

May - 19

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ A new plant species named *Cyphostemma annamalaii* belonging to the Vitaceae family was discovered on Sanjeevi hill in Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu in the southern Eastern Ghats.
- ❖ India received its first Alzheimer's disease-modifying therapy with the launch of Donanemab under the brand name Lormalzi.
- ❖ Indian agencies made the first-ever seizure of Captagon drug worth ₹182 crore under Operation RAGEPILL, targeting a consignment destined for the Middle East.
- ❖ DRDO and the Indian Air Force successfully conducted the maiden flight trial of TARA (Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation), India's first indigenous glide weapon system, off the Odisha coast.
- ❖ Indian chess player Apaar Saxena earned the International Master (IM) title after securing all three IM norms with strong performances in European chess tournaments.
- ❖ The first Made-in-India Airbus C-295 military transport aircraft was completed at the Tata-Airbus facility in Vadodara, Gujarat and is ready for flight testing.
- ❖ Roche launched India's first under-the-skin (subcutaneous) immunotherapy drug, Tecentriq SC, for lung cancer treatment.

NATIONAL NEWS

SEHAT Initiative

- ❖ The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) jointly launched the SEHAT (Science Excellence for Health through Agricultural Transformation) mission on 11 May 2026 in New Delhi.
- ❖ SEHAT is a national mission-mode programme aimed at integrating agriculture, nutrition, and public health to improve measurable health outcomes.
- ❖ The initiative focuses on preventive healthcare, shifting from curative to preventive and promotive health approaches in India.
- ❖ It prioritises biofortified crops, integrated farming systems, occupational health of farmers, and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension, and cancer.

- ❖ The programme promotes evidence-based policy, indigenous innovation, and collaboration between science, agriculture, and health sectors for improved nutrition security.



SEHAT MISSION

Science Excellence for Health through Agricultural Transformation

 A national mission-mode programme designed to translate agricultural advancements into tangible health outcomes for the people of India

 **Objective:** To build a framework for 'Healthy Food, Healthy Farms & Healthy India'

Kalam and Kavach 3.0



KALAM & KAVACH 3.0

DEFENCE STRATEGIC DIALOGUE



TAKING 'JAI' FORWARD

Jointness • Aatmanirbharta • Innovation
WITH I²

Indigenisation • International Collaboration

14 May 2026
Manekshaw Center

- ❖ Kalam & Kavach 3.0 was held in New Delhi at the Manekshaw Centre.

- ❖ The theme of the event was “Taking JAI Forward With I²”.
- ❖ JAI stands for Jointness, Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance), and Innovation.
- ❖ I² represents Indigenisation and International Collaboration in the defence sector.
- ❖ The conclave focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled warfare, hypersonic technology, quantum-enabled C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance), and integrated theatre commands.

BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting 2026

- ❖ The BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting 2026 was held in New Delhi to discuss multilateral cooperation and global issues.
- ❖ The meeting highlighted the need for reform in the international financial architecture and for strengthening multilateral institutions.
- ❖ India, Iran, Cuba, and Uganda discussed cooperation in areas such as health, food security, technology, and development partnership.
- ❖ India and Cuba exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for regular consultations between their foreign ministries.
- ❖ The BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting was hosted in India as part of the BRICS India 2026 presidency activities.



Integrated CCUS Field Laboratory

- ❖ India's first Integrated Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) Field Laboratory Facility was inaugurated at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay under Bharat Innovates 2026.

- ❖ The facility integrates carbon capture technology with carbon utilisation and permanent geological carbon dioxide (CO₂) storage.
- ❖ The project supports India's Panchamrit climate commitments and long-term Net-Zero emission targets.
- ❖ The laboratory uses non-potable water to capture carbon emissions and convert them into industrial-grade carbonate and bicarbonate salts.
- ❖ The project also includes India's first pilot-scale scientific drilling initiative to study carbon dioxide storage potential in the Deccan Traps basalt formations.



Supreme Court Judges' Strength



- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu promulgated the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026, to increase the number of judges in the Supreme Court.

- ❖ The ordinance increases the number of Supreme Court judges from 33 to 37, excluding the Chief Justice of India (CJI), raising the total sanctioned strength from 34 to 38.
- ❖ The ordinance was promulgated under Article 123 of the Constitution, which allows the President to issue ordinances when Parliament is not in session, and immediate action is necessary.
- ❖ The amendment changes Section 2 of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956, by replacing the word “thirty-three” with “thirty-seven”.
- ❖ The gazette notification dated 16 May 2026 stated that Parliament was not in session and that circumstances required immediate action by the President.
- ❖ The ordinance will be placed before both Houses of Parliament and will cease to operate if no approval is passed within 6 weeks after Parliament reassembles or if both Houses disapprove it.

MSP for Kharif Crops 2026-27

MSP for Kharif Crops

for Marketing Season 2026-27

Cabinet approves increase in Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for **14 Kharif Crops** for Marketing Season **2026-27**

Highest absolute increase in MSP recommended for **Sunflower Seed** (₹622 per quintal), followed by **Cotton** (₹557 per quintal), **Nigerseed** (₹515 per quintal) and **Sesamum** (₹500 per quintal)

Expected margin to farmers over cost of production estimated highest for **Moong** (61%), followed by Bajra (56%), **Maize** (56%) and **Tur/Arhar** (54%)

- ❖ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved higher Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for 14 Kharif crops for the 2026-27 marketing season.
- ❖ MSP for common paddy was increased to ₹2,441 per quintal and Grade A paddy to ₹2,461 per quintal.

- ❖ The highest MSP increase was announced for sunflower seed at ₹622 per quintal, followed by cotton at ₹557, Niger seed at ₹515 and sesamum at ₹500.
- ❖ MSP for tur/arhar was fixed at ₹8,450 per quintal, moong at ₹8,780 and urad at ₹8,200 per quintal.
- ❖ Procurement of 14 Kharif crops during 2014-15 to 2025-26 reached 8,746 lakh metric tonnes (LMT), compared to 4,679 LMT during 2004-05 to 2013-14.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Ebola Health Emergency - WHO



- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).
- ❖ PHEIC (Public Health Emergency of International Concern) is declared under the International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005 for serious disease outbreaks requiring global response.
- ❖ Ebola Virus Disease is a severe viral haemorrhagic fever caused by Ebolavirus and was first identified in 1976 near the Ebola River region.
- ❖ The current outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo virus species, first identified in Uganda in 2007.

- ❖ More than 246 suspected cases and over 80 suspected deaths were reported in Ituri province of Congo, while Uganda reported two cases, including one death in Kampala.
- ❖ WHO deployed health experts and released US\$500,000 from its emergency contingency fund to support outbreak response measures.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Lion Species Spotlight Programme

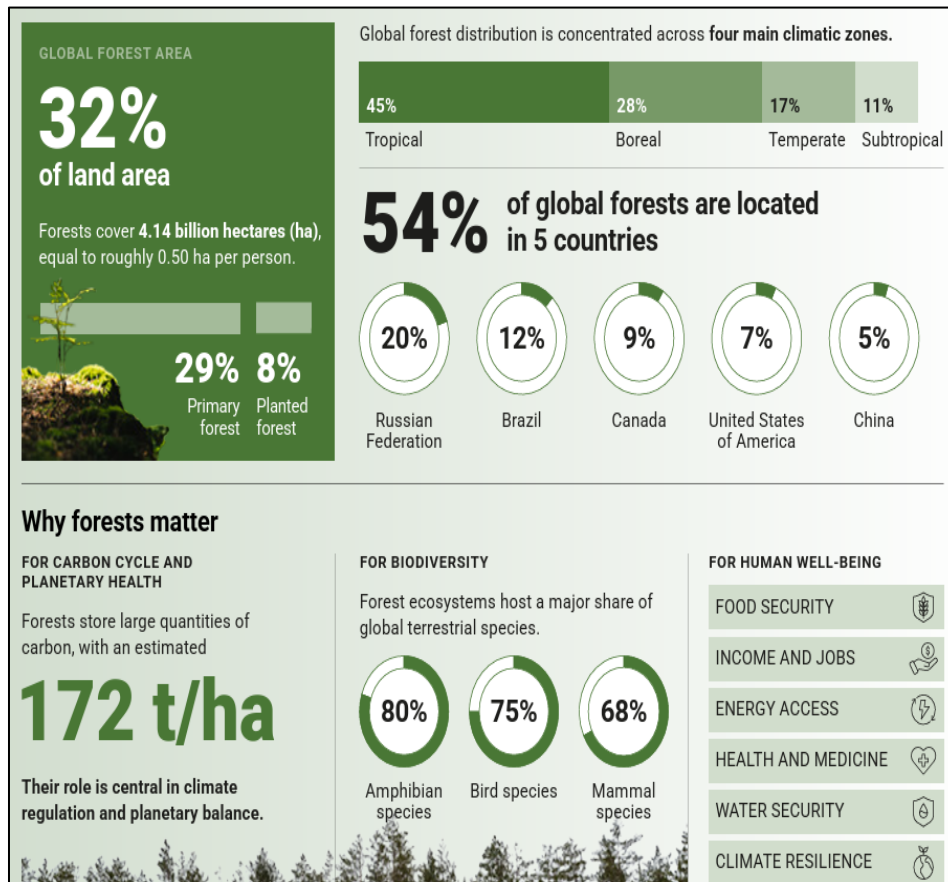


- ❖ The 'Lion' Species Spotlight Programme was launched at Sasan Gir, Gujarat, ahead of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit 2026.
- ❖ The programme highlighted India's Asiatic lion conservation efforts and promoted international cooperation among lion range countries.
- ❖ India will host the first IBCA Summit in New Delhi on 1–2 June 2026 with participation from around 95 countries.
- ❖ The Asiatic lion population in the Gir landscape reached 891 in 2025, showing a 32% increase compared to 2020.

- ❖ Project Lion, launched in 2020, focuses on habitat expansion, scientific population monitoring, and conservation of Asiatic lions.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Global Forest Goals Report 2026



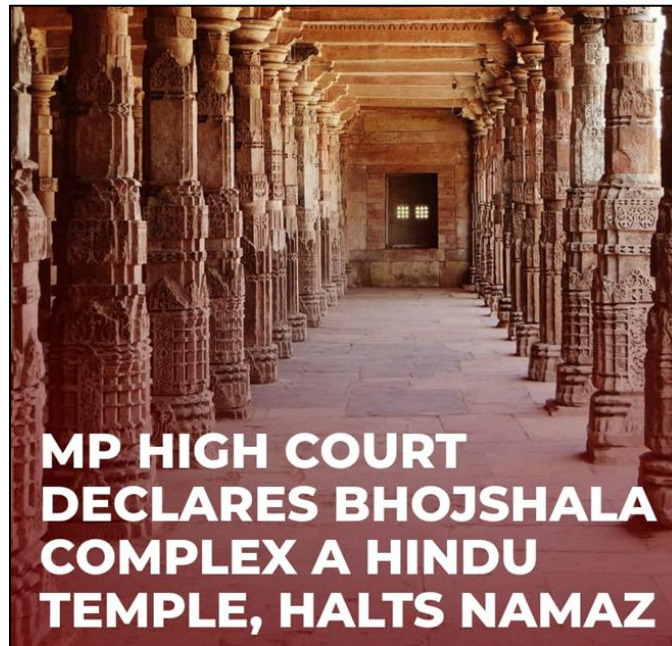
- ❖ The Global Forest Goals (GFG) Report 2026 was released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat.
- ❖ The report assessed progress towards 6 Global Forest Goals set for 2030 under the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (2017–2030).
- ❖ Global forest area declined by more than 40 million hectares between 2015 and 2025 due to agricultural expansion and rising demand for fuelwood and charcoal.
- ❖ The report identified weak governance, illegal trade, insecure land tenure and limited institutional capacity as major barriers to sustainable forest management.
- ❖ Forest degradation increased because of climate-related pressures such as droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, pests and diseases.

- ❖ The report stated that forest finance reached a record US\$84 billion in 2023, but it remains far below the estimated annual requirement of US\$300 billion by 2030.

STATE NEWS

Bhojshala Complex Verdict

- ❖ The Madhya Pradesh High Court declared the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Mosque complex in Dhar district as a temple dedicated to Goddess Saraswati.
- ❖ The Indore Bench of the High Court quashed the 2003 Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) order that had restricted Hindu worship rights at the site.
- ❖ The Archaeological Survey of India conducted a scientific survey of the complex from March to June 2024.
- ❖ The ASI survey report stated that the present structure contained parts of earlier temples.
- ❖ Bhojshala is a disputed religious site in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh and is historically linked with Sanskrit learning and Goddess Saraswati worship.
- ❖ The Supreme Court had earlier ordered status quo at the site while allowing the ASI survey to continue.



Mizoram Ginger Mission

- ❖ The Centre launched the ₹189.79 crore Mizoram Ginger Mission to promote processing, branding and export of Mizo ginger.

- ❖ The mission was launched with support from the Ministry of Development of the North-Eastern Region (DONER).
- ❖ The project focuses on value addition, branding, market integration and infrastructure development across the ginger value chain.
- ❖ The mission includes 1 integrated processing hub, 3 spoke processing centres and more than 30 strategic interventions covering nearly 20,000 farming households.
- ❖ Mizoram ginger contains 6–8% oleoresin, higher than the global average of around 3%, making it valuable for food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries.
- ❖ Thingpui Ginger and Thinglaidum Ginger of Mizoram received Geographical Indication (GI) tags in 2021.

