

February - 20

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister unveiled the foundation stone for establishing TIDEL Parks in Tiruchi and Madurai at a total cost of ₹717 crore.
- ❖ Tata Group Chairman Chandrasekaran has been conferred Honorary Knighthood by the United Kingdom for his services to the UK-India business relations.
- ❖ India's Fourth-Generation Deep-Ocean Submersible known as 'Matsya-6000' has very successfully completed the wet testing which focusing on human safety, system reliability, and scientific payload testing.
- ❖ Kerala State has made history by launching India's first all-women scuba diving firefighting team, "Gannets," comprising of 17 highly-trained officers ready to respond to underwater emergencies.
- ❖ Indonesia has won the Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships 2025 for the first time, beating hosts People's Republic of China.
- ❖ One of the world's very most active volcanoes, Mount Etna in Italy, has erupted recently.

TAMIL NADU

NAKSHA Pilot Project

WHAT IS NAKSHA PROJECT

- National Geospatial Knowledge-Based Land Survey of Urban Habitation (Naksha), is a pilot programme of ministry of rural development's department of land resources, govt of India
- The project is for urban settlements in 152 urban local bodies across 26 states and three Union territories
- Its objective is to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership
- It aims to provide citizens with simple and secure access to their land records through modern technology & digital means

The infographic includes a map of India with a red location pin, a magnifying glass over a map section, and a computer monitor icon.

- ❖ A national geospatial knowledge-based land survey of the urban habitations (NAKSHA), a pilot programme to modernise urban land records, was launched in Thanjavur.
- ❖ The programme is taken up under the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme of the Department of Land Resources of the Union Ministry of Rural Development.



- ❖ It aims at ensuring that the urban land records were accurate and up-to-date, empowering urban citizens and enabling better urban planning.
- ❖ The one-year pilot programme will be implemented in more than 150 cities across the country.
- ❖ Under the programme, drones would be deployed to carry out geospatial mapping and create accurate property records.
- ❖ The data would be integrated with the property tax records of the urban local bodies.
- ❖ Advanced land survey devices would be used to create the maps.

NATIONAL

Immigration and Foreigners Bill 2025

KEY ENHANCEMENTS IN THE BILL	
■ All immigration control under one agency	■ Airlines and transporters must verify passengers' documents or face fines
■ Universities, hospitals and hotels must report foreign visitors	■ Govt has clearer powers to restrict, deport or track foreigners
■ Stringent fines and prison terms for illegal entry, over-staying, document fraud	■ Foreigners cannot change their names without nod

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is likely to bring the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025.
- ❖ The bill repeals all the four existing legislations that deal with immigration and movement of foreigners.
- ❖ The proposed legislation will replace the existing laws
 - The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920
 - The Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939
 - The Foreigners Act, 1946; and
 - The Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000.
- ❖ The proposed legislation also gives the power to the Centre to restrict or regulate the entry, exit, and movement of foreigners within India.



- ❖ The new Bill imposes a penalty up to Rs 5 lakh for unauthorised entry, and up to Rs 10 lakh for fake passport.
- ❖ The role of universities, hospitals, and other medical institutions admitting the foreign nationals will be specified, along with matters related to passports and visas.

India's Richest Political Party in 2023-24

Key Points	
» A large portion of the income for national parties came from donations through electoral bonds	
» - While the BJP received the highest amount, securing Rs 1,685.63 crore, the Congress received Rs 828.36 crore, and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rs 10.15 crore	
» Among the national parties, six declared receiving a total of Rs 2,669.87 crore from donations and contributions	
» 'The BJP declared a total income of Rs 4,340.473 crore during FY 2023-24 but spent only 50.96 per cent of it,	amounting to Rs 2,211.69 crore. The total income of Congress was Rs 1,225.12 crore, while its expenditure for the year was Rs 1,025.25 crore or 83.69 per cent of its total income'
	» The audit reports of CPI(M), Congress and BJP were submitted with delays ranging from 12 to 66 days

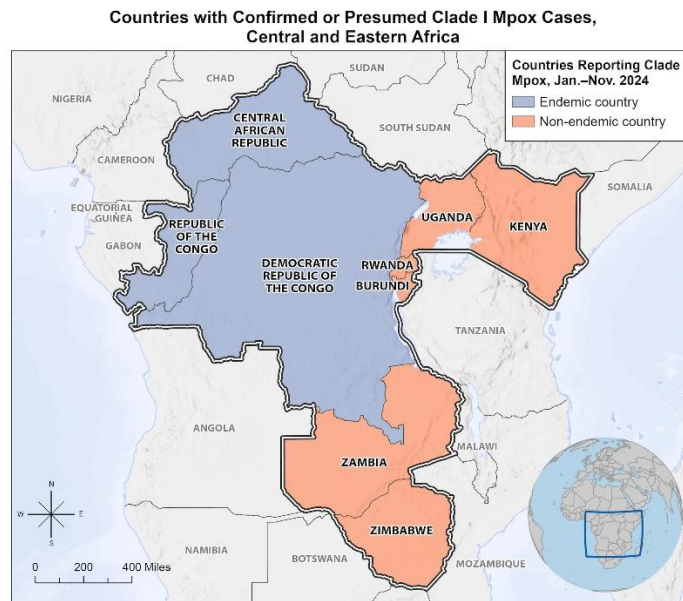
- ❖ The BJP emerged as the richest party with income exceeding Rs 4,340 crore for the financial year 2023-24.
- ❖ It is followed by the Congress whose income was over Rs 1200 crore.
- ❖ The CPI(M)'s total income was Rs 167.636 cr while the party spent Rs 127.283 cr, 75.93% of its income.
- ❖ 6 National Parties (BJP, INC, CPI(M), AAP, BSP and NPEP) have declared a total income of Rs 5820.912 cr, collected from all over India.

INTERNATIONAL

Mpox Clade Ib Outbreak in DRC

- ❖ The rapid spread of mpox clade Ib in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was majorly (83.4%) linked to sex workers.
- ❖ Overall, 200/751 (26.6%) of the professional sex workers were infected during the study period.
- ❖ Since 2023, the DRC has reported more than 50,000 suspected mpox cases in an outbreak that has spilled over to neighbouring countries.

- ❖ From September 2023 to June 2024, 670 mpox case-patients were admitted to the hospital from 17 surrounding health areas.
- ❖ Of the cases, 52.4% were in females, and 47.6% in males.



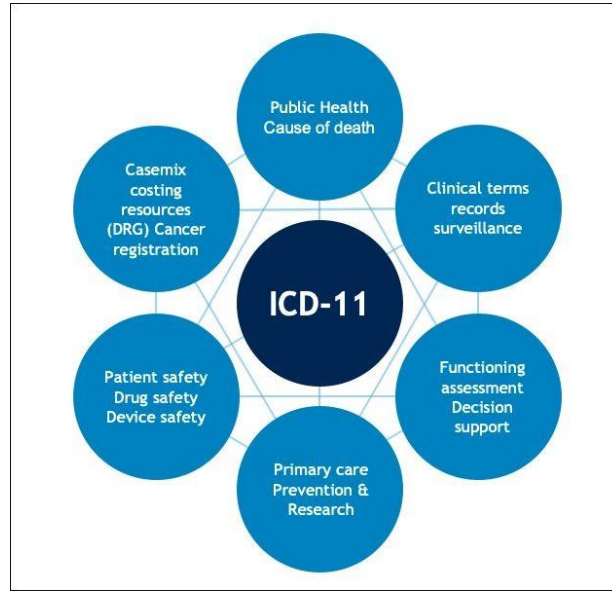
Munich Security Conference 2025



- ❖ The 61st Munich Security Conference (MSC) was held in Munich, Germany.
- ❖ The MSC was founded by a German official and publisher Ewald-Heinrich von Kleist at the peak of the Cold War.
- ❖ Starting in 1963, the conference initially only focused on military issues and was mainly attended by Western countries and their high-profile officials.
- ❖ After the end of the Cold War in 1991, the conference expanded its agenda beyond defence and security to include issues like climate change and migration.

- ❖ It also began inviting the leaders from the eastern nations including Russia, India and China.
- ❖ In 2023, for the first time in 20 years, Russia wasn't invited to the event.

ICD 11 2025 edition – WHO



- ❖ The World Health Organization released the 2025 edition of the International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision (ICD-11).
- ❖ It is a tool that standardizes the language used by health professionals worldwide in diagnosing, reporting and monitoring diseases, injuries and causes of death.
- ❖ Its new features designed to improve interoperability, accuracy and ease of use in national health systems (e.g. advanced NLP and API-based coding).
- ❖ A new module covering traditional medicine conditions of Ayurveda and related traditional medicine systems, including Siddha and Unani, will enable systematic tracking of traditional medicine services.
- ❖ In India, the Central Bureau of Health Intelligence (CBHI) is an agency under the Ministry of Health serves as the WHO Collaboration Centre for ICD-related activities.

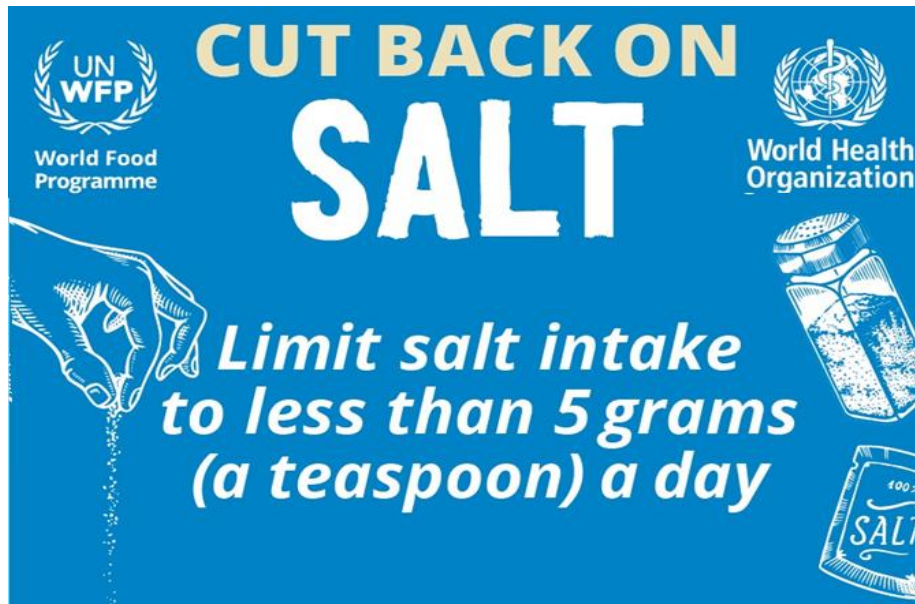
Mission 300 Africa energy summit

- ❖ The Mission 300 Africa Energy Summit was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- ❖ It was hosted by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, the African Union, the African Development Bank Group, and the World Bank Group.

- ❖ It has analysed the target of providing electricity access to 300 million people in 12 African countries by 2030 – known as Mission 300.



WHO Guidelines on Table Salt



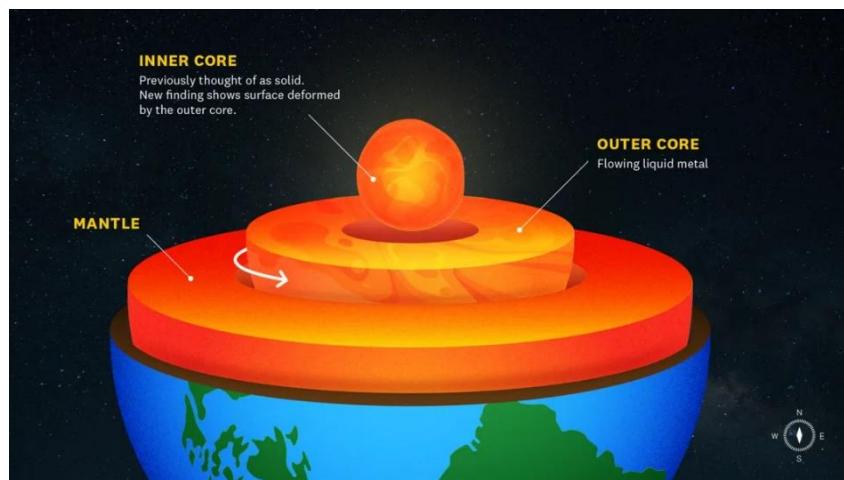
- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) has released a very set of guidelines of recommending use of lower-sodium salt substitutes.
- ❖ WHO had already strongly recommended reducing sodium intake to less than 2 grams a day.
- ❖ Now, it recommends replacing regular table salt (sodium chloride) with lower-sodium salt substitutes that contain potassium chloride (KCl).
- ❖ This recommendation is for adults (not pregnant women or children).

- ❖ It excludes the individuals with kidney impairments or with other circumstances or conditions that might compromise potassium excretion.
- ❖ Globally, each year, eight million deaths are associated with the poor diets, and of these, 1.9 million are attributable to the high sodium intake.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Earth's Inner Core Dynamics

- ❖ Recent studies found evidence that the Earth's inner core deforms at its boundary with the liquid outer core.
- ❖ The inner core's independent spin appears to be slowing.
- ❖ The core is a hot, mostly solid ball of iron roughly 1,500 miles wide.
- ❖ These findings suggest that the near surface of the inner core is undergoing the structural changes.
- ❖ These changes could affect its rotation and even influence the length of a day.
- ❖ The interactions between the inner and outer core are believed to be the driving force behind these developments.



Gravehawk System

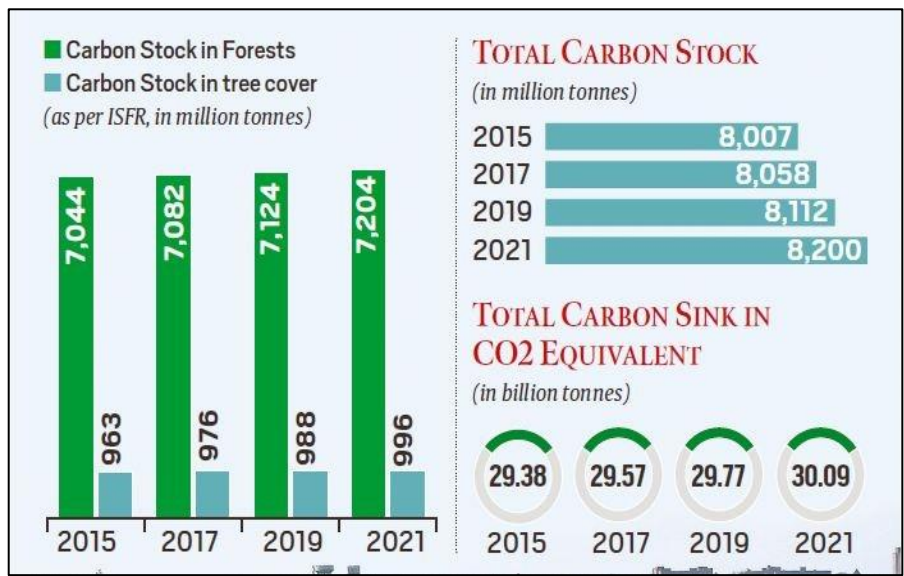
- ❖ Ukraine has reportedly acquired a new weapon system - the Gravehawk hybrid surface-to-air missile system.
- ❖ The system was developed by the United Kingdom in collaboration with Denmark.
- ❖ It has been described as a UK-designed “mobile air defense system”.
- ❖ This can “retrofit” air-to-air missiles into a ground-based air defense role.

- ❖ The missiles can reach speeds of up to Mach 2.5 and engage targets at a range of approximately 12 miles.



ENVIRONMENT

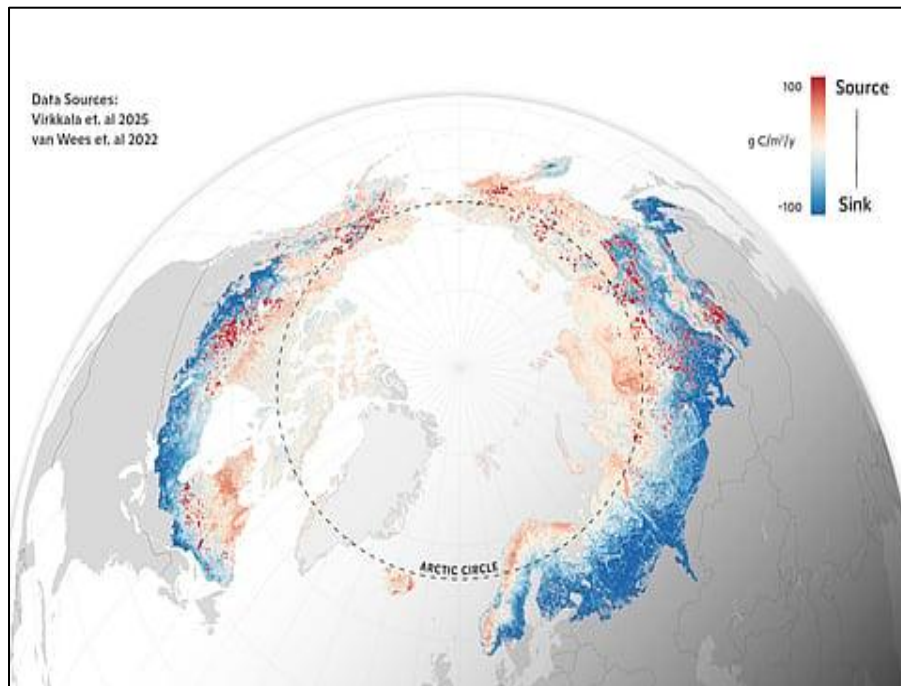
India's Carbon Sequestration 2025



- ❖ The green cover in India has absorbed more carbon than it emitted annually in the last decade.
- ❖ But the rate of sequestration declines during the extreme climate events such as drought.
- ❖ The Green vegetation absorbs carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and releases it back into the air through respiration.

- ❖ The Net Ecosystem Exchange (NEE) estimates ranging from 380 to 530 million tonnes of carbon per year.
- ❖ They (green vegetation) released 210 million tonnes of carbon annually, acting as carbon sources.

Arctic Boreal Zone - Carbon Source



- ❖ The Arctic Boreal Zone, encompassing the treeless tundra, boreal forests, and the wetlands spread over 26 million square kilometres, has undergone a significant transformation.
- ❖ 40 per cent of this region has become a carbon source, releasing more of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than it absorbs.
- ❖ This is marking a shift from its role as a carbon sink for millennia.
- ❖ The researchers suggest the shift may have started before 1990.
- ❖ The carbon source areas were distributed across Alaska (44 per cent), northern Europe (25 per cent), Canada (19 per cent), and Siberia (13 per cent).
- ❖ The Arctic Boreal Zone has experienced significant “greening,” with 49 per cent of the region showing longer growing seasons and increased vegetation.
- ❖ However, only 12 per cent of the region acts as a net carbon sink annually.
- ❖ A carbon sink absorbs more carbon from the atmosphere than it releases.
- ❖ A carbon source, on the other hand, releases more carbon than it absorbs.

- ❖ Permafrost, defined as soil or rock that remains at or below 0 degrees Celsius for at least two consecutive years, stores vast amounts of carbon locked in ice.

Coral reefs in the Gulf of Eilat in Red Sea

- ❖ Researchers have discovered a significant pause in coral reef growth in the Gulf of Eilat/Aqaba during the late Holocene period.
- ❖ Coral reefs in the Gulf of Eilat experienced a surprising 3,000-year 'shutdown' in growth, from about 4,400 to 1,000 years ago.
- ❖ It was likely due to a temporary drop in sea level that could have been caused by global cooling.
- ❖ Despite the long pause, the reef has eventually recovered, with the coral species reappearing from deeper waters, demonstrating their natural resilience.
- ❖ Coral diversity and abundance displayed remarkable consistency before and after the hiatus.



STATES

India's first Elderly Commission

- ❖ Kerala is set to establish India's first Elderly Commission.
- ❖ It aims to address the challenges of its rapidly ageing population, ensuring senior citizens' rights, welfare, and social integration.
- ❖ The state's proportion of people aged 60 and above, which stood at 12.6 percent in 2011, is projected to rise to 22.8 percent by 2036.



- ❖ Kerala's elderly population is growing at an annual rate of 4 percent – higher than the national average of 3.3 percent.
- ❖ Kerala's elderly population is projected to reach 8.4 million by 2036.
- ❖ The commission will function as an independent body with significant authority, including the powers of a civil court.
- ❖ It can investigate grievances and enforce protective measures.
- ❖ It is to be led by a full-time Chairperson, who will hold the rank of Secretary to the Government.
- ❖ The tenure of the Chairperson and members will be three years, with an extension of up to six months if a successor is not appointed in time.
- ❖ Additionally, the commission must include at least one member from Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes and one-woman member, ensuring the very diverse representation.

Kerala to Establish State Senior Citizen Commission to Safeguard Elderly Rights

- Kerala plans to form a Senior Citizen Commission via an ordinance.
- Aimed at addressing senior citizens' issues like neglect, exploitation, rehabilitation, and social inclusion.
- The commission will have a chairperson and three members, ensuring representation of women and SC/ST communities.
- Based in Thiruvananthapuram, it will advise on welfare policies, provide legal aid, and promote community engagement.
- Chairperson and members serve three years, with allowances for meetings.

Chhattisgarh HC Ruling on Marital Rape

- ❖ The Chhattisgarh High Court has observed that a husband cannot be charged with rape or unnatural sex for engaging in the sexual relations with his wife, regardless of her consent, as long as she is above 15 years of age.
- ❖ The marital rape immunity in law is also extended to Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) that criminalised “unnatural sex”.
- ❖ Section 375, which criminalises rape, states that the provision does not extend to “sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife,” when the wife has attained the age of majority (18 years old).
- ❖ If the age of the wife is not below 15 years, then any sexual intercourse or sexual act by the husband cannot be termed as rape.

- ❖ In November 2023, the Bombay High Court had ruled that consensual sex with a minor wife is rape, rejecting the defence of consent in such cases.
- ❖ The Nagpur Bench upheld a 10-year sentence for a man convicted after his minor wife accused him of rape.
- ❖ The Madhya Pradesh High Court ruled last year that unnatural sex with a wife is not rape and that a wife's consent is irrelevant in such matters.

Chhattisgarh HC Acquits Man in Wife's Death, Rules Unnatural Sex Without Consent 'Not an Offense'

On December 11, 2017, the appellant allegedly forced unnatural sex on his wife, who died that day.

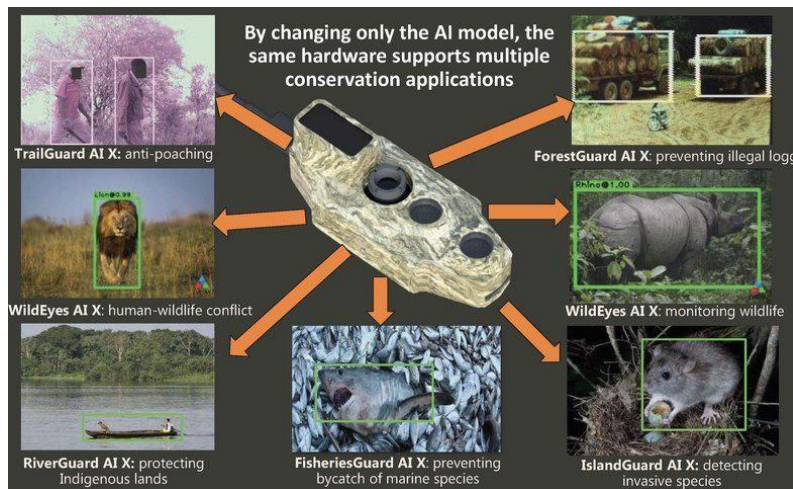


"Marital Rape" Not Criminalized

The Chhattisgarh High Court acquitted a 40-year-old man accused of unnatural sex with his wife, leading to her death, citing that **Indian law does not criminalize marital rape**. Justice Narendra Kumar Vyas overturned his conviction, ordering his immediate release from jail.



TrailGuard AI System

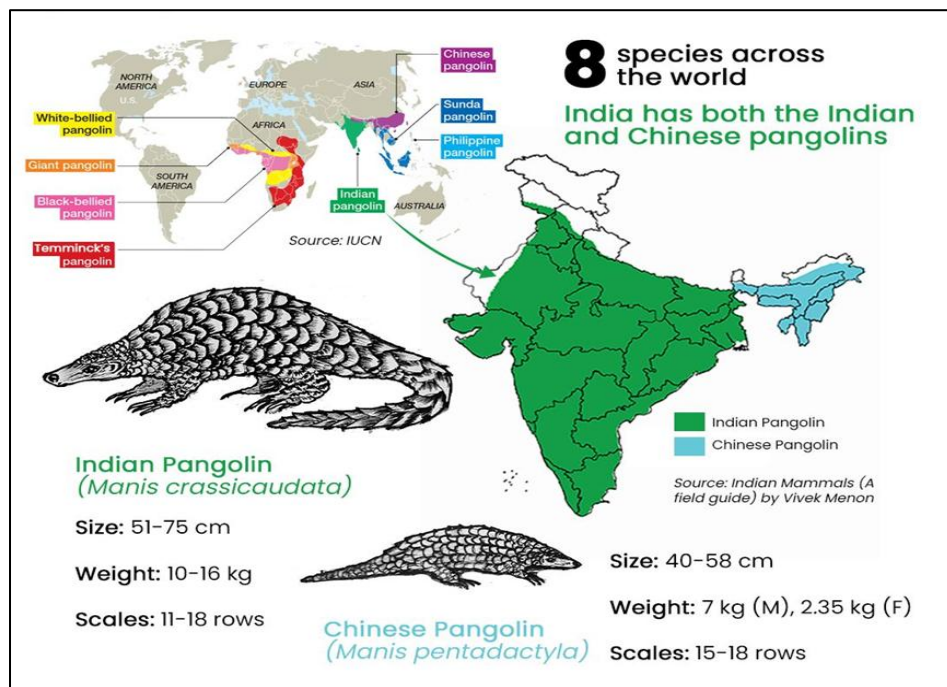


- ❖ Odisha's Simlipal Tiger Reserve has 100-150 AI-enabled cameras that send real-time alerts of poachers and animal movement inside the forest.
- ❖ They operate on a low-power mode by default but switch to a high-power mode when they sense movement, and capture an image.

- ❖ The camera then performs the AI inference on the edge, meaning it uses the chip inside to sort between various object classes such as ‘animals’, ‘humans’, and ‘vehicles’ in the image.
- ❖ If the AI deems it a necessary, it autonomously transmits an image using the cellular system attached to the camera to an end-user in 30-40 seconds.
- ❖ In the last 10 months, TrailGuard AI has helped wildlife officials at Simlipal arrest 96 poachers and seize more than 86 country-made guns.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Pangolin Day 2025 - February 15

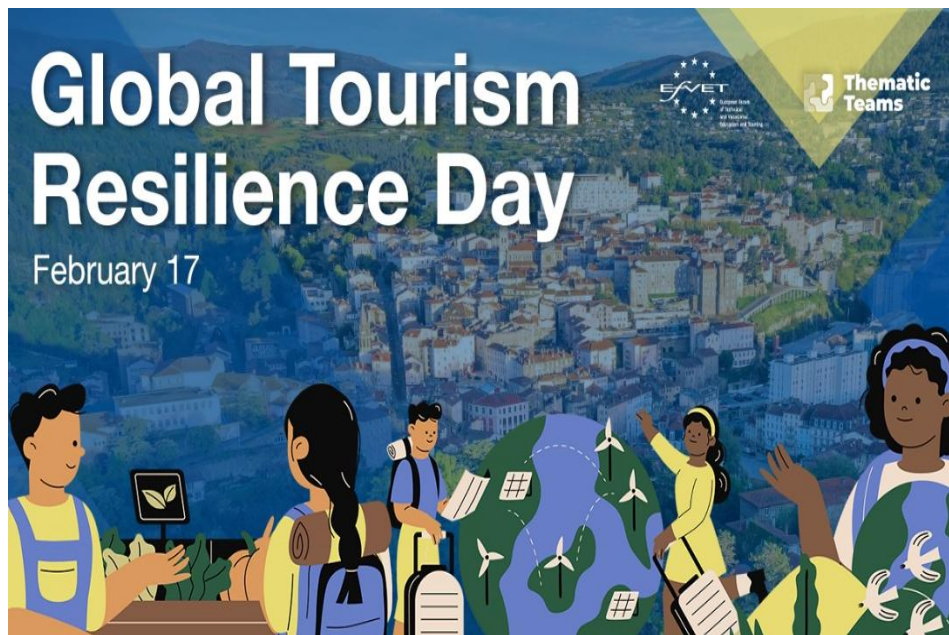


- ❖ This day is an opportunity for pangolin enthusiasts to join together in raising awareness about these unique mammals.
- ❖ They are the only mammals with scales.
- ❖ They do not have teeth and feed on only ants and termites.
- ❖ There are eight species of pangolins found worldwide- four each in Asia and Africa
- ❖ The Indian Pangolin is the only species of pangolin found in Andhra Pradesh
- ❖ The Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*), also called the Thick-Tailed Pangolin and Scaly Anteater, is a native of the Indian Subcontinent.
- ❖ It is protected under Schedule-I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and is also listed in Appendix-I of the CITES.

- ❖ It is classified as ‘Critically Endangered’ on the IUCN Red List.

Global Tourism Resilience Day 2025 - February 17

- ❖ It is marked to commemorate the resilience and adaptability of the travel and tourism sector.
- ❖ This day emphasizes the very importance of a resilient tourism sector that can overcome the challenges like pandemics, economic crises, and environmental changes, ensuring the continued economic growth, cross-cultural exchange, and sustainability.
- ❖ The observance encourages nations to develop the strategies that strengthen the tourism sector against future disruptions.
- ❖ Sustainable tourism supports poverty reduction, job creation, and environmental conservation.

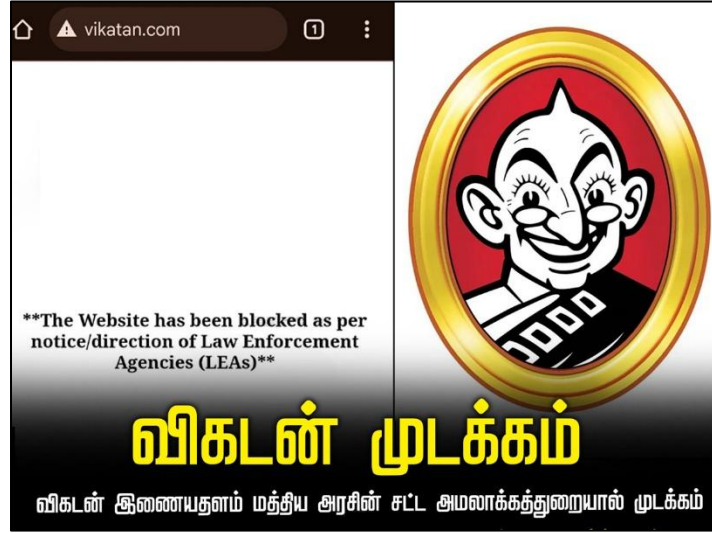


MISCELLANEOUS

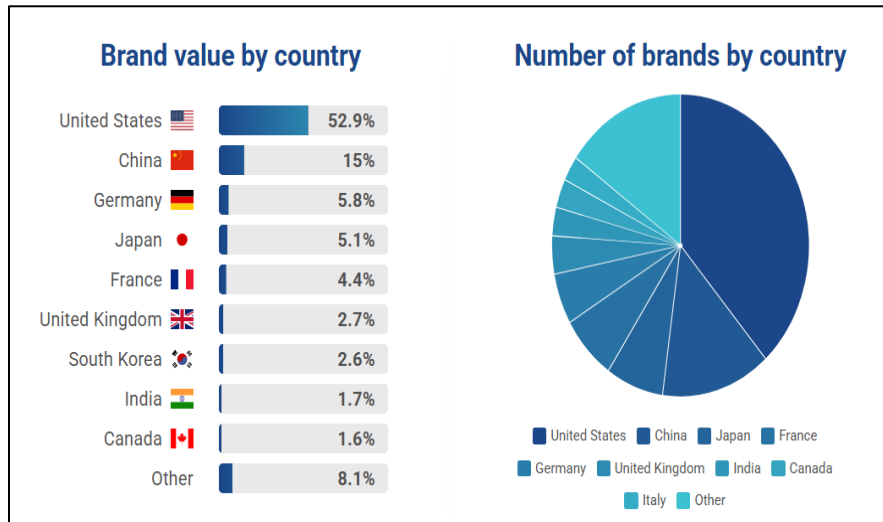
Website blocking order

- ❖ The Vikatan magazine’s website was blocked in India by the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting through a referral to the Department of the Tele communications.
- ❖ The Inter Departmental Committee under the IT Rules of 2021 was conducting a hearing on blocking that specific cartoon.

- ❖ The magazine has set up an alternate domain for readers to access the site.



19th Global 500 2025 report



- ❖ Apple is once again the world's most valuable brand. With USD574.5 billion.
- ❖ The second-place is occupied by Microsoft with USD 461 billion.
- ❖ Google is ranked third rank with USD 413.0 billion.
- ❖ It is followed by Amazon and Walmart.
- ❖ TikTok/ Douyin and Facebook hold on to the 7 and 8 ranks they occupied in 2024.
- ❖ NVIDIA makes the top 10 for the first time since it was first valued in 2014, when it ranked 424th in the US 500.
- ❖ Infosys is ranked at 132nd and HDFC ranked in 164th place.



- ❖ For the second year running, WeChat is the world's strongest brand with a Brand Strength Index.
- ❖ Nike is the second strongest brand in the world.

