



THE HINDU



GS Paper 3-Environment

Madhav National Park becomes India's 58th Tiger Reserve

The Hindu Bureau
BHOPAL

The Centre declared the Madhav National Park in Madhya Pradesh as the country's 58th tiger reserve on Sunday, with Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav making the announcement. The newly added Tiger Reserve is also the ninth from the State to get the recognition.

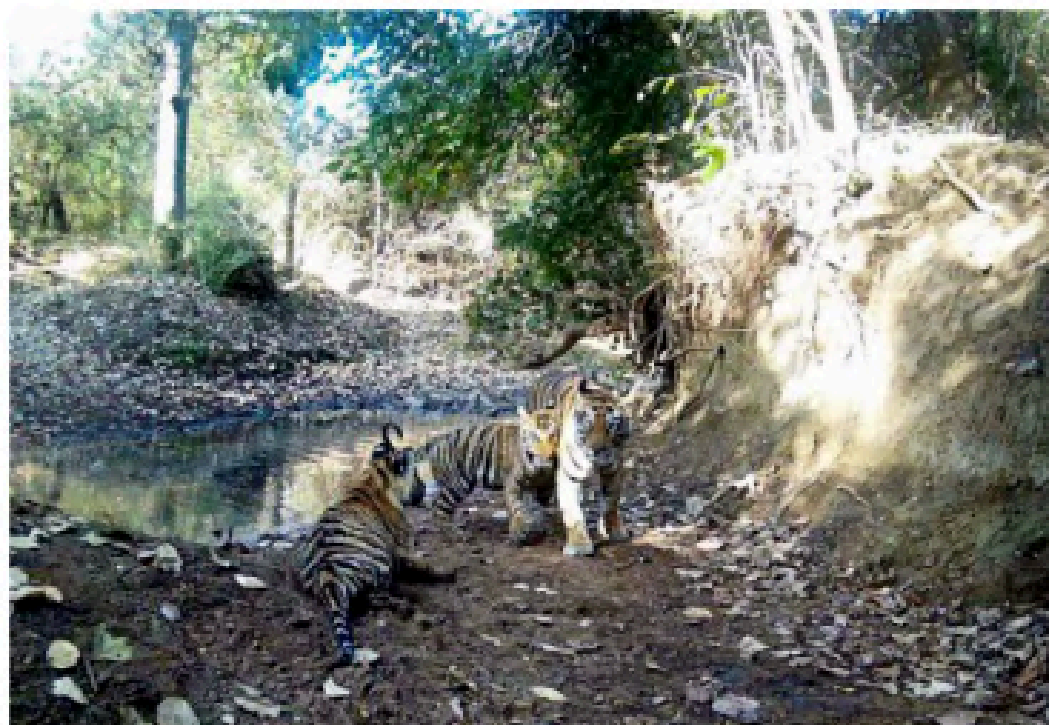
Mr. Yadav posted on X, "58th roar and counting! Thrilled to announce that the country has added the 58th Tiger Reserve to its tally with the latest entrant

being Madhya Pradesh's Madhav Tiger Reserve. This is Madhya Pradesh's 9th Tiger Reserve."

Located in Shivpuri district in the Chambal region of Madhya Pradesh, the reserve has a population of five tigers at present, including two cubs born recently.

Three tigers, including two females, were introduced to the Madhav National Park in 2023 as part of the tiger reintroduction project in the State.

Two more tigers
Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav could



Conservation counts: The reserve has five tigers at present, including two cubs that were born recently. ANI

soon release two more tigers into the reserve.

"With historic emphasis

laid on restoring the ecological diversity on planet Earth by PM Shri Narendra

Modi ji, India continues to make great strides in environmental protection and wildlife conservation. I congratulate all wildlife lovers and conservationists. The development is a testament to the relentless efforts of our forest officials who are selflessly working towards the cause," the Union Minister said in his post.

Applauding the move, Mr. Modi said that India was blessed with wildlife diversity and a culture that celebrated wildlife.

"Amazing news for wildlife lovers! India is blessed with wildlife diversity and

a culture that celebrates wildlife. We will always be at the forefront of protecting animals and contributing to a sustainable planet," he said on social media platform X.

The Chief Minister also thanked the Prime Minister for the development.

"Heartfelt thanks to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for your visionary leadership in designating Madhav National Park as India's 58th and MP's 9th Tiger Reserve! Madhya Pradesh is proud to lead wildlife conservation and protect our biodiversity," the Union Minister wrote.



KEY POINTS

- Madhav National Park in Madhya Pradesh has been declared India's 58th tiger reserve, the state's 9th. The reserve, located in Shivpuri district, currently has five tigers, including two cubs. Three tigers were introduced in 2023, and two more may be released soon.





THE HINDU



GS Paper 1-History

Thakkolam temple, a treasure trove of Tamil history, needs restoration

B. Kolappan
RANIPET

The Jalanatheswarar temple at Thakkolam in Ranipet district, a treasure trove of Tamil history, particularly the reign of the Cholas, is in bad shape.

The outer wall on the northern side of the temple, situated on the banks of the Kosasthalaiyar, has collapsed, and the temple tank is in a derelict state.



The outer wall on the northern side of the temple, which is situated on the banks of the Kosasthalaiyar, has collapsed

rajitavaraman,” she said.

Dr. Kalaikovan, who has written a detailed report on the inscriptions of the Thakkolam temple, said they were vital in establishing the chronology of the

KEY POINTS

The Jalanatheswarar temple in Thakkolam, a Chola-era site, is deteriorating, with a collapsed wall and neglected tank. Thakkolam, historically significant with 51 inscriptions, provides insights into the Chola dynasty, including Aditya I's reign and his son Rajaditya's death in a battle there.





THE HINDU



GS Paper 2-Governance

Centre awaits prospective names from High Courts to be appointed ad hoc judges

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Over a month after the Supreme Court cleared the decks to appoint ad hoc judges in High Courts to deal with the rising pendency of cases, the government is yet to receive proposals from respective High Courts naming candidates.

Considering a backlog of over 18 lakh criminal



from respective High Court collegiums for appointing

ditions. However, later a special Supreme Court Bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justices B.R. Gavai and Surya Kant had relaxed certain conditions and kept some in abeyance.

The Bench said each High Court should keep the appointment to two to five ad hoc judges and not exceed 10% of the total sanctioned strength. "The ad hoc judges will sit in a

KEY POINTS

Over a month after the Supreme Court authorized the appointment of ad hoc judges to tackle a backlog of 18 lakh criminal cases, the government has yet to receive proposals from High Courts. Under Article 224A, retired judges can be appointed, with the Court limiting appointments to 2–5 judges per High Court to hear pending criminal appeals with a sitting judge.





THE HINDU



GS Paper 2-IR

India, Mauritius and a visit to deepen long-standing ties

In our current era of geopolitical churn and uncertainty, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Mauritius (March 11-12, 2025), will be a celebration of the deep and long-standing ties between the two countries. Mr. Modi had last visited the island country in 2015, but on this occasion, he will be the guest of honour at its Independence Day celebrations on March 12. India-Mauritius relations have enjoyed political consensus, irrespective of the party in power in either country. Mauritius has a new government in power led by Navinchandra Ramgoolam of the Labour Party, whose coalition won a landslide victory in the elections held in November last year. While India-Mauritius relations will continue to be positive and stable, the visit provides an opportunity for Mr. Modi to establish a personal connect with Mr. Ramgoolam and reassure him of India's continuing support to the island's security and prosperity. It was during the latter half of my tenure as India's High Commissioner to Mauritius (1992-97) that Mr. Ramgoolam was Prime Minister. India-Mauritius relations saw significant growth under his leadership and he was particularly sensitive to India's security concerns. I have no doubt that he will prove to be a trusted partner for India and will open new vistas for our cooperation.

The strong link of history

Mr. Ramgoolam's father, Sir Seewosagur Ramgoolam, had led the struggle for his country's independence and was its first Prime Minister. Not many people know that Sir Seewosagur worked closely with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose during Bose's stay in Britain between 1919-21. They were part of the Indian students' movement



Shyam Saran

is a former Foreign Secretary and was India's High Commissioner in Mauritius (1992-97)

The Indian Prime Minister's forthcoming visit is a reminder that India-Mauritius ties need to

There are strong people-to-people ties between the two countries. Nearly 70% of the population of Mauritius is of Indian origin, being the descendants of Indian indentured labour who were brought by the colonial rulers to work on sugar plantations. About 50% trace their ancestry to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and still speak the Bhojpuri dialect. There are smaller communities of Tamil, Telugu, and Marathi-speaking communities who have preserved their languages and traditional culture. Mauritius appears like a microcosm of India.

However, the country is home to other ethnic groups including African and mixed populations, which create its proud rainbow culture. Though only 2% of the population, the island's French population is wealthy and influential, still owning its large sugar plantations, dominating its banking and financial sector and other commercial business.

The challenge for India's diplomats lies in maintaining links with all segments of the Mauritian population, even while celebrating the kinship and cultural ties that exist with its India-origin population. India has done much to nourish the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Indian-origin population. In 1976, it inaugurated the Mahatma Gandhi Institute as a premier institution for promoting Indian languages and culture. The Indian Cultural Centre in Mauritius is the largest of anywhere in the world and is one of the most active. The island hosts the World Hindi Secretariat that is supported by India.

A business gateway

India-Mauritius bilateral trade has expanded rapidly over the past few years, reaching \$554

and French. With its well-developed finance and banking sector and reliable laws and regulations, Mauritius has become a preferred platform for doing business with Africa particularly Francophone Africa. Thanks to a favourable Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with India, Mauritius is also a major channel for foreign investment into India. Mauritius has emerged as a successful international financial centre, mainly on the back of the DTAA.

Crucial to India's maritime security

Mauritius is the sentinel of the western Indian Ocean and maritime security cooperation between our two countries is critical to enhancing India's maritime security. The Colombo Security Conclave brings together India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Mauritius and Bangladesh to work together to make this ocean space safe and secure. Mauritius is a small island but its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is 2.3 million square kilometres. India has set up a chain of coastal radar stations, redeveloped the Mauritian island of Agaléga to serve as a joint surveillance facility and given Mauritius access to the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in Gurugram, India, to significantly advance domain awareness in its vast EEZ. India's oceanographic survey ship, INS *Sarvekshak*, has just completed the survey of 25,000 sq.km of Mauritius' ocean territory.

At a time when China's footprint in the Indian Ocean is expanding, India-Mauritius maritime security cooperation has assumed special importance.

Beyond the ceremonial honours bestowed upon him, Mr. Modi will have much substance to



KEY POINTS

PM Modi's visit to Mauritius (March 11-12, 2025) will strengthen India-Mauritius ties, highlighting cultural, trade, and maritime security cooperation, especially amid growing Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean.





THE HINDU



GS Paper 3-Environment



FROM HUMAN HABITATION TO TIGER TERRITORY

In Odisha's Simlipal Tiger Reserve, villagers face the threat of displacement as the Forest Department pushes to return the area to a tiger habitat. In 2015, the government announced that the reserve would be a tiger reserve, but the villagers have been living there for generations.



A village in Odisha's Simlipal Tiger Reserve, where the Forest Department is pushing to return the area to a tiger habitat. The village has been living there for generations.

A village in Odisha's Simlipal Tiger Reserve, where the Forest Department is pushing to return the area to a tiger habitat. The village has been living there for generations.

The village has been living there for generations. The Forest Department is pushing to return the area to a tiger habitat. The village has been living there for generations.

The village has been living there for generations. The Forest Department is pushing to return the area to a tiger habitat. The village has been living there for generations.

The village has been living there for generations. The Forest Department is pushing to return the area to a tiger habitat. The village has been living there for generations.

KEY POINTS

In Odisha's Satkosia Tiger Reserve, indigenous villagers are being displaced to make way for tiger reintroduction, despite the reserve lacking tigers. Villages like Tuluka and Asanbahal were relocated to poorly planned settlements, with compensation insufficient. Critics argue the displacement harms indigenous rights and livelihoods, with some challenging the policy in court.



The Indian **EXPRESS**

GS Paper 3-Species

Delhi zoo to get smooth-coated otters after two decades

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

SMOOTH-COATED otters will return to the Delhi zoo after a two-decade gap as part of an exchange programme with the Surat zoo. The zoo had last housed the animal in 2004. Officials said on Sunday that the otters are expected to arrive by the end of this month.

Along with the otters, the

Delhi zoo, officially called the National Zoological Park, will also receive 10 star tortoises from the Surat zoo. In exchange, it will send five sangai deer, two blue-and-yellow macaws, and four green-cheeked conures.

Delhi zoo director Sanjeet Kumar said another exchange programme with the Lucknow zoo has been finalised, under which Delhi will receive swamp deer in return for chinkara.

"A team of officials, including



Smooth-coated otters are expected to arrive at the zoo by the end of this month.

a keeper, is travelling to the Surat zoo on Monday to assess the otters and gain insights into their housing and maintenance. The exchange is expected to be completed in the last week of March. Necessary preparations are underway at both the zoos," Kumar said.

The Delhi zoo recently witnessed multiple animal deaths, prompting efforts to introduce new species, including leopards, lions, and a Himalayan black bear.

"The lions are likely to be brought from the Indore zoo, with discussions expected to conclude next week. Talks for a Himalayan black bear from the Jammu zoo are also in the final stages. Even before the recent death of a leopard, we were already in discussions to bring more leopards, as two of our current ones are fairly old. Talks are ongoing with two zoos in the country," Kumar said.

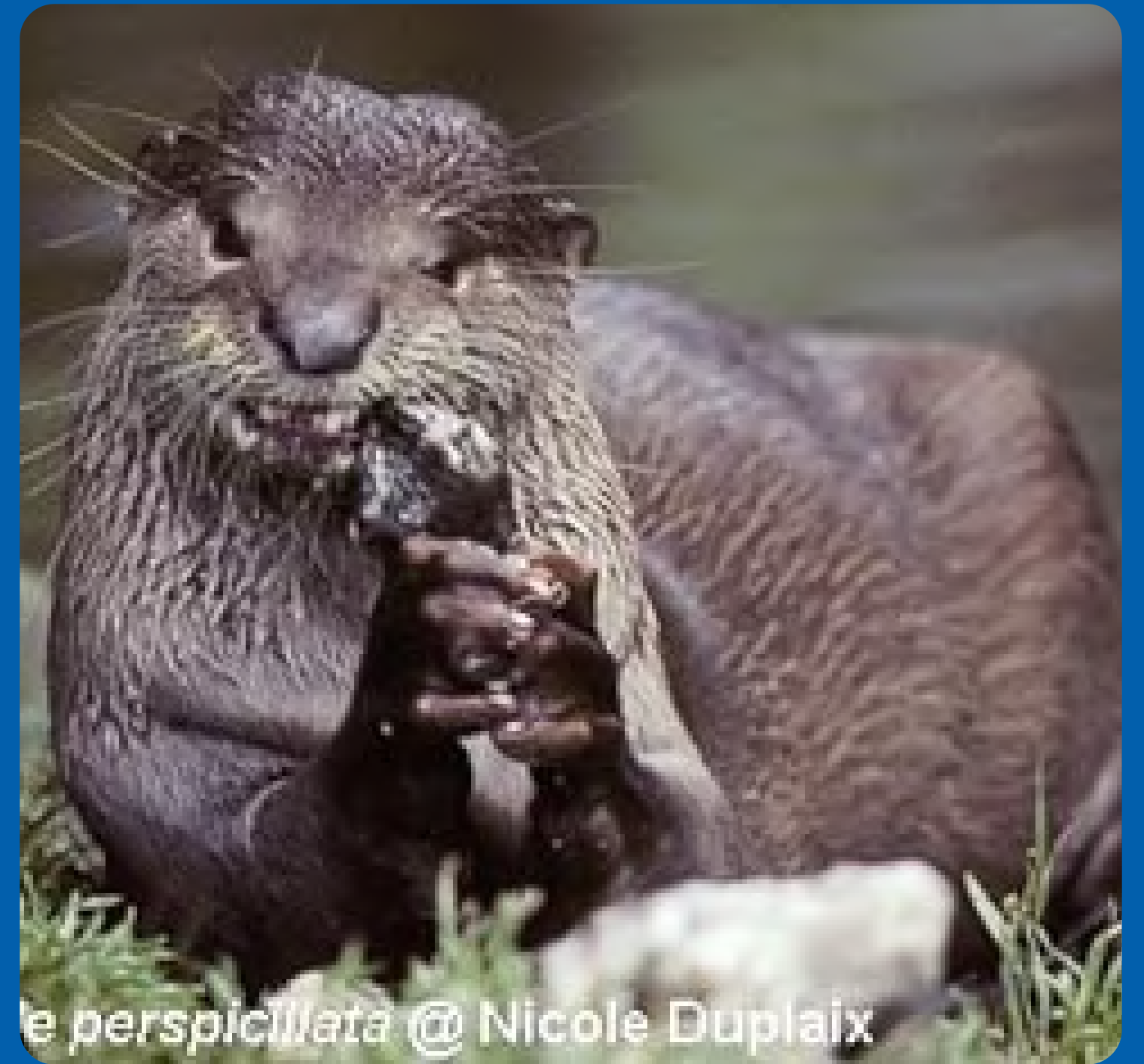
The zoo's last casualty was a 15-year-old female leopard, Babli,

who died on February 26 due to age-related complications. The zoo now has two male and one female leopard. Her death followed two other fatalities in February: a 22-year-old jaguar and a 15-year-old nilgai, both were under prolonged treatment for age-related ailments.

On January 25, a female sangai deer died after a fight with a male sangai deer, while another nilgai sustained injuries in a similar incident.

KEY POINTS

1. Otters are aquatic and found worldwide, except in Australia, New Zealand, Madagascar, and some oceanic islands. The Smooth-coated Otter is found throughout South and Southeast Asia, including major rivers in India south of the Himalayas. They prefer rocky areas, vegetated riverbanks, and marshes. The species is listed as Vulnerable by the IUCN.



Lutra perspicillata @ Nicole Duplaix

The Indian **EXPRESS**

GS Paper 2-Health

HANTAVIRUS

The rodent-borne virus that killed pianist Betsy Arakawa, wife of actor Gene Hackman

ANAGHA JAYAKUMAR
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

NEARLY TWO weeks after actor Gene Hackman and his pianist wife Betsy Arakawa were found dead in their home in Santa Fe, New Mexico, officials on Friday said Hackman died of heart disease days after Arakawa succumbed to hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS).

What is hantavirus?

Hantavirus is a family of rodent-borne viruses that can cause serious illness, even death, in humans. Infected rodents spread the viruses through their urine, faeces, and saliva, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The virus is not spread from person to person.



Santa Fe County officials hold a presser on the death of actor Gene Hackman and his wife Betsy Arakawa on March 7.

KEY POINTS

Hantavirus is a rodent-borne virus that can cause severe illness, including hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS), often spread by deer mice. Symptoms include fatigue, fever, muscle aches, and respiratory issues. There's no cure, but early detection and respiratory support may help. The CDC recommends using gloves, N95 masks, and bleach when cleaning areas with rodent droppings.

This Word Means **Hantavirus**

ned.





PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



GS Paper 3-Defence

Ministry of Defence



INDIAN ARMY CONTINGENT DEPARTS FOR INDIA- KYRGYZSTAN JOINT SPECIAL FORCES EXERCISE KHANJAR-XII

Posted On: 09 MAR 2025 1:27PM by PIB Delhi

KEY POINTS

1. The 12th edition of the India–Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise, KHANJAR–XII, will be held in Kyrgyzstan from March 10 to 23, 2025. Established in 2011, the exercise alternates between India and Kyrgyzstan, focusing on Counter Terrorism and Special Forces operations in urban and mountainous terrains, while strengthening defense ties and addressing regional security concerns.

