

17 August 2024

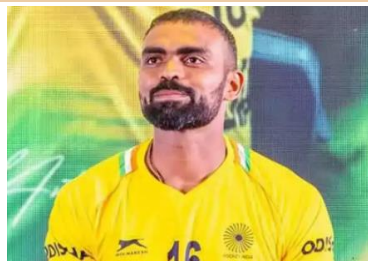
## Neelakurinji becomes a 'threatened species' officially



### Key Points:

- ❖ Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*), the purplish flowering shrub, that blooms once in 12 years, has been included on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) official Red List of Threatened Species.
- ❖ This is the first-ever Global Red List assessment for this flagship species of the montane grasslands of southwest India.
- ❖ The latest global assessment confirms its threatened status in the Vulnerable (Criteria A2c) category of the IUCN. The mass blooming of the flower is a huge tourist attraction.

## PR Sreejesh appoints India junior men's team head coach



### Key Points:

- ❖ Goalkeeper PR Sreejesh has been appointed as the new head coach of the junior men's hockey team.
- ❖ The Indian goalkeeper delivered a stellar performance as India bagged the bronze medal for the second consecutive time, edging out Spain 2-1.
- ❖ His crucial saves were instrumental in the win as he capped off a brilliant campaign with the medal. Notably, India won consecutive bronze hockey medals for the first time in 52 years since the 1972 Munich Games

## Sandeep Poundrik takes charge as Secretary of Ministry of Steel



### Key Points:

- ❖ Sandeep Poundrik has assumed charge as Secretary of the Ministry of Steel

Steel. He is a 1993-batch IAS officer from the Bihar cadre.

- ❖ Poundrik was in charge of the Additional Chief Secretary position in the Industries Department and also held additional charge for several other positions in the Government of Bihar.
- ❖ He had previously served as Advisor in the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) under the Ministry of Home Affairs and as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

**DRDO successfully tested its first Long-Range Glide Bomb GAURAV**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully tested its Long-Range Glide Bomb, GAURAV, off the coast of Odisha.
- ❖ The smart bomb was dropped from the Indian Air Force's Su-30 MK-1 fighter plane.
- ❖ The successful testing of the smart bomb is likely to enhance the Indian Air Force's combat capability.

- ❖ After being dropped from the fighter plane, the bomb pops out its wings and is guided to its target by an onboard satellite navigation system.
- ❖ These bombs are very useful for the Air Force as they can be fired from a safe distance from the enemy air defence system.

**About GAURAV Bomb**

- ❖ The Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad laboratory of the DRDO, is developing long-range glide bombs named GAURAV for the Indian Air Force.
- ❖ GAURAV is a a winged long-range glide bomb which weighs 1000 kg and has a glide range of 100 km .
- ❖ The Gaurav bomb has a hybrid navigation system, which combines the Inertial Navigation System (INS) and the Global Positioning System (GPS).

**Chhattisgarh govt. to develop fourth tiger reserve in State**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ Chhattisgarh government decided to declare a new tiger reserve covering areas of Guru Ghasidas National Park and Tamor Pingla wildlife sanctuary in the state.

- ❖ This will be the fourth tiger reserve in the state.
- ❖ Creation of the tiger reserve will lead to the development of eco-tourism and also generate employment opportunities for villagers living its the core and buffer areas.
- ❖ As per the recommendation of State Wildlife Board and the consent of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Union Ministry of Forest and Climate Change, the cabinet has decided to notify Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve in an area of 2,829.387 sq km.
- ❖ Currently, the state has three tiger reserves – Indravati (in Bijapur district), Udanti-Sitanadi (Gariaband) and Achanakmar (Mungeli).

**Government announces 70th National Film Awards 2022 winner's List**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ The 70th National Film Awards for the year 2022 were announced on 16 August 2024.
- ❖ The head of the jury for the various segments of the National Film Awards presented the list of winners of the 70th National Film Awards to the

Union Minister for Railways, Information and Broadcasting and Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw in New Delhi.

- ❖ Rahul Rawail was the Chairperson of the Feature Film Jury, Nila Madhab Panda was the Chairperson of the Non-Feature Film Jury and Gangadhar Mudalair was the Chairperson of the Best Writing on Cinema Jury

**Nanjarayan, Kazhuveli & Tawa Reservoir newly added Ramsar Sites**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ Three new sites –Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary and Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu and Tawa Reservoir in Madhya Pradesh—have been designated as Wetlands of International Importance or Ramsar Sites, bringing the total number of wetlands declared as Ramsar sites in India to 85.
- ❖ Bhupender Yadav, the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, announced the addition of the three new wetlands to the Ramsar site on 14 August 2024.



### What is a Ramsar Site?

- ❖ Ramsar Site refers to wetlands that have been notified by the signatory countries of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance as being of international importance.
- ❖ The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance came into force in 1975. An international conference was held in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 to build an international consensus on conserving and preserving wetlands worldwide.
- ❖ The list of the Ramsar sites is maintained by the Ramsar convention's secretariat, based at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) headquarters in Gland, Switzerland.

### India and Ramsar Convention

- ❖ India ratified the Ramsar Convention on 1 February 1982.
- ❖ First Indian wetland sites - Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Chilika Lake (Odisha) in 1981.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu has 16 sites, and Uttar Pradesh has 10.
- ❖ Largest Ramsar site: Sunderban of West Bengal

### ❖ Smallest Ramsar: Renuka in Himachal Pradesh

#### What is a Wetland?

Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil or is present either at or near the soil's surface all year or for varying periods of time during the year. The wetlands can be on lands or coastal areas.

### IRS Officer Rahul Navin new Director of Enforcement Directorate (ED)



#### Key Points:

- ❖ The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14 August 2024, has approved the appointment of Rahul Navin as the Director of the Directorate of Enforcement (ED).
- ❖ Rahul Navin was appointed as the acting director of the Enforcement Directorate by the government of India on 15 September 2023 after Sanjay Kumar Mishra's retirement.
- ❖ Sanjay Mishra had to retire after the Supreme Court held the frequent extension given to him by the government of India as illegal.

#### Tenure of Rahul

- ❖ Navin The 1993 batch of Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer Rahul Navin has been appointed for a term of two years from the date of his assumption of office

- ❖ Rahul Navin is currently a Special Director in the Enforcement Directorate.

#### Directorate of Enforcement or ED

- ❖ In 1956, the government of India established the Directorate of Enforcement (ED).
- ❖ The ED is under the administrative control of the Department of Revenue, Union Ministry of Finance.
- ❖ It is the sole agency that enforces the criminal provisions of the; Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) 2002.
- ❖ ED has the power to seize the property earned from money laundering activities and also prosecute the person accused of money laundering.
- ❖ Under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act 2018, the ED has the power to seize the property of persons who have committed economic crimes in India and have fled from India. Civil provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) 1999. Headquarters: New Delhi

#### About the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet

##### Key Points:

- ❖ The appointment committee of the Cabinet is the highest body of the government of India, which approves the appointment to various top administrative posts of the government of India.

- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet consists of two cabinet ministers of the government of India.
- ❖ They are : Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah- Union Minister for Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation

#### Freedom Notes: On the Independence Day Speech and Beyond



##### Key Points:

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first Independence Day speech in his third term in office — his eleventh since 2014 — was a significant address, signalling continuity and authority as he now leads a coalition government.
- ❖ During his speech, the PM highlighted several key issues and proposed ways to address them.
- ❖ **Key Issues Highlighted by the Prime Minister**
  1. **Uniform Civil Code (UCC):** The PM called for the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code, describing it as a secular measure agnostic of religious faiths.
  2. **One Nation, One Election:** The concept of 'One Nation, One Election' was proposed, aiming to synchronise elections across the country to

streamline governance and reduce costs.

3. **Women's Safety:** In light of recent incidents, including the sexual assault and murder of an on-duty doctor in Kolkata, the PM stressed the need for increased safety measures for women.
4. **Economic Stability and SEBI Allegations:** The PM raised concerns about attempts to destabilise the country's economy, referencing a report by the U.S.-based Hindenburg Research that accused the head of SEBI of conflict of interest.
5. **Dynastic Politics and Youth Participation:** Criticising dynastic politics, the PM suggested that one lakh first-generation young leaders should enter electoral politics at various levels.
6. **Security of Minorities in Bangladesh:** The PM expressed hope for peace in Bangladesh and raised concerns about the safety of the Hindu minority community there.

7. **Achievements in Manufacturing and Anti-Corruption Efforts:** Reviewing his two terms in office, the PM highlighted India's progress in manufacturing and its fight against corruption, while acknowledging ongoing challenges.

- ❖ Independence Day serves as a reminder of the need for a governance approach that balances continuity with inclusivity and consultation. While the issues raised by the Prime Minister are important, their effective implementation requires a more balanced and consultative approach. The government must work towards building consensus on sensitive issues like the Uniform Civil Code and ensure that criticism and accountability are seen as fundamental aspects of democracy, rather than threats to stability. The true essence of freedom lies in holding the government accountable through a participatory political process.

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