



## Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve

**Contex:** The Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve has been officially declared the 56th tiger reserve in India, marking a significant milestone in tiger conservation.

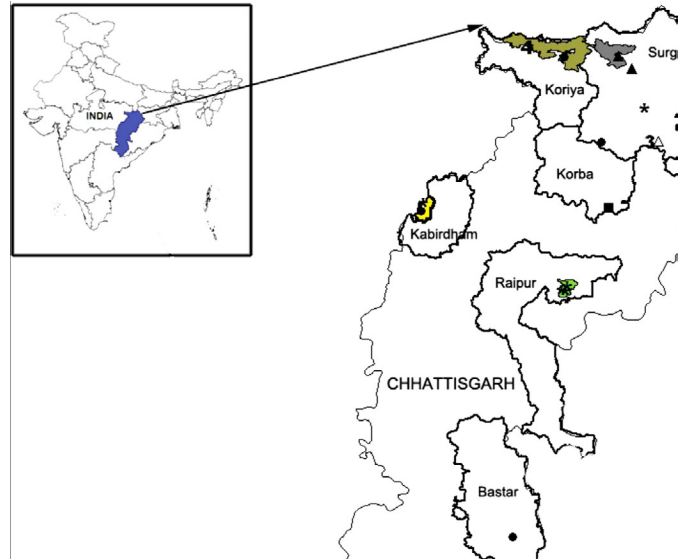
### About Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve:

- Third largest tiger reserve in India, after Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem (Andhra Pradesh) and Manas (Assam).
- Chhattisgarh now has four tiger reserves, strengthening the state's commitment to tiger conservation.
- Part of a landscape complex spanning nearly 4,500 square kilometers.
- Connected to:**
  - Sanjay Dubri Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh) to the north.
  - Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh) to the west.
  - Palamau Tiger Reserve (Jharkhand) to the east.
  - This connectivity forms a significant wildlife corridor across state boundaries.
- Home to threatened species such as the Indian wolf, sloth bear, leopard, and the Bengal tiger.
- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) approved the reserve's notification in October 2021.
- Located in the Chota Nagpur Plateau and Baghelkhand Plateau, known for their ecological diversity. Supports various terrains, dense forests, and water bodies that are critical for the survival of the Bengal tiger.

### About Project Tiger:

- Launched in 1973 by the Government of India under the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change, Project Tiger aims to conserve the Bengal tiger and maintain the ecological balance of its habitat. Initially launched in 9 tiger reserves, it now covers 56 across India.
- The project focuses on preserving tigers for their scientific, economic, and ecological value, adopting a holistic ecosystem approach that includes the conservation of prey species. Managed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), it involves financial assistance for tiger reserves and anti-poaching

measures.



### Key strategies include:

- Core-buffer areas:** National parks for strict protection and mixed-use buffer zones.
- Technological innovations:** UAV surveillance and M-STRIPES for monitoring.
- Special Tiger Protection Forces (STPF) for anti-poaching.

### About Tigers in India:

- As of 2023, India's tiger population exceeds 3,000, making it the world leader in tiger conservation. Project Tiger also promotes community engagement and ecotourism, supporting both conservation and local livelihoods.

## 5-Year Strategic Action Plan By India and Italy

**Context:** On the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni unveiled a comprehensive five-year Joint Strategic Action Plan for 2025-29.

### Key focus area:

- This strategic blueprint outlines an ambitious vision for collaboration across key sectors, including defence,

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trade, energy, space, and technology.

### Defence and Security Cooperation

- A major focus of the action plan is strengthening defence ties between India and Italy. The two leaders agreed to hold Joint Defence Consultative meetings and Joint Staff Talks annually, facilitating exchanges of information, joint visits, and training activities.

### Economic and Industrial Cooperation

- The action plan envisions robust economic cooperation, particularly through industrial partnerships. Italy and India aim to promote technological collaboration in sectors such as automotive, semiconductors, infrastructure, and advanced manufacturing.

### Connectivity and Infrastructure Development

- A key component of the action plan is enhancing connectivity. Both leaders committed to strengthening maritime and land infrastructure, with particular attention to the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor project.

### Space and Scientific Cooperation

- One of the most promising areas of collaboration highlighted in the plan is in space exploration. India's Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Italy's Italian Space Agency (ASI) are set to expand their cooperation in various fields, including Earth observation, heliophysics, and lunar science.

### Energy Transition and Global Cooperation

- India and Italy also pledged to strengthen their commitment to global sustainability initiatives. The two countries will work together on energy transition efforts, notably through the Global Biofuels Alliance and the International Solar Alliance. These partnerships aim to accelerate the shift to renewable energy sources and reduce the global carbon footprint.

### About India and Italy Relationship:

- Diplomatic relations between India and Italy were established in 1947.
- Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Italy in 1953.
- Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, President of Italy, was the first Italian head of state to visit India in February 1995.
- Indian PM paid his official visit to Italy in October 2021

to attend the G20 Summit. In March 2023, the Italian PM paid her first-ever state visit to India as the guest of honour of Raisina Dialogue.

- The relationship between India and Italy was elevated to Strategic Partnership in March 2023 during the visit of the Italian Prime Minister to India.
- A connection was identified between the Indo-Pacific, in which India plays a leading role, and the enlarged Mediterranean where Italy sits at the centre of the Mediterranean Sea and acts as a natural bridge towards the Indo-Pacific.
- Italy is India's 4th largest trading partner in the European Union, after Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands.
- Bilateral trade crossed US\$ 14.253 billion in 2022-23, with India's exports to Italy at US\$ 8.691 billion.
- India's Department for Science and Technology (DST) and the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste established the DST-ICTP Ramanujan Prize in Mathematics for developing countries. The 2022 prize was awarded to Prof. Mohamad Moustafa of Senegal.
- The Executive Programme on Cultural Cooperation for the term 2023-2027 was signed in 2023, further strengthening cultural diplomacy.

## India's First Indigenous Antibiotic, Nafithromycin, Launched to Combat Drug Resistance

**Context:** India has taken a significant step in the fight against antimicrobial resistance (AMR) with the soft launch of Nafithromycin, the country's first indigenous antibiotic.

- Announced by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, Nafithromycin is designed to treat Community-Acquired Bacterial Pneumonia (CABP), a global health concern exacerbated by drug-resistant bacteria.
- Developed with support from the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), this new antibiotic offers a promising solution in the battle against AMR.

### Key Features of Nafithromycin:

- **Ten Times More Effective:** Nafithromycin has been

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shown to be ten times more effective than existing antibiotics like azithromycin, offering a significant advantage against drug-resistant pneumonia.

- **Shorter Treatment Course:** Unlike traditional antibiotics that require extended treatment, Nafithromycin offers a more convenient 3-day regimen, enhancing patient compliance and effectiveness.
- **Broader Pathogen Coverage:** This antibiotic targets both typical and atypical pathogens, filling a critical gap in antibiotic development. No new antibiotics in this class have been developed in over 30 years.
- **Superior Safety and Tolerability:** Clinical trials have demonstrated Nafithromycin's minimal gastrointestinal side effects, no significant drug-food interactions, and high patient tolerance, making it suitable for a wide range of individuals.

development took 14 years, with an investment of ₹500 crores. Clinical trials were conducted across the U.S., Europe, and India, ensuring the antibiotic's effectiveness in diverse populations.

### Significance for India:

- **Public-Private Collaboration:** The creation of Nafithromycin highlights the successful collaboration between the government, research institutions, and the pharmaceutical industry, strengthening India's ability to develop homegrown healthcare solutions.
- **Global Health Leadership:** The launch positions India as a critical player in the global effort against AMR, contributing to global awareness, especially during World AMR Awareness Week.

### What is Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)?

- Antimicrobial resistance occurs when microorganisms, including bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites, evolve to resist the drugs designed to kill or inhibit their growth. This resistance makes infections more difficult to treat, resulting in longer illnesses, higher healthcare costs, and increased mortality.
- While AMR can naturally occur over time through genetic changes, its spread has been accelerated by the overuse and misuse of antimicrobial drugs, such as antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals, and antiparasitic medications.

## India Struggles with Limited Effectiveness of Gender Responsive Budgeting: UN Report

**Context:** India's efforts in Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) have been facing significant challenges, as highlighted by a recent United Nations report. The report pointed out key issues such as the exclusion of essential women-focused programs and the lack of sex-disaggregated data, which hinder the effectiveness of GRB in addressing gender disparities.

### What is Gender Budgeting?

- Gender budgeting is a tool to ensure public resources are allocated efficiently, considering the distinct needs of women and marginalized groups.



### Addressing the Global AMR Crisis:

- **Global Threat of AMR:** Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is one of the biggest challenges in global healthcare. It makes infections more difficult to treat, increases disease severity, and drives up healthcare costs. Pneumonia, responsible for over 2 million deaths annually, contributes significantly to the global burden, with India accounting for 23% of these cases.
- **Development Milestones:** Nafithromycin's

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- India ratified the CEDAW in 1993 and introduced its first GBS in the 2005-2006 Union Budget.
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) acts as the central nodal agency, while the Ministry of Finance mandates the establishment of Gender Budget Cells across ministries.

### Key Findings from the UN Report:

- Exclusion of Key Programs Benefiting Women:** Essential programs in healthcare, education, and social welfare often miss out, leading to insufficient focus on gender-specific needs.
- Lack of Sex-Disaggregated Data:** India struggles to collect and use sex-disaggregated data, hindering effective tracking of resources and their impact on women.
- Weak Monitoring and Implementation:** Limited accountability in tracking funds allocated for women's welfare calls for stronger oversight.
- Inadequate Integration in Budget Prioritization:** Gender considerations need to be integrated from the beginning of the budgeting process.

### Recommendations for India:

- Improved Data Collection:** Enhancing sex-disaggregated data will allow accurate tracking and

better addressing of women's needs.

- Stronger Monitoring:** Improved monitoring mechanisms at the sectoral level will ensure funds are utilized effectively.
- Engagement of Subnational Governments:** Gender budgeting should be adopted at the state and local levels to reach marginalized women, especially in rural areas.
- Capacity Building:** Training officials in gender budgeting will ensure effective implementation.
- Public Participation:** Increased participation of women in the budgeting process will foster greater inclusivity.

### Highlights of the Gender Budget Statement (GBS) 2024-25

- Rise in Pro-Women Allocations:** 6.8% of the total budget for 2024-25 is allocated to pro-women schemes, up from 5% historically.
- New Reporting Structure – Part C:** Part C includes schemes with up to 30% allocation for women, such as PM Kisan. (Part A covers schemes with 100% allocation, like SAMARTHYA, making up nearly 40% of total GBS allocations. Part B includes schemes with 30%-99% allocation, such as PM AJAY.)

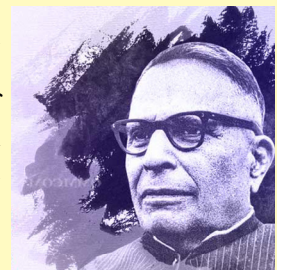
## Power Packed News

### 125th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab

- The 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab, also known as “Utkal Keshari,” will be celebrated on November 22, 2024, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, will be the Chief Guest, along with several other ministers. The event will feature the release of a commemorative stamp and coin in honor of Dr. Mahtab.
- Sahitya Akademi will also release books, including a monograph in Odia and translations of his work Gaon Majlis in Hindi and English. An exhibition showcasing Dr. Mahtab's life and contributions will be organized by the Ministry of Culture, along with artworks created by Odia artists during a National Painting Camp.

#### About Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab:

- Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab, born on November 21, 1899, was a freedom fighter, writer, and social reformer. He actively participated in India's independence movement and was jailed multiple times.
- As the Chief Minister of Odisha, he played a key role in integrating Odisha into India and promoting its development.
- He also made significant contributions to literature with his books History of Orissa and Gaon Majlis, which earned him the Sahitya Akademi Award. His efforts have left a lasting impact on Odisha and India.



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### India Wins Women's Asian Champions Trophy in Hockey

- On 20 November 2024, India won the Women's Asian Champions Trophy in Hockey, securing their second consecutive title.
- The final match, held at the Rajgir Hockey Stadium in Bihar, saw India defeat China 1-0. Deepika scored the winning goal in the 31st minute from a penalty corner, and finished the tournament as the top scorer with 11 goals. She was also named the best player of the tournament.
- This victory marked India's third Women's Asian Champions Trophy title, equaling South Korea's record of three wins. India had previously won the title in 2016 and 2023. Japan secured third place by defeating Malaysia 4-1 in the bronze medal match.

#### About Women's Asian Champions Trophy:

- The Women's Asian Champions Trophy is a biennial international competition featuring the top six women's hockey teams from Asia. The tournament includes teams from member associations of the Asian Hockey Federation. South Korea holds the most titles, with three wins, while India and Japan have each won the tournament twice. This tournament continues to highlight the competitive spirit and skill of Asian women's hockey teams.

### New Microbe Identified Affecting Sesame Plants in West Bengal

- Researchers have identified a new microbe responsible for a peculiar disease affecting sesame crops in Midnapore, West Bengal. Researchers, led by Prof. Gaurab Gangopadhyay from Bose Institute, identified the causative agent as a bacterium called Candidatus Phytoplasma, a type of Mollicutes bacteria.
- This bacterium thrives in the phloem of plants and is transmitted primarily through phloem-feeding insects such as leafhoppers and plant-hoppers.
- The disease results in sesame plants reverting to a vegetative state after reaching the flowering and fruiting stages. Flowers that are typically white with pinkish tinges turn green, disrupting the crop's normal growth cycle.
- Sesame, known as the "Queen of Oil," has been valued for its medicinal properties, including antioxidants that benefit heart health. However, a recent disease has caused a significant concern for sesame farmers in the region.
- This discovery, published in the Plant Molecular Biology Reporter in 2024, sheds light on the disease's impact on sesame plants' metabolic pathways. Understanding this microbe could lead to better management strategies for sesame crops, which are crucial for India's agricultural and economic sectors.



### WAVES: Prasar Bharati's New OTT Platform for Digital Streaming

On November 20, 2024, Prasar Bharati launched its new OTT platform, WAVES, at the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa. The platform is designed to meet the growing demand for digital streaming services while maintaining a focus on family-friendly and culturally rich content.

#### Key Features:

- Content Selection:** WAVES offers classic Indian television shows like Ramayan, Mahabharat, Shaktimaan, and Hum Log, reviving nostalgia for older generations while appealing to modern viewers.
- Diverse Offerings:** The platform includes a mix of news, documentaries, and regional content, supporting inclusivity and reflecting India's cultural diversity.
- Multi-Language and Multi-Genre:** WAVES provides content in over 12 languages and spans more than ten genres, catering to a wide audience across the nation. **Special Programs:** Notably, WAVES will feature live broadcasts such as the Aarti of Lord Shri Ram Lalla from Ayodhya and the Prime Minister's Mann Ki Baat.

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