

DAILY PT POINTERS

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Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav releases a cheetah into the wild at the Kuno National Park in Sheopur district. PTI

M.P. CM releases five more cheetahs into the wild in Kuno

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Chief Mi-

'jeev charachar jantu sa-maana' is amazing; which is the ideal shelter for wildlife and the courtyard of

Cheetahs

They are one of the oldest of the big cat species.

They are the fastest land animals in the world over short distances.

Altogether, 5 subspecies of cheetah have been described:

Northwest African cheetah

East African cheetah

South African cheetah

Northeast African cheetah

Asiatic cheetah.

Population and Distribution: Cheetahs are mainly present in southern African countries such as Algeria, Botswana, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, among others.

Iran is the only country having the Asiatic cheetah.

African cheetahs are bigger in size as compared to Asiatic cheetahs.

IUCN Status: All cheetah subspecies are listed as vulnerable by the IUCN, except the Northwest African and Asiatic cheetah which are critically endangered at present.

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What is the SC directive on sacred groves?

What are the implications of the December 18 order? What did *T.N. Godavarman v. Union of India* establish about the definition of 'forest land'? How are sacred groves traditionally conserved by communities?

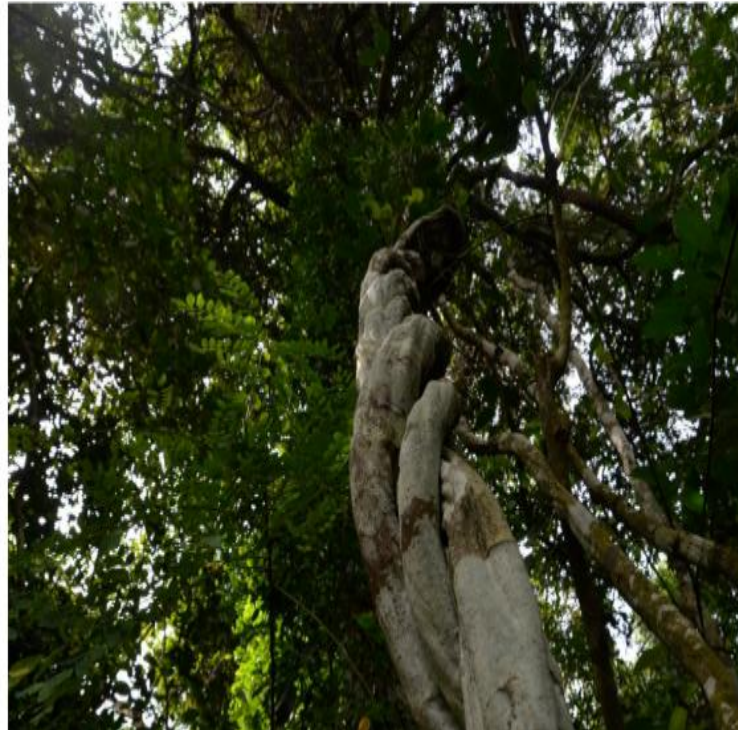
EXPLAINER

C.R. Bijoy

The story so far:

In December 18, 2024, the Supreme Court directed the Forest Department of Rajasthan to map on the ground and via satellite every 'sacred grove' in detail. They were to be identified irrespective of their size and based "solely on their purpose and their cultural and ecological significance to the local community". After mapping, the court directed the department to classify them as 'forests' and notify them as 'community reserves' under the Wildlife Protection Act (WLP) 1972. Effectively, the decision would transfer the sacred groves from community protection to forest officialdom for the purposes of conservation. The move defies the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, which by virtue of being enacted later overrides the WLP, and which the government had intended to do the reverse: i.e. recognise traditional and customary rights over all forest lands and transfer them back from the Forest Department to gram sabhas.

The sacred groves of Rajasthan, also



THE GIST

▼ The Supreme Court ordered the Rajasthan Forest Department to map and classify sacred groves as 'forests' and 'community reserves' under the Wildlife Protection Act.

▼ This order shifts control of sacred groves from community-based management to the Forest Department.

▼ The decision conflicts with the Forest Rights Act, which recognises community rights over forest resources.

▼ The shift in control from community protection to Forest Department management could undermine the traditional governance of these areas.

- the Supreme Court of India directed Rajasthan's Forest Department to map and classify sacred groves as 'forests' and 'community reserves' under the Wildlife Protection Act (WLP).
- This decision conflicts with the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, which recognizes community governance of sacred groves. Sacred groves, culturally significant and biodiversity-rich, are traditionally managed by local communities. The Court's move may undermine community control, transferring authority to the Forest Department, potentially disregarding the FRA's provisions that empower gram sabhas to manage community forest resources.

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Western Ghats: a living archive of culture, memory, and resilience

Through old and contemporary works, writers have sought to capture the alarming changes sweeping through the Sahyadris; they serve as a wake-up call to save the ecosystem, scarred by encroachment, displacement of tribal people, and skewed policies, from further ruin.

S.S. Shrivastava

The Western Ghats, the longest mountain range in the Indian subcontinent, stretches along the western coast of the Indian peninsula, spanning six states: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. Known as one of the world's most biodiverse regions, the Western Ghats were once celebrated for their breathtaking natural beauty — cascading waterfalls, lush greenery, and a dazzling array of flora and fauna. Today, however, the region's landscape faces a stark transformation. Climate change, deforestation, the decline of traditional livelihoods, land encroachment, and the displacement of tribal communities have left the region in peril.

Through old and contemporary works, writers have sought to capture the alarming changes sweeping through the Sahyadris; they serve as a wake-up call to save the ecosystem, scarred by encroachment, displacement of tribal people, and skewed policies, from further ruin.

Resistance and resilience

When livelihood, land, culture, and identity are at stake, resistance and resilience are the only means of safeguarding them. In 2011, writer by Shreya Dasgupta in Maharashtra in 2010 and translated into English in 2012 by Jayashree Subudhi, we learn of a tribal community's deep connection to the forest, which sustains them both physically and spiritually. As outsiders encroach upon their land, tribal family and others in the community resist, drawing on their traditions and

- The Western Ghats, also known as the Sahyadri, meaning benevolent mountains, stretches along the western coast of the Indian peninsula, spanning six States: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.
- Known as one of the world's most biodiverse regions, the Western Ghats were once celebrated for their breathtaking natural beauty — cascading waterfalls, lush greenery, and a dazzling array of flora and fauna. Today, however, this idyllic landscape faces a stark transformation. Climate change, deforestation, the decline of traditional livelihoods, land encroachment, and the displacement of tribal communities have left the region in peril.

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'West Asia crisis must not be allowed to undermine IMEC'

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Greece fully supports the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) as a "project for peace", Minister of Foreign Affairs George Gerapetritis has said, admitting that the project's planning has been delayed since its launch in September 2023 due to the conflict in West Asia, and the Israel-Gaza war in particular.

In an exclusive interview to *The Hindu*, Mr. Gerapetritis, who has arrived in Delhi for Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Thursday

and Jordan, which will be discussed during the talks.

He said Greece is working towards doubling trade and investment initiatives with India and plans to open two new consulates in Mumbai and Bengaluru. It also wants direct flights to begin and more visas to be issued.

"The ongoing crisis in the Middle East has delayed the project's planning, but it must not be allowed to undermine the powerful rationale behind IMEC. It is our resolve - that of India, Greece, and our partners in between - that we will bring this project of peace and prosperity to pass," Mr. Gerapetritis



George Gerapetritis

the IMEC that was launched on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in Delhi.

No meeting yet

Despite the memorandum of understanding stipulating that the stakeholders would meet "within 60

due to the West Asia conflict.

"The ceasefires in Gaza and Lebanon and the opening of the crossing in Rafah, combined with the new conditions in Syria, represent a significant turning point and leave room for hope that the conflicts will subside," Mr. Gerapetritis said, adding that Greece would pursue "peaceful settlement of disputes" during its current two-year elected term as a member of the United Nations Security Council.

During a visit to India in February 2024, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis had pitched Greece as the "gateway to

mentioned Greek's Piraeus port, along with Italy's Messina and France's Marseille, as possible ports on the IMEC route.

More recent reports have also suggested that the Adani Group, which runs other ports on the proposed IMEC route, including Mundra port in Gujarat and the Haifa port in Israel, was seeking terminals in Greek ports like Kavala and Volos.

Trade between India and Greece stood at \$1.9 billion in 2022-23. Both countries have committed to "doubling it by 2030". Greece is particularly interested in Indian commerce in the areas of "construc-

indicating that trade would pick up at a faster pace if the long-pending India-European Union Free Trade Agreement talks are concluded.

Asked about the issue of illegal immigration, with thousands of undocumented Indian migrants using the sea route to reach Greece each year, he said that Greece and India are negotiating a memorandum of understanding on migration and mobility.

"Overall, we apply a strict but fair migration policy. What we are trying to do is to turn irregular migration into legal and orderly pathways of human mobility," Mr. Gerapetritis

- Greece supports the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) as a "project for peace," despite delays due to the Israel-Gaza conflict.
- Proposed in 2023, IMEC aims to enhance connectivity between India, the Middle East, and Europe through advanced infrastructure, offering an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative.
- It could boost trade, attract foreign investment, and support India's green hydrogen efforts, but its success requires substantial investment, political commitment, and private sector engagement.

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Army's Fort William in Kolkata set to be known as Vijay Durg

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In the latest step toward eliminating colonial practices and mindsets within the armed forces, Fort William in Kolkata, the headquarters of the Eastern Army Command, has been renamed Vijay Durg. Additionally, Kitchener House inside Fort William has been renamed Manekshaw House, and South Gate, formerly known as St. George's Gate, is now Shivaji Gate.

Wing Commander Himanshu Tiwari, the Defence Public Relations Officer in Kolkata, has said the decision was made in mid-December and all in-



Army officers gather at Fort Williams in Kolkata during the Army Day celebrations. AP

“vestiges of the colonial era” and “Indianising” military traditions and customs – an initiative Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described as freedom from the mentality of

- Fort William in Kolkata has been renamed Vijay Durg as part of efforts to eliminate colonial influences in the Indian military.
- Kitchener House is now Manekshaw House, and St. George's Gate is renamed Shivaji Gate. This aligns with Prime Minister Modi's push for indigenisation, urging the armed forces to move away from outdated colonial practices.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB- Miscellaneous

Ministry of Culture



Chaman Arora awarded Sahitya Akademi Award 2024 in Dogri for his book "Ik Hor Ashwthama"

Posted On: 04 FEB 2025 6:35PM by PIB Delhi

- The Sahitya Akademi Award 2024 in Dogri has been awarded to Late Chaman Arora for his book Ik Hor Ashwthama.
- The award, established in 1954, recognizes outstanding literary works in major Indian languages.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air-GS2(IR)

President Trump Signs Executive Order Withdrawing US From UNHRC



- The Human Rights Council, established in 2006 by the UN General Assembly, is the main intergovernmental body responsible for promoting and protecting human rights globally. Composed of 47 member states, it addresses human rights violations and emergencies, offering recommendations for improvement.
- The Council receives support from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and meets at the UN Office in Geneva.