Sweden's Royal Order of the Polar Star, Degree Commander Grand Cross, which is Sweden's highest honour given to a foreign Head of Government.
- ❖ The 25th anniversary of the Sino-Russian Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation (originally signed in 2001) is being commemorated throughout 2026.
- ❖ The Ministry of AYUSH launched the Ayush Anudan Portal under the Ayush Grid initiative to digitise grant management in the AYUSH sector.
- ❖ Bharat Forge signed a MoU with Andhra Pradesh to establish India's first private-sector Marine Gas Turbine (MGT) facility in Visakhapatnam.
- ❖ Former Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal launched the "Index" platform through his startup Parallel Web Systems to help content creators and publishers receive compensation when Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems use their content.
- ❖ World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) is observed every year on 17 May to raise awareness about the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digital connectivity in society.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is "Digital lifelines: Strengthening resilience in a connected world".

NATIONAL NEWS

Country Strategic Opportunities Programme

- ❖ The Government of India and the International Fund for Agricultural Development have launched a new Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) for 2026–2033.
- ❖ COSOP is an eight-year strategic framework for strengthening rural livelihoods and improving rural incomes.
- ❖ The programme focuses on climate-resilient agriculture, financial inclusion, and market-oriented rural development.
- ❖ It aims to strengthen grassroots institutions such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), and cooperatives.
- ❖ COSOP also promotes innovation in agriculture, fisheries, and animal husbandry with support from NABARD.

- ❖ The programme supports South-South cooperation by sharing India’s rural development and digital agriculture experience with other countries.



Urtan and Dhirauli Mines




- ❖ The Ministry of Coal announced the start of coal production from the Urtan and Dhirauli coal mines in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Urtan became India’s first underground coal mine to start production under the commercial coal auction regime.
- ❖ Both mines produce non-coking coal that can be sold in the open market under the liberalised commercial coal mining policy.

- ❖ The mines are located in the Gondwana Coal Basin, which contains most of India's black coal reserves.
- ❖ The project aims to strengthen domestic coal production, underground mining and India's energy security.

Coal/Lignite Gasification Scheme

Cabinet approves Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects

 **Financial outlay ₹37,500 crore**

Aim to accelerate coal/ lignite gasification programme and advance the national target of gasifying 100 million tonnes of coal by 2030.

Financial incentive provided at a maximum of 20% of the cost of Plant and Machinery through a transparent and competitive bidding process.

Scheme is expected to create around 50,000 direct and indirect jobs across 25 projects in coal-bearing regions.

- ❖ The Union Cabinet approved the Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects with an outlay of ₹37,500 crore.
- ❖ The scheme aims to promote coal gasification technology to convert coal and lignite into Synthesis Gas (Syngas) for producing fuels and chemicals.
- ❖ It is implemented by the Ministry of Coal and targets 100 million Tonnes (MT) of coal gasification by 2030.
- ❖ Financial assistance under the scheme is capped at 20% of plant and machinery cost, with a maximum support of ₹5,000 crore per project.
- ❖ The scheme aims to reduce imports of urea, ammonia, methanol, and natural gas and strengthen India's energy security under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

NHRC Advisory 2.0

- ❖ The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issues Advisory 2.0 to states and UTs to ensure the welfare of transgender persons
- ❖ The Advisory focuses on ten key areas for action to ensure the welfare of transgender persons.



- ❖ The key recommendations are as follows:
 - Inclusion of distinct categories such as 'Intersex', 'Transmen' and 'Transwomen' in the upcoming Census of India and other national surveys to ensure accurate and inclusive gender-disaggregated data collection;
 - Review of laws, including the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, Juvenile Justice Act and succession laws, to ensure recognition of self-identified gender and protection of the rights of transgender and intersex persons;
 - Ensuring equal inheritance, succession, housing and property rights for transgender and intersex persons without discrimination;
 - Developing comprehensive SOPs for police and correctional institutions regarding arrest, detention, searches, interrogations, imprisonment, confidentiality and access to gender-affirming healthcare for transgender persons;

**NHRC issues Advisory 2.0 to
Ministries and the Chief Secretaries of
all the states and UTs to ensure the
welfare of transgender persons**

**Recommendations issued following field
interactions and stakeholder
consultations, in continuation of the
Commission's 2023 Advisory**

**The Commission urges gender-inclusive
reforms, recommends inclusive census
and workplace reforms for transgender
persons**

**The Advisory highlights concerns over
education, healthcare, property and legal
rights of transgender persons**

**Seeks action taken reports within two
months**

- Establishing dedicated legal aid cells, helplines and independent grievance-redressal mechanisms for transgender and gender-diverse persons facing discrimination, violence or custodial abuse;
- Admission of transgender students in educational institutions based on self-identified gender without requiring medical proof, along with the creation of gender-neutral facilities and grievance-redressal mechanisms;
- Mandatory gender-sensitization training for teachers, counsellors, police, prison personnel, judicial officers and healthcare professionals to promote inclusion and reduce discrimination;
- Developing standardized and ethical medical protocols for gender-affirming healthcare, regulation of Sex Reassignment Surgery costs and equal insurance coverage for transgender healthcare needs;

- Prohibition of coercive or non-consensual medical procedures on intersex children, except in life-saving situations, while ensuring counselling and psychosocial support for parents;
- Promoting inclusive workplaces through gender-neutral facilities, inclusive Human Resource policies, workplace grievance mechanisms and mandatory diversity disclosures, alongside welfare measures for elderly transgender persons; and
- Simplifying the documentation process and enabling self-identification-based enrolment for elderly transgender persons in welfare schemes and establishing transgender-inclusive old-age homes and community shelters, ensuring privacy, healthcare access, social interaction and emotional well-being.

Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026



- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs has amended Citizenship Rules, 2009.
- ❖ It notified Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026
- ❖ It was targeting applicants from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh.
- ❖ Applicants must declare whether they have a valid or expired passport from Pakistan, Afghanistan, or Bangladesh.
- ❖ They are required to provide passport details including number, date and place of issue, and expiry.
- ❖ It has introduced electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-OCI) cards.

Inquiry report on Yashwant Varma

- ❖ The Judges Inquiry Committee submitted its report to Parliament in accordance with the statutory requirements under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968.
- ❖ The committee was constituted by the Lok Sabha Speaker to inquire into allegations against former High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma.
- ❖ The Presiding Officer of the Judges Inquiry Committee, Supreme Court Judge Justice Aravind Kumar, along with the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Senior Advocate of the Karnataka High Court B.V. Acharya, presented the Report of the Judges Inquiry Committee to Mr Birla.
- ❖ It will be laid before both Houses of Parliament in due course.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Green Strategic Partnership 2026

- ❖ India and Norway upgraded their ties to a Green Strategic Partnership during talks in Oslo, Norway.
- ❖ The talks were held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre.
- ❖ The partnership includes clean energy, green shipping, maritime security, digital health, space cooperation and the blue economy.
- ❖ Norway joined India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, and ISRO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Norwegian Space Agency.
- ❖ India and Norway also agreed on technical cooperation for Gujarat's Kalpasar Project and green maritime development.



India-Nordic Summit 2026



- ❖ The 3rd India-Nordic Summit was held in Oslo, Norway.
- ❖ The five Nordic nations are Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.
- ❖ India and the Nordic countries upgraded ties to a Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership.
- ❖ The summit focused on green technology, clean energy, Artificial Intelligence (AI), maritime security, space cooperation and climate action.
- ❖ Nordic countries supported India's permanent membership in a reformed United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and India's membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).
- ❖ Finland will host the 4th India-Nordic Summit.

India-Bangladesh Trade

- ❖ India became the second-largest trading partner of Bangladesh, surpassing the United States, according to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

- ❖ China remained Bangladesh’s largest trading partner with about 21.21% share of total trade.
- ❖ India accounted for about 8.47% of Bangladesh’s external trade by February 2026, slightly ahead of the United States at 8.46%.
- ❖ Bangladesh imports rice, onions, sugar, cotton, yarn, food products and industrial intermediate goods from India.
- ❖ India’s long land border with Bangladesh helps reduce transport costs, improve connectivity and support faster trade movement.



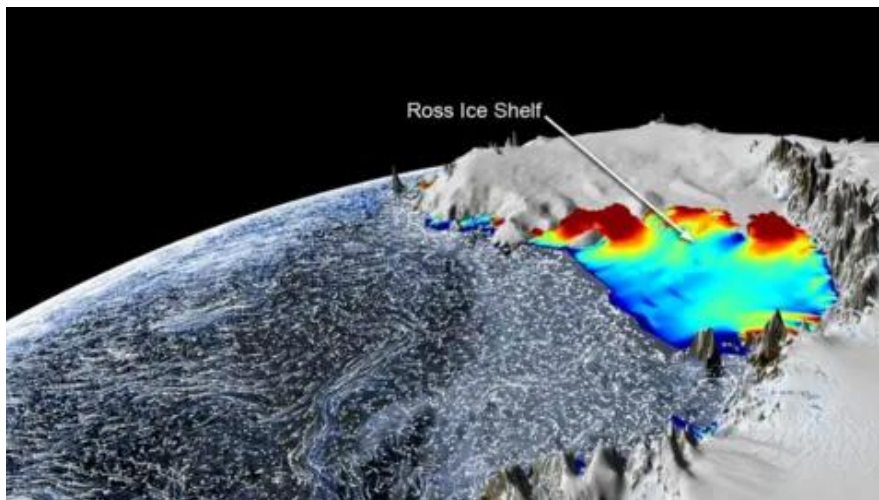
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Shukrayaan Mission



- ❖ Sweden joined India's Venus Orbiter Mission "Shukrayaan" through scientific collaboration with ISRO.
- ❖ Shukrayaan is India's planned interplanetary mission to study the atmosphere, exosphere, volcanic surface, and weather systems of Venus.
- ❖ The Swedish Institute of Space Physics will develop the Venusian Neutral Analyser (VNA) payload for the mission.
- ❖ The mission was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2024 with an outlay of ₹1,236 crore and will be launched using the LVM-3 rocket.
- ❖ The spacecraft will carry 19 payloads and is expected to reach Venus by July 2028 after a 112-day journey.

Microbes Beneath Ross Ice Shelf



- ❖ Scientists discovered diverse microbial communities living beneath Antarctica's Ross Ice Shelf without sunlight.
- ❖ The microbes survive through chemosynthesis, using chemicals like ammonium, nitrite, and sulfur compounds for energy instead of sunlight.
- ❖ Researchers found bacteria, archaea, and viruses forming a unique ecosystem under the ice shelf.
- ❖ Ross Ice Shelf is located in Antarctica and is one of the largest ice shelves in the world.
- ❖ The discovery may help scientists understand life in extreme environments and the possibility of life on other planets.

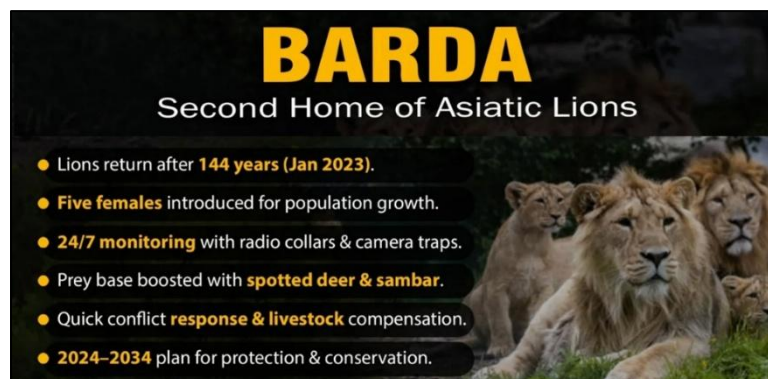
ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Maharashtra Wetland Documentation

- ❖ Maharashtra completed ground-truthing (physical verification) of 23,404 wetlands out of 23,415 identified wetlands in the state.
- ❖ The remaining 11 wetlands pending verification are located in the Pune district.
- ❖ The verified wetland maps will be sent to district administrations and the State Wetland Authority for notification under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules.
- ❖ Ahmednagar district has the highest number of wetlands in Maharashtra, with 1,596 wetlands, followed by Nashik and Chandrapur districts.
- ❖ Wetlands include marshes, ponds, peatlands, mangroves and lagoons, and they help in water conservation, flood control and biodiversity protection.
- ❖ The National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management functions under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.



Second habitat for Asiatic lions



- ❖ The Barda Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat, India, has been officially designated as the second natural habitat for Asiatic lions.

- ❖ Gujarat chief minister Bhupendra Patel virtually inaugurated the first pre-event of the International Big Cat Alliance Summit 2026.
- ❖ The pre-event on lion conservation was organised at Sasan Gir by the ministry of environment, forest and climate change as part of preparations for the International Big Cat Alliance Summit 2026 scheduled to be held in new Delhi. The lion population in Gujarat has increased from 284 in 1991 to 891 today.

India's Cheetah Mission



- ❖ Project Cheetah is a pioneering initiative aimed at reintroducing the cheetah in India after its extinction in the country.
- ❖ India's cheetah population rises to 53 which includes the 33 cheetahs born in India.
- ❖ The programme was initiated through the translocation of a founder population of 20 cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa, which was further supplemented by 9 cheetahs from Botswana.
- ❖ Kuno National Park has been developed as the primary site for establishment of the population, while Gandhisagar Wildlife Sanctuary has been prepared as an additional habitat to support further expansion.
- ❖ Preparatory work is also underway to expand the project to new areas, including the Banni grasslands in Gujarat.
- ❖ The next phase of the project will focus on consolidation and expansion through additional translocations, development of new sites such as Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.

STATE NEWS

Coffees of Nagaland Mission



Jyotiraditya Scindia unveils Rs 175-crore mission to turn Nagaland into a premium coffee hub

- ❖ Centre has launched the ₹175-crore “Coffees of Nagaland” Mission to develop Nagaland as a global speciality coffee destination.
- ❖ The mission follows a cluster-based Coffee Value Chain Development model covering plantation, processing, branding, exports, tourism and farmer training.
- ❖ Two pilot coffee clusters were identified — Tuophema village in Kohima district for Arabica coffee and Ghotovi village in Niuland district for Robusta coffee.
- ❖ The initiative aims to create the “Brand North East – Coffees of Nagaland” with coffee tourism, farm stays and international market promotion.
- ❖ The project will promote organic certification, Geographical Indication (GI) tagging, digital traceability and higher income opportunities for coffee farmers.

Central Zonal Council Meeting 2026

- ❖ The 26th Central Zonal Council meeting was held in Jagdalpur (Bastar region, Chhattisgarh) under Union Home Minister.
- ❖ It was attended by the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh (Yogi Adityanath), Madhya Pradesh (Mohan Yadav), Uttarakhand (Pushkar Singh Dhami), and Chhattisgarh (Vishnu Deo Sai).
- ❖ The meeting is being held in Bastar, and even before the meeting, the entire Bastar region has become Naxal-free

- ❖ This zone stretches from the Himalayan region in the north to the Gangetic plains and further to the plateau regions of central India, which are rich in forests and minerals.
- ❖ Chhattisgarh connects nearly seven states, which gives the entire Central Zone immense strategic importance.



PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Soumya Swaminathan - Royal Society



Dr Soumya Swaminathan Elected Fellow of Royal Society; MP Kanimozhi Hails Historic Achievement.

Former WHO Chief Scientist Dr Soumya Swaminathan has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society, becoming only the second Indian woman scientist in the institution's 365-year history to receive the prestigious recognition.

- ❖ Dr Soumya Swaminathan was elected Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS).
- ❖ She became part of India's first father-daughter duo to receive the honour along with her father, M. S. Swaminathan, who was elected FRS in 1973.
- ❖ The Royal Society was founded in 1660 in the United Kingdom (UK), and its fellowship is one of the world's top science honours.
- ❖ Dr Soumya is a paediatrician and medical researcher known for work on tuberculosis (TB), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and global public health.
- ❖ She earlier served as Chief Scientist of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Director-General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- ❖ She also became only the second Indian woman scientist, after Gagandeep Kang, to be elected Fellow of the Royal Society.

VD Satheesan - Kerala CM

- ❖ V.D. Satheesan sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Kerala.
- ❖ Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Satheesan and the Ministers-designate.
- ❖ Apart from Satheesan, a full Cabinet comprising 20 ministers was also sworn in.
- ❖ Satheesan had said that a "complete Cabinet" was being sworn in at one go for the first time in 60 years.



Rangasamy - Puducherry CM




- ❖ Puducherry CM Founder of the All India N.R. Congress (AINRC) and head of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the Union Territory of Puducherry, N. Rangasamy, was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Puducherry for the fifth time.
- ❖ With the latest swearing-in, Rangasamy has become the first leader in Puducherry's history to hold the office of Chief Minister five times
- ❖ Lieutenant Governor K. Kailashnathan administered the oaths of office and secrecy.
- ❖ Along with Mr. Rangasamy, Bharatiya Janata Party's legislature party leader A. Namassivayam and AINRC legislator Malladi Krishna Rao were sworn in as Ministers in the second NDA government in the UT.)

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Hypertension Day 2026 – May 17

- ❖ The day aims to raise awareness about high blood pressure and related health risks.
- ❖ It was started in 2005 by the World Hypertension League (WHL).
- ❖ Hypertension means high blood pressure and is often called a “silent killer” because it may not show early symptoms.
- ❖ Uncontrolled hypertension can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and other cardiovascular diseases.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2026 is “Controlling Hypertension Together: Check your blood pressure regularly, defeat the silent killer”.



2026  **WORLD**
HYPERTENSION
DAY **MAY 17**

Controlling Hypertension Together

