

October - 16

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Fisher Friend Mobile Application, developed by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), won the Tech4Nature Award at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi.
- ❖ The Siddi community in Junagadh district, Gujarat, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group, achieved a literacy rate of over 72 %.
- ❖ India is hosting the United Nations Troop Contributing Countries' (UNTCC) Chiefs Conclave in New Delhi.
- ❖ Jasprit Bumrah becomes the first Indian fast bowler to play 50 Tests across all formats, achieving the milestone in the second Test against the West Indies.
- ❖ The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in Mumbai arrested 13 people, in a gold smuggling bust named Operation Golden Sweep.
- ❖ India and Australia are conducting the fourth edition of Exercise AUSTRAHIND 2025 in Perth, Australia.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Cancelation of Class 11 Board Exams



- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government has cancelled the Class 11 public examination for the academic year 2025–2026.
- ❖ Government Order states that students will follow the pre-2017–2018 evaluation system.

- ❖ Class 11 board exams were originally introduced in 2017 to ensure uniform syllabus coverage.

Aran Illam

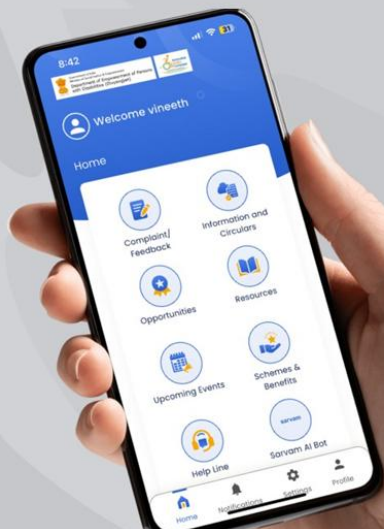
- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched 'Aran Illam' shelter homes for transgender persons.
- ❖ Two homes were opened in the first phase—one in Shenoy Nagar, Chennai, and the other in Anna Nagar, Madurai.
- ❖ Transgender individuals above 18 years with an ID from the State Transgender Welfare Board are eligible to stay.
- ❖ The shelter duration ranges from one month to three years based on individual needs.
- ❖ The homes provide counselling, education, free legal help, and support for family reintegration.



NATIONAL NEWS

Sugamya Bharat App

- ❖ The government has launched a revamped version of the Sugamya Bharat App to enhance accessibility for Divyangjan and elderly citizens.
- ❖ The New features include an AI-powered chatbot for real-time assistance and integration of government schemes for persons with disabilities.
- ❖ The app was originally launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in 2021.
- ❖ It enables users to report accessibility issues in public infrastructure, transport, and ICT systems.



SUGAMYA BHARAT APP

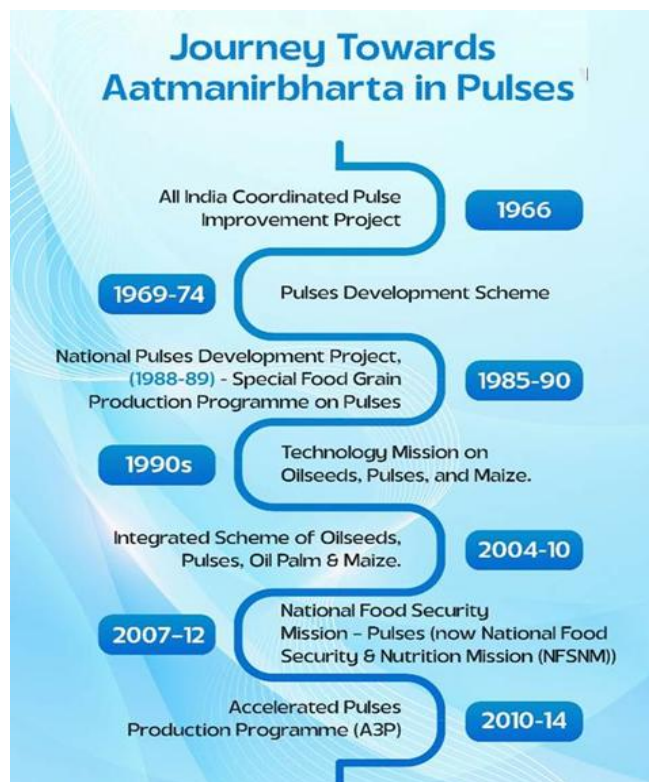
Launched in 2021 under the Accessible India Campaign to promote universal accessibility and empower citizens to report accessibility barriers in buildings, transport, and digital platforms

key features

- ▶ Complaint/Feedback
- ▶ Information & Circulars
- ▶ Opportunities
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Upcoming Events
- ▶ Schemes & Benefits
- ▶ HelpLine
- ▶ Sarvam AI Bot

<https://sugamyabharat.gov.in>

Pulses Mission 2025



- ❖ The Prime Minister launched the Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses (2025–26 to 2030–31) with a budget of ₹11,440 crore.



- ❖ The mission aims to increase domestic pulses production to 350 lakh tonnes and expand cultivation area to 310 lakh hectares by 2030–31.
- ❖ It guarantees 100 percent procurement of Tur (Arhar), Urad, and Masoor pulses at Minimum Support Price (MSP) for four years.
- ❖ The government plans to distribute 88 lakh free seed kits and 126 lakh quintals of certified seeds to farmers.

Special Purpose Fund – RDI Scheme

- ❖ The Executive Council of Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) approved guidelines and a Special Purpose Fund for the Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) Scheme.
- ❖ The RDI Scheme includes a ₹1 Lakh crore fund approved by the Union Cabinet on July 1, 2025, under the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
- ❖ Funding is structured in two tiers:
 - The Special Purpose Fund under ANRF, and
 - Second-Level Fund Managers, such as Alternative Investment Funds, Development Finance Institutions, and focused research organizations.
- ❖ The scheme finances up to 50% of project costs for transformative research at Technology Readiness Levels 4 and above; grants and short-term loans are excluded.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Gaza Peace Summit 2025

- ❖ The Gaza Peace Summit was held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

- ❖ It was co-hosted by U.S. President Donald Trump and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi.
- ❖ The summit followed the release of all remaining hostages and a ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas.
- ❖ The main aim was to strengthen efforts for regional peace and stability in the Middle East.



World's First Live Underwater Interview



- ❖ Palau, a Pacific island nation, has hosted the world's first-ever live underwater interview.

- ❖ Palau's President Surangel Whipps Jr interviewed with Estonian Olympic swimmer and activist Merle Liivand.
- ❖ The interview has used LiFi Talking Mask technology, which transmits sound underwater using light.
- ❖ Palau is an archipelago of about 340 islands located east of the Philippines.

ECONOMY NEWS

Unified Markets Interface

INVESTMENTS THROUGH E-RUPEE	
➤ Unified Market Interface will enable instant buying, selling, and trading of financial assets as digital tokens settled through RBI's digital currency	➤ 3.2 mn loans worth ₹1.7 tn were sanctioned through Unified Lending Interface, which links lenders to verified data sources
➤ RBI aims to promote greater interoperability among aggregators with new standards for customer onboarding, consent management, and data security	➤ The retail e-rupee, launched in Dec 2022, now includes 19 banks & 7 mn users.
	
'It is a critical new layer in India's digital public infrastructure' — RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra	

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced the Unified Markets Interface (UMI) for tokenizing financial assets.
- ❖ The UMI uses wholesale Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) and blockchain technology for asset tokenization.
- ❖ Tokenization allows fractional ownership and global trading of real-world assets through digital tokens.
- ❖ RBI also launched AI-based UPI HELP, IoT Payments with UPI, Banking Connect, and UPI Reserve Pay to improve digital payments.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Neutral-atom qubit array

- ❖ Caltech has developed the world's largest neutral-atom qubit array with 6,100 qubits, advancing towards error correction and large-scale quantum computing.

- ❖ A qubit is the fundamental unit of quantum information, acting as the quantum counterpart to a classical bit.
- ❖ The concept of the qubit was introduced by American theoretical physicist Benjamin Schumacher.
- ❖ Qubits are built using quantum particles like electrons, photons, trapped ions, atoms, and superconducting circuits.



Maitri II



- ❖ The Finance Ministry has approved the construction of Maitri II, India's fourth research station in Antarctica.

- ❖ Maitri II will be located in eastern Antarctica and is expected to be ready by January 2029.
- ❖ Maitri II will feature upgraded infrastructure, improved living conditions, and automated scientific instruments to relay data to India.
- ❖ Maitri, India's second Antarctic research station, was established in 1988.
- ❖ Dakshin Gangotri, an India's first Scientific Research Station, was operational till 1990.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Araneus nox Spider

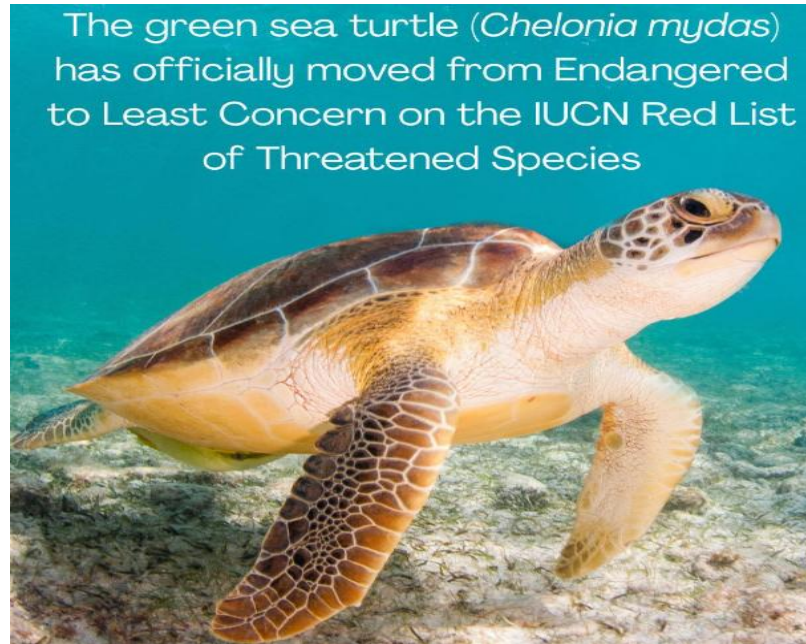


- ❖ The spider species *Araneus nox* was spotted for the first time in India during a monsoon survey in Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ❖ The species was previously spotted only in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand.
- ❖ A total of 82 spider species from 20 families were spotted during the two-phase survey in August and September 2025.

Green Sea Turtle Population Status

- ❖ The IUCN has upgraded the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) status from Endangered to Least Concern after decades of global conservation efforts.
- ❖ The global green turtle population has increased by nearly 28% since the 1970s, despite ongoing threats to some subpopulations.

- ❖ Conservation successes include protecting nesting females and eggs, using Turtle Excluder Devices, and reducing unsustainable trade.
- ❖ Major recoveries were reported in Ascension Island, Brazil, Mexico, and Hawai'i, with some subpopulations nearing pre-commercial levels.
- ❖ The Southwest Pacific subpopulation, including Raine Island in Australia, shows declining hatchling production in recent years.



IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2025

- ❖ The 4th edition of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook was launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi.
- ❖ This report is a global assessment by the International Union for Conservation of Nature evaluating the conservation status of all natural and mixed UNESCO World Heritage Sites every 3 to 5 years.
- ❖ Over 80 % of natural heritage sites face direct climate risks such as coral bleaching, glacial melt, and wildfires.
- ❖ Approximately 10 % of global terrestrial carbon is stored in natural World Heritage Sites, supporting climate regulation.
- ❖ 15 sites were newly added to the "World Heritage in Danger" list, largely due to conflict, pollution, and ecosystem fragility.
- ❖ India has 7 natural and mixed World Heritage Sites, covering over 1.5 % of the global natural heritage area.

- ❖ The Sundarbans face mangrove decline due to rising salinity, cyclones, and sea-level rise, affecting biodiversity and protection services.
- ❖ The Western Ghats are under pressure from mining, construction, and land-use changes, threatening ecological balance.
- ❖ The Nanda Devi and the Great Himalayan National Park are experiencing glacial retreat and invasive species issues.



Armenia - Member of IUCN



- ❖ Armenia became the newest State Member of IUCN during the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi.

- ❖ The country features diverse habitats, including alpine meadows, mountain forests, semi-deserts, and freshwater ecosystems.
- ❖ Rare species in Armenia include the Critically Endangered Caucasian leopard, the endemic Bezoar goat, and the Sevan trout found only in Lake Sevan.
- ❖ Armenia aims to restore forests across 12.9% of its territory by 2030 and integrate Nature-based Solutions into national policies.

REPORTS AND INDICES

IUCN report 2025

- ❖ The Global Land Outlook Thematic Report on Ecological Connectivity and Land Restoration report was launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi.
- ❖ It was prepared by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).
- ❖ The report urges countries to include ecological connectivity in land, water, and infrastructure planning.
- ❖ Ecological connectivity means the unimpeded movement of species, the connection of habitats, and the flow of natural processes sustaining life on Earth.



PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

International Ranger Awards 2025

- ❖ 13 rangers and ranger teams received the 2025 International Ranger Awards for their service in wildlife and forest protection.
- ❖ The awards were presented by the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas.

- ❖ Winners from 13 countries, including Ukraine and Burkina Faso, received grants between USD 5,000 and 25,000.
- ❖ The awards aim to raise awareness of rangers' crucial role in global biodiversity and ecosystem protection.



IUCN Kenton Miller Award 2025



- ❖ Sonali Ghosh, Director of Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, received the Kenton R. Miller Award.

- ❖ She is the first Indian to win this international award for innovation in national parks and protected area sustainability.
- ❖ The award was presented by the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), part of IUCN.
- ❖ The Kenton R. Miller Award recognises innovations in planning, management, governance, and community engagement in protected areas.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Durand Line Clash 2025

- ❖ Fierce clashes occurred along the Durand Line, the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.
- ❖ The Afghan forces captured multiple Pakistani military outposts in Kunar and Helmand provinces.
- ❖ Pakistan closed key border crossings, including Torkham and Chaman, stopping trade between the countries.
- ❖ It was established in 1893 as the international border between the Emirate of Afghanistan and the British Indian Empire.



World's First Virtual Museum

- ❖ The UNESCO has launched the world's first Virtual Museum of Stolen Cultural Objects.
- ❖ It showcases nearly 240 missing artifacts from 46 countries.

- ❖ The platform was unveiled at the World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development, known as MONDIACULT.
- ❖ The virtual museum is designed to empty itself as items are physically recovered and repatriated.



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