



28 March 2024

National and International News

<p>Great Indian Bustard</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Supreme Court has recently appointed a seven-member committee to address the challenge of balancing conservation efforts for the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) with the promotion of renewable energy in the same regions. <p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps), also known as the Indian bustard, is a large bird found in the Indian subcontinent. It has a horizontal body and long bare legs, resembling an ostrich. These birds are often found in the same habitat as blackbuck and are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 in India. Formerly widespread in India and Pakistan, the Great Indian Bustard is now critically endangered, listed as such on the IUCN Red List since 2011. The population has drastically declined, with possibly fewer than 250 individuals remaining as of 2008. The main threats to the species are hunting and habitat loss. Historically, they were hunted for meat and sport, and poaching remains a concern. Increased agriculture due to irrigation projects like the Indira Gandhi Canal has also led to habitat loss. <p>Efforts of Conservation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address these challenges, the state of Rajasthan launched "Project Great Indian Bustard" on World Environment Day in 2013. The project aims to protect and manage bustard breeding grounds within protected areas and outside by fencing them off and providing secure breeding enclosures.
<p>Ramakrishna Mission</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swami Smaranananda Maharaj, the president of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission,



passed away in Kolkata.

About:

- The **Ramakrishna Mission, established in 1897 by Swami Vivekananda**, is a philanthropic organization rooted in the principles of karma yoga, **emphasizing selfless service to God**.
- Its multifaceted work includes healthcare, disaster relief, rural management, tribal welfare, education, and cultural activities.
- Additionally, the **mission provides religious and spiritual teachings and publishes numerous important Hindu texts**.
- The organization primarily promotes Advaita Vedanta and advocates four yogic ideals: **Jnana, Bhakti, Karma, and Raja yoga**.
- The Ramakrishna Movement, also known as the Vedanta Movement, was initiated by Swami Vivekananda to disseminate the message of Vedanta and uplift the underprivileged. Its motto is **"for one's own liberation and for the good of the world."**

Brucethoa ISRO



Context:

Researchers have recently identified a **new species of deep-sea isopod off the Kollam coast in Kerala, naming it Brucethoa ISRO** in honor of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Key points:


- This tiny crustacean, part of the Brucethoa genus, was found living as a parasite on the Spinyjaw greeneye fish.
- **It is the second species from this genus to be discovered in India.**

Isopods:

- **Isopods, which belong to the order "Isopoda,"** are invertebrates within the larger group of crustaceans, which includes crabs and shrimp.
- They are incredibly diverse, with **approximately 10,000 known species found in various habitats worldwide**, ranging from mountains and deserts to the deep sea.
- Despite their diversity, **isopods share common features**.
- They all possess **two pairs of antennae, compound eyes, and four sets of jaws**.
- Their bodies consist of **seven segments, each with its own pair of walking legs**.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additionally, isopods have a short abdominal section composed of six segments, known as "pleons," with one or more segments fused into a tail section. • About half of all isopod species live in the ocean, while others inhabit coastal and shelf waters, either moving along the seafloor or residing in plants. • While most isopods are free-living, some marine species are parasitic, living on other animals.
<p>Philippines</p>  <p>© Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India has voiced support for the sovereignty of the Philippines, a move that has drawn a reaction from China. <p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Philippines, officially known as the Republic of the Philippines, is an archipelagic nation in Southeast Asia, comprising 7,641 islands with a total land area of 300,000 square kilometers. • The country is divided into three main geographical regions from north to south: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. • With a diverse population, it is the world's twelfth-most-populous country. • Manila serves as the capital, while Quezon City is its most populous city. <p>Border Countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographically, the Philippines is bordered by the South China Sea to the west, the Philippine Sea to the east, and the Celebes Sea to the south. • It shares maritime borders with Taiwan to the north, Japan to the northeast, Palau to the east and southeast, Indonesia to the south, Malaysia to the southwest, Vietnam to the west, and China to the northwest. • Due to its location as an island nation on the Pacific Ring of Fire and its proximity to the equator, the Philippines is prone to earthquakes and typhoons. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically, the Philippines has a mixed economic system that combines private freedom with centralized economic planning and government regulation.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The country is a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). • The Philippines has experienced significant economic growth in recent decades, with an average annual growth rate of approximately 6% since 2010. • In 2023, the Philippine economy was estimated to be \$435.67 billion, with a per capita income of \$12,127 in 2024. • The dispute between China and the Philippines centers on China's claim to the Spratly Islands, which it asserts dates back centuries. • China contends that almost the entire South China Sea, including the Spratlys and other island groups, falls within its sphere of influence, a claim strongly disputed by the Philippines and Vietnam, among others.
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Kerala Regional News

<p>Kochi Water Metro Proposes Green Hydrogen-Powered Vessel</p> 	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kochi Water Metro aims for sustainability by exploring hydrogen-fuel-cell technology. • Plans to introduce green hydrogen-powered vessels in the near future. • The Managing Director emphasises the need for technological advancement for sustainability. • Exploring Cochin Shipyard Ltd's hydrogen-fuel-cell vessel for future fleet. • Acknowledges initial cost challenges of green hydrogen, anticipates future cost-effectiveness. • Recent operations launched on South Chittoor, Eloor, and Cheranalloor routes. • Trial run completed for Fort Kochi-High Court stretch, service expected to start in April. • Focus on attracting tourists, with plans to operate three boats on the route. • Construction progressing for terminals at various locations. • Currently operates services on multiple routes including High Court-Vypeen and Vyttila-Kakkanad.
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Efforts to Restore Water Bodies in Forested Areas of Kerala Show Positive Outcomes.



Context:

- Collaborative effort between forest department and local residents results in restoration of 160 water bodies across Aryankavu, Punalur, Pathanapuram, Ranni, and Konni forest ranges since January.
- 50 new ponds constructed along riverbanks in each forest range of the southern circle.
- Initiative aims to mitigate animal-human conflicts by enhancing water availability in forest habitat.
- Significant decrease in animal movement from forest to residential zones reported by forest department.
- Decrease in incidents of elephant and wildlife conflicts noted in Ranni, Konni, Achankovil, and Punalur division areas.
- Total of 909 fatalities and 7,492 injuries recorded in human-animal conflicts between 2016 and 2023.
- Efforts yield positive results, leading to reduction in man-animal conflicts in Kollam, Thiruvananthapuram, and Pathanamthitta districts.
- Plans to install GPS devices in elephant corridor areas to monitor movements underway.
- Approximately 104 WhatsApp groups were established to facilitate communication among officials and local residents for addressing man-animal conflicts efficiently.

Kerala Government Declares April 26 as Holiday for Lok Sabha Elections.

Key Points:

- Kerala government declares a public holiday on April 26 for Lok Sabha Elections.
- Government offices and educational institutions remain closed on polling day.
- Holiday pay applicable for commercial establishments; Labour Commissioner tasked with declaring holiday for private firms under Kerala Shops and Commercial Establishments Act.
- Government order ensures wages of employees are not reduced or denied due to holiday.
- Lok Sabha Elections, spanning seven phases nationwide, commence on April 19.
- Voting for all 20 constituencies in Kerala scheduled for April 26.
- Counting of votes and announcement of results set for June 4.



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Kerala Kalamandalam Breaks Tradition: Boys Now Permitted to Learn 'Mohiniyattam

Context:

- Kerala Kalamandalam Deemed University opens admission for boys to learn Mohiniyattam, marking a milestone for gender equality.
- Decision made unanimously during administrative meeting following RLV Ramakrishnan's Mohiniyattam recital.
- **Boys from Class 8 to Post Graduation now have the opportunity to study Mohiniyattam at the state's premier cultural university.**
- Controversy sparked by criticism from dance teacher Sathyabhama, who voiced concerns about male dancers' performances in Mohiniyattam.
- Sathyabhama's comments on a YouTube channel, including remarks on appearance and stance, stirred debate on social media.
- **RLV Ramakrishnan accuses Sathyabhama of making racist remarks and files a complaint against her.**
- **Kerala Human Rights Commission and SC/ST Commission register a case against Sathyabhama over alleged casteist remarks.**
- Ramakrishnan, brother of late actor Kalabhavan Mani, **files a police complaint against Sathyabhama for insulting him.**

Note on Mohiniyattam:

- Mohiniyattam is a classical solo dance form from **Kerala, India**, that honours the **Hindu god Vishnu in his incarnation as the enchantress Mohini.**
- The name translates to "**the dance of Mohini**", and the dance is **characterised by graceful movements, soft footwork**, important hand gestures, and subtle facial expressions.

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