

Current Affairs search results for tag: Environment

### **1. U.S. President signs executive order on environmental justice ( April 22, 2023 )**

U.S. President signs executive order on environmental justice

**U.S. President Joe Biden** signed an **executive order** on 21st April.

#### **An overview of the news**

- The executive order directs every single federal agency to work toward **environmental justice** for all and improve the lives of communities hit hardest by toxic pollution and climate change.
- The order would **establish a new Office of Environmental Justice** within the White House that aims to coordinate the government's efforts.
- Federal agencies will work to notify communities when a **toxic substance** is released from a federal facility.
- Disasters such as the February derailment of a freight train in **East Palestine, Ohio**, have drawn attention to environmental damage from hazardous chemical spills.

#### **What is environmental justice?**

- Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful participation of all people, regardless of race, color or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.

### **2. Environment Ministers agree to make efforts to reduce vehicle emissions ( April 17, 2023 )**

Second Health Working Group meeting begins in Goa

The meeting of **G7 (Group of seven) energy and environment ministers** ended on 16th April at **Sapporo city in Japan**.

#### **An overview of the news**

- The major focus in the meeting is on reducing the **carbon footprint of automobiles**.
- The G-7 summit will be hosted by **Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Hiroshima in May 2023**.

#### **Joint Statement of the Meeting**

- The ministers agreed to make efforts **to reduce vehicle emissions**.
- Agreement to halve **carbon dioxide levels recorded in 2000 by 2035**.
- A major focus was placed on how to reduce the **carbon footprint of automobiles**.

- Each country will check its progress every year to meet the target.
- The agreement called on countries to help **reduce emissions across a wide range of vehicles.**
- A new target was also set **to prevent ocean pollution by plastic waste by 2040.**

### **About G7**

- The G7 is a group of seven major industrialized countries, including **Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.**
- The G7 holds annual meetings to discuss various global issues, but these meetings are usually held in different locations each year.
- The **48th G7 summit was hosted by Germany in 2022.**

### **3. NHAI signs MoU with Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve ( April 15, 2023 )**

NHAI signs MoU with Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve

The **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.**

### **An Overview of the News**

- The objective of the MoU is to improve the entry process for vehicles entering the forest area by facilitating a seamless and efficient system.
- The initiative proposes a FASTag based **payment system at forest entry points** to avoid long queues and delays.
- The benefit of collection of **Ecosystem Management Coordination Fee through FASTag** will be extended to various entry points of the Tiger Reserve.
- The partnership between the **Highways Management Company of India Limited and the Forest Department** is an important step towards promoting sustainable tourism and conserving natural resources.
- This partnership will help curb vehicular emissions at forest entry points, thereby contributing to environmental protection.

### **About National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**

- It is an **independent organisation established in 1995** by the Government of India.
- NHAI manages and maintains a vast network of **more than 50,000 km of National Highways across India**, which represents about 40% of the total length of National Highways in the country.

- NHAI is responsible for **maintaining and upgrading the quality of National Highways in India** and ensuring their smooth operation for the benefit of road users.
- As a **nodal agency of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways**, NHAI plays a vital role in formulating policies related to highways and implementing them effectively.

Establishment - **1988**

Headquarters - **New Delhi**

Sector - **Indian National Highway System**

Objective - **Development and maintenance of National Highways**

Parent Agency - **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of India**

### **About Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve**

- The Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve, located in **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**, is the largest tiger reserve in India, covering a total area of **3,728 km (1,439 sq mi)**.
- It was **established in 1983**.
- The tiger reserve is spread over five districts, which are **Nandyal, Prakasam, Palnadu, Nalgonda and Mehboob Nagar**.
- The tiger reserve is located inside the **Nallamala forest area**, which is known for its rich biodiversity and diverse flora and fauna.

### **4. According to the latest tiger census data in 2022, the number of tigers in India has increased to 3,167 ( April 11, 2023 )**

According to the latest tiger census data in 2022, the number of tigers in India has increased to 3,167

According to the latest tiger census data released by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, the number of tigers in India is set to reach **3,167 in 2022**.

### **An Overviews of the News:**

- This figure shows a significant increase from the previous census figures of **1,411 in 2006, 1,706 in 2010, 2,226 in 2014 and 2,967 in 2018**.
- The Prime Minister launched the '**International Big Cat Alliance**' to mark the completion of 50 years of '**Project Tiger**'. The aim of the alliance is to protect and conserve seven major big cats across the world including tigers and lions.
- The Prime Minister also released a booklet titled '**Amrit Kaal Ka Tiger Vision**', which outlines the vision for tiger conservation over the next 25 years.

## Project Tiger

- Project Tiger was started in 1973 by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- Under this programme, central assistance is provided to the states with tiger population for conservation of tigers.
- The initial reserves covered under Project Tiger were Jim Corbett, Manas, Ranthambore, Simlipal, Bandipur, Palamu, Sundarbans, Melghata and Kanha National Parks.
- At the time of the launch of Project Tiger in the year 1973, there were only 9 tiger reserves in the country, at present the total number of tiger reserves in the country has increased to 54.

## The top 10 states with the highest population of tigers in India are:

1. **Madhya Pradesh** - This state has the highest population of tigers in India with a total of 526 tigers.
2. **Karnataka** - With a total of 524 tigers, Karnataka has the second largest population of tigers in India.
3. **Uttarakhand** - This state has a total of 442 tigers and is known for its dense forests.
4. **Maharashtra** - Maharashtra is home to 312 tigers, making it the fourth state with the highest tiger population in India.
5. **Tamil Nadu** - This state has a total of 264 tigers and is known for the Mudumalai and Anamalai tiger reserves.
6. **Assam** - With a total of 190 tigers, Assam is an important state for tiger conservation efforts in India.
7. **Kerala** - Kerala also has a total of 190 tigers and is known for the Periyar Tiger Reserve.
8. **Uttar Pradesh** - This state has 173 tigers and is home to the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve.
9. **West Bengal** - With a total of 88 tigers, West Bengal has a relatively low population of tigers compared to other states.
10. **Rajasthan** - This state has the lowest tiger population among the top 10 states with a total of 69 tigers.

## 5. World's first Asian King Vulture Conservation and Breeding Center to be inaugurated in Uttar Pradesh ( April 10, 2023 )

Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Center (JCBC) for the critically endangered Asian king vulture,

**Uttar Pradesh** has set up a state-of-the-art **Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Center (JCBC)** for the critically endangered **Asian king vulture**, the first of its kind in the world.

## An Overview of the News

- It is located in the Maharajganj district of Uttar Pradesh and is spread over 1.5 hectares.
- The JCBC is designed to maintain a sustainable population of Asian king vultures by breeding them in captivity and releasing them into the wild.
- The Asian king vulture is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act and is listed as critically endangered by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List**.

- The use of diclofenac in veterinary medicine in India has led to a population decline in recent years, and the JCBC aims to have at least 40 vultures in captivity over 15 years to ensure the sustainable conservation of the species.
- The Forest Department has partnered with the **Bombay Natural History Society for technical guidance.**

### **About Wildlife Protection Act**

- **Introduction:** The Wildlife Protection Act is a law enacted in India in 1972 with the primary objective of **protecting the wildlife and their habitats in the country.**
- **Prohibition:** The Act prohibits hunting, poaching, capturing or killing any wild animal listed under Schedules I to IV of the Act, without prior permission from the authorities.
- **Protected Areas:** The Act designates specific areas as protected areas for the protection of wildlife and their habitats. These include national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and biosphere reserves.
- **Penalties:** The Act provides for strict penalties including fine and imprisonment for violations. Repeat offenders may face more severe punishment.
- **Amendments:** The Act has undergone several amendments over the years, the latest being in 2003 and the amendments aim to strengthen the protection of wildlife and their habitats.

### **6. Eravikulam National Park got a fernarium for the first time ( April 4, 2023 )**

Eravikulam National Park got a fernarium for the first time

**Eravikulam National Park in Munnar, Kerala** has a new attraction – a **fernarium** and it is the first fern collection set up in a hill station.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- The **Fernarium** is **located within the park close to the Orchidarium** and is accessible to the public from 20 April.
- The objective of the **Fernarium is to educate visitors about the biodiversity of the park and to showcase the flora in a unique way.**
- Ferns grow naturally in a soilless environment by absorbing water and nutrients from trees, making the park an ideal location for a fernarium.

#### **About Eravikulam National Park:**

- **Location:** Eravikulam National Park is located in the Western Ghats of India, within the state of Kerala.
- **History:** The park was initially established as a game sanctuary in 1975, with the primary objective of protecting the endangered Nilgiri tahr, a type of mountain goat that is endemic to the Western Ghats.
- **National Park Status:** In 1978, the sanctuary was declared a National Park and now it is spread over an area of 97 square kilometres.

- **Biodiversity:** The park is famous for its rich biodiversity, which houses a number of wildlife species including Nilgiri Tahr, Macaque, Leopard and many bird species.
- **Recognition:** The park has received international recognition for its conservation efforts, and was awarded the prestigious Green Globe certification in 2019 for its commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism.

## **7. Bandipur completes 50 years as a Project Tiger Reserve ( April 4, 2023 )**

Bandipur completes 50 years as a Project Tiger Reserve

**Bandipur** completed **50 years as a Project Tiger Reserve** 1 April 2023.

### **About Bandipur Tiger Reserve**

- This reserve is located in the state of **Karnataka** and is **spread over an area of 912.04 sq km.**
- It is located in two districts of Karnataka, **Mysore and Chamarajanagar.**
- It is considered **one of the world's premier tiger habitats** and is an important component of the **country's first biosphere reserve - the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.**
- It was launched by the then Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi in 1973** with the aim of arresting the decline in the tiger population.
- Bandipur was **one of the first nine sanctuaries** to be brought under the flagship program of **Project Tiger in 1973.**
- **Bandipur Tiger Reserve is surrounded by-**
  1. Nagarahole Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) in the North West (Kabini Reservoir separates the two).
  2. Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) in the South.
  3. Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (Kerala) in the South West.

### **Project Tiger**

- Project Tiger was started by the **Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in the year 1973.**
- Under this program, **central assistance** is provided to the states having tiger populations for conservation of tigers.
- The initial reserves covered under Project Tiger were **Jim Corbett, Manas, Ranthambore, Simlipal, Bandipur, Palamu, Sundarbans, Melghata and Kanha National Parks.**

- At the time of the launch of Project Tiger in the year 1973, there were only **9 Tiger Reserves** in the country, at present the total number of **Tiger Reserves in the country has increased to 54.**

### **Other Tiger Reserves in Karnataka**

- Bhadra Tiger Reserve
- Nagarahole Tiger Reserve
- Dandeli-Anshi Tiger Reserve

### **8. Second meeting of Working Group on Environment and Climate Sustainability under India's G20 chairmanship begins ( March 27, 2023 )**

The second meeting of the Working Group on Environment and Climate Sustainability started on 27 March and it is a three-day meeting.

The **second meeting** of the **Working Group on Environment and Climate Sustainability** started on **27 March** and it is a **three-day meeting**.

### **An Overview of the News**

- This meeting is being held at the **Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.**
- At the beginning of the meeting, G-20 member countries made a presentation on best practices for water resource management.
- The event was attended by around **130 delegates from G20 member states, 11 invited countries and 14 international organisations..**
- The meeting focuses on several **thematic areas, including halting land degradation, accelerating ecosystem restoration and enriching biodiversity, encouraging resource efficiency and the circular economy, and promoting a sustainable and climate-resilient blue economy.**

### **About the G20**

- It is an international forum of the world's leading economies established in **1999.**
- Its primary objective is **to promote international financial stability and sustainable economic growth.**
- The G20 serves as a forum to discuss and coordinate policies related to a wide range of economic and financial issues such as **trade, investment, employment, energy and climate change.**

### **9. Bhupender Yadav launches Aravalli Green Wall Project ( March 26, 2023 )**

Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister **Bhupendra Yadav** inaugurated the **Aravalli Green Wall Project** on March 26 at **Tikli village in Haryana** in a program organized on the occasion of **International Forest Day.**

**An overview of the news**

- The project will increase the **green cover and biodiversity of Aravallis** through **afforestation, reforestation and restoration of water bodies**.
- It will also improve **soil fertility, water availability and climate resilience of the region**.
- The project will benefit the local communities by providing them with **employment opportunities, income generation and ecosystem services**.
- The objective of this initiative is to green a **buffer zone of about 5 km of Aravalli mountain range** spread over five states.
- **75 water sources** will be rejuvenated under the project, starting with five water sources in each district of the Aravalli landscape on March 25.
- The project will also involve massive tree plantation drive and conservation of water resources in the Aravalli region.
- The project will cover barren land in **Gurgaon, Faridabad, Bhiwani, Mahendragarh and Rewari** districts of Haryana.

**About Aravali Green Wall Project**

- The project is part of the **Union Forest Ministry's vision of creating green corridors across the country** to combat **land degradation and desertification**.
- The project covers the states of **Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi** where the Aravalli hills are spread over an area of **6 million hectares**.
- The project will involve **rejuvenation and restoration of ponds, lakes and rivers as well as planting of native species of trees** and shrubs on scrub, barren land and degraded forest land.
- The project will also focus on **agro-forestry and grassland development** to enhance the livelihood of local communities.

**About Aravalli Range**

- It extends from **Himmatnagar in Gujarat to Delhi for a distance of about 720 km**, which extends to **Haryana and Rajasthan**.
- It is thousands of years old, formed when the **Indian subcontinental plate collided with the mainland of the Eurasian plate**.
- According to carbon dating, copper and other metals were mined in the Aravalli range around the **5th century BCE**.
- Its height is between **300 m to 900 m**.
- **Its highest peak is Guru Shikhar (1,722 m) on Mount Abu**.



**10. IndiaAI ecosystem ( March 17, 2023 )**

task force for framing a draft roadmap for the artificial intelligence ecosystem

The **Ministry of Electronics and IT** set up a **task force for framing a draft roadmap for the artificial intelligence ecosystem** by the end of April.

**An overview of the news:**

- The Minister of **State for Electronics and IT** has announced the establishment of the IndiaAI platform, which aims to support research and provide tools for startups in the field of artificial intelligence.
- This platform will **focus on promoting Indian startups, research, and innovation**, which could contribute to the growth of the Indian economy.
- Estimates suggest that **AI could potentially add USD 967 billion** to the Indian **economy by 2035 and USD 450-500 billion** to India's **GDP by 2025**, which is a significant amount and could account for 10% of the country's USD 5 trillion GDP target.

**About IndiaAI platform:**

- INDIAai stands for '**The National AI Portal of India**' platform.
- The platform was **launched in 2018**.
- It is a joint initiative of the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** and the **National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM)**.
- The primary objective of the IndiaAI platform is to create a collaborative ecosystem for AI in India by bringing together industry, academia, startups, and the government.
- The platform provides a forum for stakeholders to exchange ideas, collaborate on projects, share best practices, and access AI resources such as datasets, algorithms, and tools.
- IndiaAI also aims to support the development of **AI-based solutions** that address societal challenges such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and urban development.
- The platform provides access to funding, mentorship, and other resources to startups and entrepreneurs working on AI-based solutions.
- **IndiaAI has several initiatives like:**
  - AI for All program: which aims to provide AI training to over 1 million citizens in India, and the AI research and innovation hub, which is a network of AI research centers and labs across the country.