



September - 18

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Karnataka made September 15 an official Engineers' Day event and allowed engineers to use the prefix "Er.", marking the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Sir M. Visvesvaraya, born on September 15, 1861.
- ❖ Sanjukta Parashar, an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer and known as the "Iron Lady of Assam", became the first woman officer to head the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)'s elite CoBRA commando unit as Inspector General (IG).
- ❖ India launched the Ocean Research Vessel (ORV) Sagar Manthan at Rishi Bankim Shipyard, Kolkata, strengthening domestic ocean research capabilities.
- ❖ Bengaluru-based Astrogate Labs unveiled India's first indigenous Optical Inter-Satellite Link (OISL) terminal at the Bengaluru Space Expo.
 - OISL uses laser beams for direct, high-speed communication between satellites, reducing dependence on ground stations.
- ❖ A healthy Badri female calf was successfully born in Uttarakhand using Ovum Pick-Up and In Vitro Fertilization (OPU-IVF) technology.
 - Badri cattle are an indigenous breed adapted to the mountainous regions of Uttarakhand.
- ❖ A rare philomela form of the Common Wanderer butterfly (*Pareronia hippia*) was recorded for the first time at Poothurai in Villupuram district.
 - Till date, the butterfly species has been historically associated more often with north eastern India and adjoining regions.

NATIONAL NEWS

Shahzad Bhatti Network Under UAPA

- ❖ The Government of India declared the Shahzad Bhatti Network a terrorist organisation under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).
- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) made the declaration, citing the network's involvement in violence, unrest and activities affecting national security.
- ❖ The network has been accused of promoting extremist ideologies and activities linked to terrorism.
- ❖ Under the UAPA, the government can take measures against organisations involved in terrorist acts or supporting terrorism.

- ❖ The authorities will seek to freeze assets and prevent funding or support to the network in India.

MHA Amit Shah declares Shahzad Bhatti Network a terrorist organisation under UAPA

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

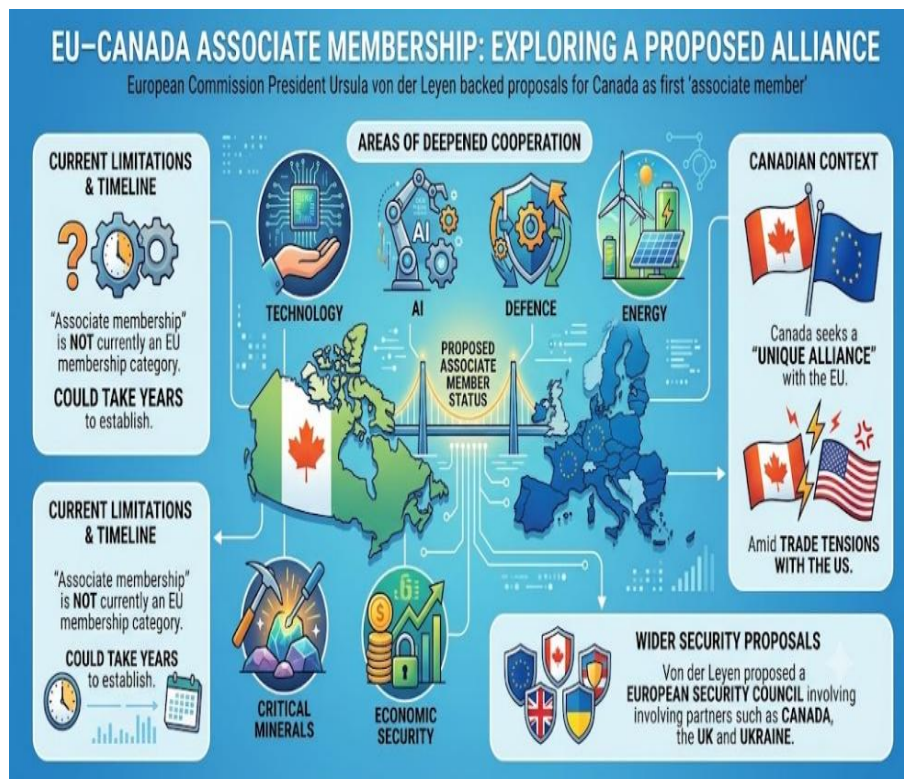
ATLAS Nuclear Initiative



- ❖ International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) launched ATLAS (Atomic Technologies Licensed for Applications at Sea) to advance nuclear energy in civilian shipping and floating nuclear power plants.

- ❖ 26 countries signed a joint statement supporting ATLAS, including India, the US, the UK, France and Japan.
- ❖ Advanced reactors such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) could power ships for long periods without refuelling.
- ❖ Floating nuclear power plants could provide electricity to coastal and remote areas and offshore industries.
- ❖ ATLAS implementation will begin in 2026 through six expert groups covering safety, security, safeguards and regulatory issues.

EU-Canada Associate Membership



- ❖ European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has backed proposals for Canada to become the EU's first "associate member".
- ❖ The proposed status would deepen EU-Canada cooperation in technology, AI, defence, energy, critical minerals and economic security.
- ❖ "Associate membership" is not currently an EU membership category and could take years to establish.
- ❖ Canada has sought a "unique alliance" with the EU amid trade tensions with the US.

- ❖ Von der Leyen also proposed a European Security Council involving partners such as Canada, the UK and Ukraine.

ECONOMY NEWS

EPFO Wage Ceiling

- ❖ Union Cabinet has approved raising the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) wage ceiling from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000 per month.
- ❖ The change is expected to bring over 51 lakh additional employees under mandatory EPFO coverage.
- ❖ It will expand access to Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) and Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme (EDLI) benefits.
- ❖ The wage ceiling was last increased from ₹6,500 to ₹15,000 in September 2014.
- ❖ The estimated additional government expenditure is ₹11,339 crore annually and about ₹56,696 crore over five years.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Hanle Dark Sky Reserve

- ❖ The 4th Hanle Dark Sky Reserve (HDSR) Star Party was held at the Indian Astronomical Observatory in Hanle, Ladakh.
- ❖ It was jointly organised by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Department of Wildlife Protection, Ladakh, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR).

- ❖ The HDSR was notified in December 2022 to reduce light pollution, support astronomical research and promote Astro-tourism.
- ❖ Hanle is also planned to host the 3.7-m upgraded Himalayan Chandra Telescope and 13.7-m National Large Optical-infrared Telescope (NLT).

Fourth HDSR Star Party Brings Astronomy Enthusiasts to Hanle, Ladakh

- * The 4th Hanle Dark Sky Reserve Star Party was held 7–12 September 2026 in Hanle, Ladakh.
- * 40 amateur astronomers/astrophotographers from across India took part with their own equipment.
- * Jointly organised by Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Ladakh's Wildlife Protection Dept, BARC, and TIFR.
- * An Open Night on 10th September drew 1,200+ local visitors and tourists.
- * Participants helped visitors view the sky and raised awareness on cutting light pollution.
- * 25 local "Astronomy Ambassadors" were trained to guide astro-tourists year-round.
- * HDSR was declared a dark sky reserve by the Ladakh government in December 2022.

Tata Steel Green Technology

TATA STEEL COMMISSIONS FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND COG INJECTION PROJECT IN INDIA TO SUPPORT LOW-CARBON STEEL PRODUCTION

- ❖ Tata Steel has commissioned India's first Coke Oven Gas (COG) injection project at its Meramandali plant in Odisha.

- ❖ COG is a hydrogen- and hydrocarbon-rich by-product gas generated during coke production.
- ❖ The cleaned gas is injected into the blast furnace through tuyeres to partly replace conventional fossil fuels.
- ❖ Its hydrogen content helps reduce the use of coke and coal and lower carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.
- ❖ It aims to improve resource efficiency, operational flexibility and low-carbon ironmaking.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Antarctic Ozone Hole 2026



- ❖ The 2026 Antarctic ozone hole reached 15 million km² by the end of August, slightly earlier than average, according to Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS).
- ❖ It expanded sharply to about 25 million km² on September 12, around 5 million km² above the average for that period.
- ❖ The rapid growth coincided with a sudden fall in stratospheric temperature at about 20 km above the South Pole.
- ❖ Cold temperatures form Polar Stratospheric Clouds (PSCs), which support chemical ozone depletion by halogens during austral spring.

- ❖ Other indicators, including minimum ozone column value and ozone mass deficit, remained close to average levels.
- ❖ The ozone hole forms annually over Antarctica during August–November, with recent years showing smaller and shorter-lived holes.

Rhino Population in Assam

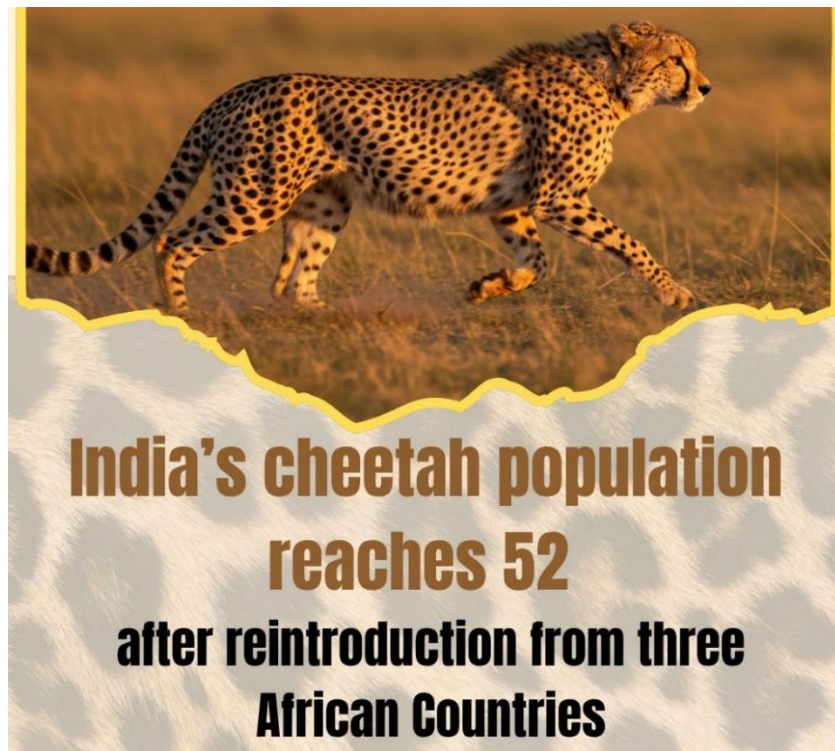
- ❖ Assam had 3,260 greater one-horned rhinoceroses as of September 2026, about 80% of the global population.
- ❖ The greater one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.
- ❖ Kaziranga National Park shelters more than 2,600 rhinos and is the largest stronghold of the species.
- ❖ Assam recorded zero rhino-poaching incidents in 2025, with poaching reported to have fallen by 86% since 2016.
- ❖ The species depends on alluvial grasslands, wetlands and riverine forests and is the state animal of Assam.
- ❖ It is found mainly in India and Nepal and is one of three Asian rhino species, along with the Javan and Sumatran rhinoceros.



Cheetah Reintroduction Programme

- ❖ India's cheetah population increased to 52, including 32 cheetahs born in India, after four years of the reintroduction programme.

- ❖ 49 cheetahs are currently in Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh and 3 in Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Of the 52 cheetahs, 25 are of Namibian origin, and 18 are of South African origin, while 9 were recently introduced from Botswana.
- ❖ The programme began with 8 Namibian cheetahs in September 2022 and 12 South African cheetahs in February 2023; 9 Botswana cheetahs were introduced in February 2026.



REPORTS AND INDICES

India Electric Mobility Index 2025

- ❖ NITI Aayog released the India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) 2025, with Delhi ranked the top performer among States and Union Territories (UTs).
- ❖ The second edition measures progress towards electric mobility goals across States and UTs.
- ❖ Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chandigarh and Goa followed Delhi among the top performers.
- ❖ IEMI scores States and UTs out of 100 using 16 indicators under three themes: transport electrification, charging infrastructure and electric vehicle (EV) research and innovation.

- ❖ The top score improved from 77 in 2024 to 84 in 2025.



Global Gender Gap Index 2026

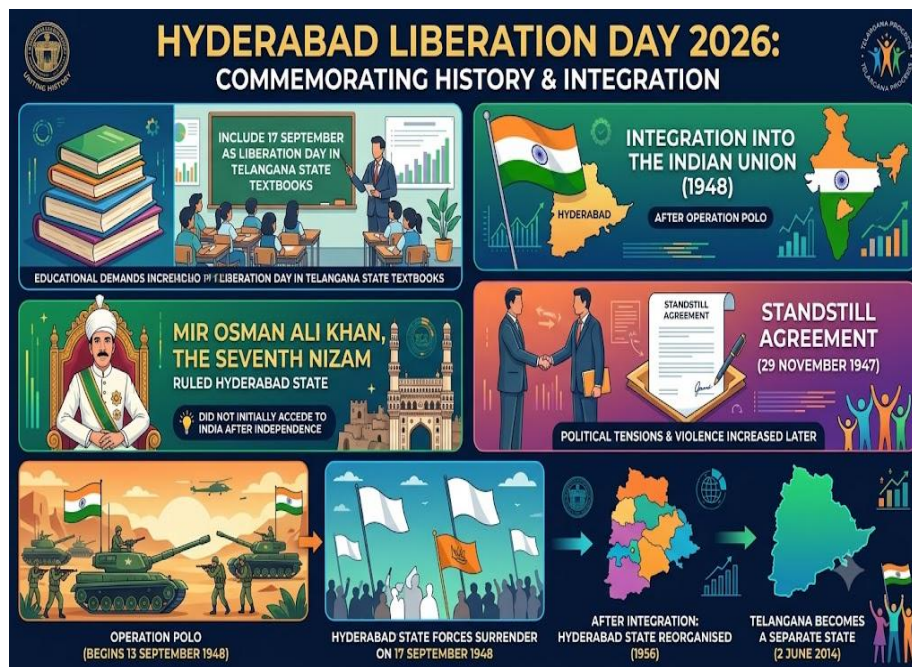


- ❖ India retained 131st rank in the Global Gender Gap Index 2026 released by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

- ❖ The index covered 145 economies, with Iceland (1st), Finland (2nd) and Norway (3rd).
- ❖ India's overall gender parity score was 64.5%, below the global average of 69.2%.
- ❖ India's Economic Participation and Opportunity parity score was 41.2%, while Educational Attainment stood at 96.6%.
- ❖ Political Empowerment was India's highest-ranked subindex, with 24.5% of the gap closed and a global rank of 67th.

STATE NEWS

Hyderabad Liberation Day 2026



- ❖ A demand was made to include 17 September as Hyderabad Liberation Day in Telangana state textbooks.
- ❖ It marks the integration of Hyderabad into the Indian Union in 1948 after Operation Polo.
- ❖ Hyderabad was ruled by Mir Osman Ali Khan, the seventh Nizam, who did not initially accede to India after Independence.
- ❖ India and Hyderabad signed a Standstill Agreement on 29 November 1947, but political tensions and violence increased later.
- ❖ Operation Polo began on 13 September 1948, and Hyderabad State Forces surrendered on 17 September 1948.

- ❖ After integration, Hyderabad State was reorganised in 1956, and Telangana became a separate State on 2 June 2014.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Ozone Day 2026 - September 16



- ❖ The day aims to raise awareness about protecting the ozone layer.
- ❖ The ozone layer protects Earth by reducing harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation reaching its surface.
- ❖ The day commemorates the Montreal Protocol, an international agreement adopted in 1987 to reduce ozone-depleting substances.
- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) established World Ozone Day in 1994, and it was first observed in 1995.
- ❖ The Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol promotes sustainable cooling and helps reduce the climate impact of refrigerants.

