



18 Apr 2025

National and International News

<p>Mission Sarovar</p> <p>Amrit</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As on March 2025, over 68,000 Sarovars have been completed, enhancing surface and groundwater availability across various regions under the Mission Amrit Sarovar. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission Amrit Sarovar is a water conservation initiative that seeks to construct and rejuvenate ponds (Amrit Sarovar) in rural areas to ensure water availability for future generations. The mission was designed to address the water crisis in rural areas while promoting community participation in water conservation efforts. Launched on 24th April 2022 developed and rejuvenated 75 Amrit Sarovars (ponds) in each district of India. This results in the creation of around 50,000 water bodies across India. The primary goal of this mission is to conserve water for the future while also supporting livelihood activities like fisheries, irrigation, and eco-tourism. The project follows a “Whole of Government” approach, integrating various ministries and government departments to achieve its objectives. Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Conservation: Ensuring a sustainable water supply and enhancing groundwater recharge. Livelihood Generation: Using the water bodies for agriculture, fisheries, and tourism to support local economies. Community Participation: Engaging local citizens, freedom fighters, and martyrs’ families in the initiative. Environmental Enhancement: Planting trees such as Neem, Peepal, and Banyan around the water bodies. Infrastructure Development: Utilizing excavated soil for construction and other infrastructure projects.
<p>Waqf Amendment Act 2025</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre has assured the Supreme Court that no Waqf properties will be de-notified and no appointments to Waqf bodies will be made until the next hearing. The Centre has 7 days to respond to petitions challenging the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, with the next hearing set




for May.

Key Points:

- The Waqf Amendment Act 2025, also known as **UMEED Act**, passed in the Parliament in April 2025, proposes significant changes to the governance and management of Waqf properties in India.
- This legislation seeks to amend the **Waqf Act of 1995**, aiming to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the administration of Waqf properties while addressing long-standing issues within the system.
- **Key Provisions of the Act include:**
 - **Renamed as UMEED Act** – Stands for Unified Management Empowerment Efficiency and Development.
 - **Inclusion of Non-Muslims** – Non-Muslim members can now be part of central and state Waqf boards.
 - **'Waqf by User' Removed** – This provision is abolished; existing registered properties remain, except disputed ones.
 - **Section 40 Removed** – The power of Waqf Boards to declare any property as Waqf land is revoked.
 - **Trusts Excluded** – Muslim trusts governed by other laws will not be treated as Waqf properties.
 - **Eligibility for Dedication** – Only practicing Muslims (for at least 5 years) can dedicate property to Waqf.
 - **Inheritance Rights Protected** – Property can't be made Waqf until legal heirs, especially women and children, receive their share.
 - **Limitation Act Applied** – Legal claims over Waqf property now follow the Limitation Act, 1963.
 - **Protection of Tribal Land** – Waqf can't be established on land under Schedules V and VI of the Constitution.
 - **Waqf Tribunal Structure Retained** – A 3-member tribunal continues, as recommended by the JPC.
 - **Govt. Property Review** – Claims on government land as Waqf must be reviewed by a senior officer above collector rank.
 - **Dispute Resolution** – Final authority in land disputes lies with a senior government official.
 - **Appeals to High Court** – High Courts can now hear appeals against Waqf Tribunal decisions.
 - **Transparency Measures** – Mutawallis must register all property details on a central portal within six months.
 - **Financial Flexibility** – Waqf Boards' share reduced from 7% to 5% to allow more spending on charity.
 - **Income Audit** – Institutions earning over ₹1 lakh



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	<p>annually will undergo government audits.</p> <p>What is a Waqf Property?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Waqf is a property donated by Muslims for a specific religious, charitable, or private purpose. Ownership of the property is considered to belong to God, while its benefits are directed to the specified purposes.
<p>Person in news: Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib</p> 	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devotees across Punjab celebrated the Parkash Purb of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji with great reverence and devotion. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guru Teg Bahadur's name earlier was Teyag Mal and he was the ninth of ten Gurus of the Sikh religion. • His father and the sixth Guru of Sikhs, Guru Hargobind Sahib (1595-1644) changed the name to Teg Bahadur. • He got his name from his fighting and sword skills on the battlefield. • He built the city of Anandpur Sahib (in Rupnagar/Ropar district, on the edge of Shivalik Hills, near the Sutlej River, in Punjab). • Religious work: He contributed more than 100 poetic hymns to Granth Sahib which cover various topics, such as the nature of God, human attachments, body, mind, dignity, service etc. • Diplomat: He was instrumental in the conciliation between Raja Bishan Singh and Raja Paranpal, thus avoiding a war.
<p>Important Days: World Heritage Day 2025</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently, World Heritage Day was celebrated every year on 18th April to honor and protect cultural and natural heritage. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year theme is “Heritage under Threat from Disasters and Conflicts: Preparedness and Learning from 60 years of ICOMOS Actions.” • The World Heritage Convention is an international agreement created by UNESCO in 1972. • The World Heritage Convention was adopted by countries around the world to protect important cultural and natural sites. • As of October 2024, there are 1,223 World Heritage Sites across 196 countries (952 cultural, 231 natural, 40 mixed). • India has 43 World Heritage Sites, with Agra Fort, Taj Mahal, Ajanta, and Ellora Caves among the first listed in 1983. <p>About UNESCO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural



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	<p>Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Headquarters: Paris ○ It has 193 Members and 11 Associate Members (As of April 2020) and is governed by the General Conference and the Executive Board. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● About UNESCO World Heritage Sites: ● A World Heritage site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). ● World Heritage sites are designated by UNESCO for having cultural, historical, scientific or other forms of significance. ● The sites are judged to contain “cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.”
UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● According to the latest UNCTAD report, India is projected to remain the fastest-growing major economy in 2025 with a growth rate of 6.5%, even as global growth trends shift toward a recessionary path. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It was established as a permanent intergovernmental body by the United Nations General Assembly in 1964. ● Objective: To aid developing countries, particularly the least developed ones, and transitioning economies, in integrating effectively into the global economy. ● Members: 195 nations (including India) ● HQ: Geneva, Switzerland ● It helps countries to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understand options for addressing macro-level development challenges ○ Diversify their economies to reduce dependence on commodities ○ Limit exposure to financial volatility, among other benefits. ● Reports published by UNCTAD: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trade and Development Report ○ World Investment Report ○ The Least Developed Countries Report
International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) signed an agreement with the central government, officially establishing India as the headquarters and secretariat of the alliance, over two months after it became a full-fledged

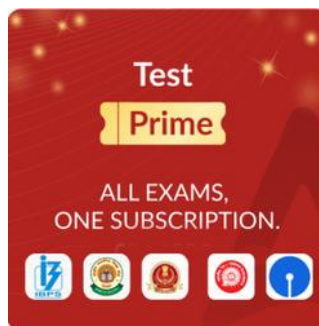


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treaty-based intergovernmental organisation.

Key Points:

- It was launched by the Prime Minister in Mysuru on **April 9, 2023**, at an event commemorating 50 years of **Project Tiger** in India.
- **Objective:** Strengthen global cooperation and efforts for conservation of seven big cat species (tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar and puma) and their habitats.
 - Out of the seven big cats, five — **tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, and cheetah** — are found in India.
- **The alliance aims to reach out to 97 range countries covering the natural habitats of the seven big cats.**
- IBCA has been conceived as a **multi-country, multi-agency coalition to strengthen global cooperation and mobilise financial and technical resources to support the entire ecosystem associated with the conservation of these species and their habitats.**
- It will serve as an evolving platform for convergence of knowledge and best practices, supporting existing specific inter-governmental platforms, while also providing direct support to recovery efforts in potential range habitats.
- IBCA would have a multi-pronged approach in broad-basing and establishing linkages in several areas and help in knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, networking, advocacy, finance, and resource support.
- IBCA governance consists of an assembly of members, a standing committee, and a secretariat with its headquarters in India.

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