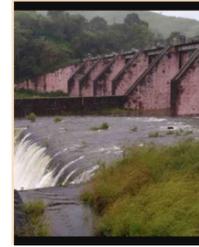


THE PALA CIVIL TIMES

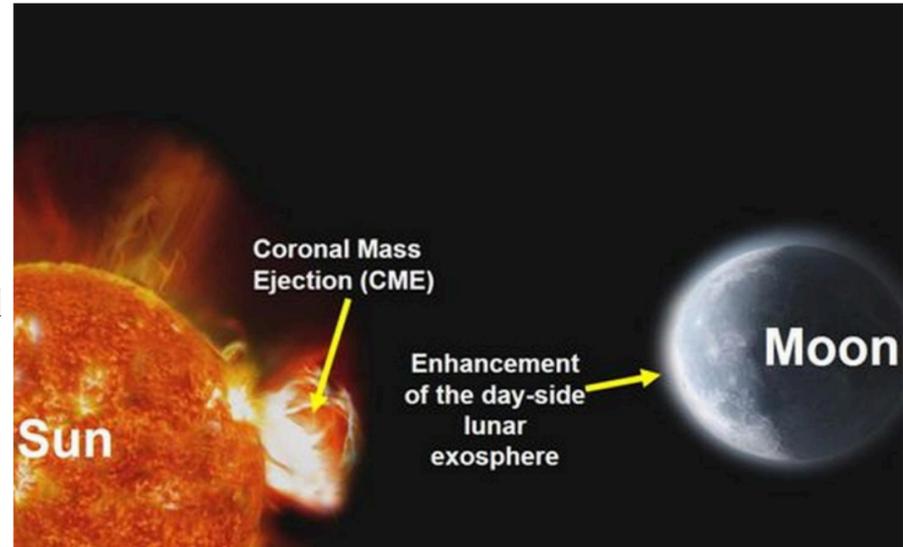


Civil Service Institute | Pala | Thiruvananthapuram | South India's Premier Civil Service Coaching Institute | www.civilservicepala.com

 <p>Early northeast monsoon onset creates 'triple whammy' in South India The Hindu: 21/10/2025- Page 1</p>	 <p>Why India is engaging the Taliban? The Indian Express: 21/10/2025- Page 1</p>	 <p>European Council approves 'New Strategic EU-India Agenda', efforts to conclude FTA The Hindu: 21/10/2025- Page 2</p>	 <p>India rapidly emerging as global hub for services exports: NSE The Hindu: 21/10/2025- Page 4</p>	 <p>Myanmar military raids major cybercrime center, detains over 2,000 people The Indian Express: 21/10/2025- Page 13</p>
---	---	---	--	---

Chandrayaan-2 makes first-ever observations on lunar exosphere: ISRO

The lunar orbiter of India's second moon mission, Chandrayaan-2, has made the first-ever observation of the effects of the sun's coronal mass ejection (CME) on the moon. The Chandra's Atmospheric Composition Explorer-2 (CHACE-2) payload onboard the orbiter had made the observation. The CHACE-2 payload aboard the spacecraft's orbiter showed an increase in total pressure of dayside lunar exosphere when impacted by the sun's coronal mass ejection, says space agency



The space agency added that the opportunity to directly observe the effects of the CME on the moon came on a rare occurrence, on May 10, 2024, when a series of CMEs were hurled by the sun. ISRO said that this observation would provide scientific insight into the understanding of the lunar exosphere and space weather effects on the moon.

CIVIL SERVICE INSTITUTE PALA

Always at the forefront in nation building

WELCOMES

Smt. Droupadi Murmu

Hon'ble President of India



To the Education Hub of Kerala

PALA



Civil Service Institute Pala

GLORIOUS 27 YEARS | 375 SUCCESS STORIES | Pioneers in IAS/KAS Coaching

Arunapuram, Pala, Kottayam District, Kerala - 686574, Mobile No: 9539381100, 8281447770



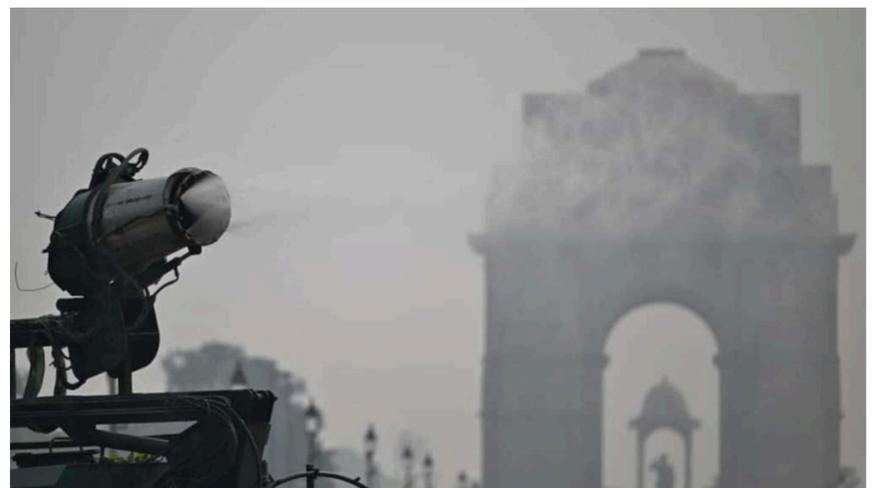


President Droupudi Murmu to arrive in Thiruvananthapuram for a four-day Kerala visit

- President Droupudi Murmu will arrive in Thiruvananthapuram on Tuesday (October 21, 2025) evening for a four-day tour of Kerala.
- The Special Indian Air Force (IAF) plane carrying Ms Murmu will touch at the IAF's Forward Base Support Unit enclave of the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport.
- Kerala Governor Rajendra Arlerkar, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Thiruvananthapuram Mayor Arya Rajendran will welcome her.
- Ms. Murmu will proceed to the Raj Bhavan where she will spend the night. On Wednesday (October 22, 2025), Ms. Murmu will visit Sabarimala Ayyappa Temple for darshan.
- A convoy of four-wheel drive vehicles will ferry her to the uphill Ayyappa temple via the Swamy Ayyappan Road.
- On Thursday (October 23, 2025), Ms Murmu will unveil the bust of former President K.R. Narayanan.
- She will inaugurate the Mahasamadhi Centenary of Sree Narayana Guru at the Sivagiri Madhom in Varkala.
- Later, Ms. Murmu will leave for Kottayam to inaugurate the valedictory function of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of the St Thomas College in Palaa.
- On Friday (October 24, 2025), Ms. Murmu will inaugurate the centenary celebrations of the St. Teresa's College at Ernakulam and leave by an IAF special flight for Delhi.
- The State police have intensified security in view of the President's visit. In Thiruvananthapuram, the police have banned parking on either side of the Shanghumugham Air Force Station-Raj Bhavan road. The City Police have alerted citizens of traffic disruptions.

Delhi's air pollution 15 times WHO limit; parts of city reel under 'severe' pollution

- After people burst firecrackers across Delhi on Deepavali night, openly flouting an existing ban allowing only green firecrackers from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., overall air pollution in Delhi on Tuesday (October 21, 2025) morning was about 15 times the limit prescribed by the World Health Organisation (WHO), according to official data.
- Delhi was the "most polluted" major city in the world on Tuesday (October 21, 2025) morning, according to IQAir's (a Swiss air quality technology company) live data for over 120 cities. Delhi's AQI of 429 was the worst in the list, followed by Lahore (260) and Karachi (182).
- The overall air quality of Delhi was in the "very poor" category on Tuesday (October 21, 2025) morning with four of the 36 monitoring stations recording "severe" air pollution.
- Severe level air pollution "affects healthy people" and "seriously impacts" those with existing diseases, according to CPCB.
- An AQI between 51 and 100 is "satisfactory", 101 and 200 is termed as "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe", as per the CPCB.
- Several other towns and cities in north India also witnessed "very poor" air quality, as per CPCB's data.
- Every winter, air pollution spikes in Delhi-NCR and most parts of the larger Indo-Gangetic plains (IGP) mainly due to meteorological factors such lower wind speed and drop in temperature, and pollution from stubble burning during October-November and bursting of firecrackers worsens it.



STATE

PRELIMS CORNER :

1. Which national agency has launched “CyTrain” a portal for online training of different stakeholders in Cybercrime investigations and prosecution?

- (a) C-DAC
- (b) NITI Aayog
- (c) CERTIn
- (d) NCRB

2. Ichamati river is a transboundary river that flows through?

- (a) India and Bangladesh
- (b) India and Bhutan
- (c) India and Nepal
- (d) India and Tibet

3. ‘The Competitiveness roadmap for India@100’ sometimes seen in news recently, is released by

- (a) NITI Aayog
- (b) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
- (c) Department of Economic Affairs
- (d) Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister

4. Coco Islands and Preparis Island are part of?

- (a) Bangladesh
- (b) Myanmar
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) Thailand

DETAILED ANSWER KEY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE CHRONICLE PAGE

Early northeast monsoon onset creates ‘triple whammy’ in South India

- An important problem arises for Tamil Nadu and Kerala when the two phases of the monsoon overlap or if both States experience intense rainfall simultaneously.
- The northeast monsoon has kicked in early this year, and at least four days sooner for the second year running, over Tamil Nadu.
- Last year, this phase of the monsoon ended with the State recording 33% more rain than the long-period average, and forecasters expect this year to go the same way as well.
- Historically, policymakers and State authorities have consistently interpreted excess rain as a positive.
- Climate change is complicating this calculus because while rainfall volumes increase, they’re often concentrated in short and localised bursts, delivering over-large quantities of water in places that often can’t absorb them in full.
- As a result, it might be time to reconsider the idea that “excess is good”.
- In urban areas, surfaces paved with concrete and asphalt keep them from absorbing heavy rainfall, leading to rapid runoff that overwhelms drainage systems, leading in turn to flash floods, low-lying areas being inundated, damage to property, and disrupted transportation.
- The sheer volume of water can also lead to sewage overflows, where untreated wastewater is discharged into streets and waterbodies, unleashing significant health and environmental hazards.
- The agricultural sector’s vulnerability to excessive rainfall is well-known: waterlogged soil suffocates plant roots, washes away seeds and young crops, sheds the nutrient-rich topsoil over time, and ultimately loses its long-term fertility.
- Too much moisture can also ease the spread of fungal diseases and pests that devastate crops and undercut yield, leading to significant financial losses for farmers.
- Intense bursts can also wash fertilizers, pesticides, and other agricultural debris into waterbodies, including reservoirs, degrading water quality.
- Finally, stagnant water becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes, increasing the risk of vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever and zoonotic diseases like leptospirosis, Japanese encephalitis, and scrub typhus.
- The cumulative impact of these issues translates to significant economic and social costs.

Why India is engaging the Taliban?

- India has historically enjoyed warm ties with Afghanistan except the period when the Taliban were in power in the 1990s.
- The monarchy in Afghanistan remained equidistant to India and Pakistan during the conflicts between the two countries.
- But the Taliban's return in 2021, after two decades of American occupation, posed a major regional challenge to India.
- Last week, India hosted the Taliban's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi and decided to upgrade its 'technical mission' in Kabul to the status of embassy, in a major move signalling that India was moving a step closer to recognising the Taliban regime.
- Many saw the Taliban's triumph as a major strategic victory for Pakistan, which always wanted to deepen influence in Afghanistan for strategic depth.
- India, on the other side, was worried because of the rise of a Pakistan-backed Islamist insurgency to power.
- India risked losing the influence it had built in Afghanistan over the past two decades.
- India had invested some \$3 billion in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2021.
- The Taliban's return to power in Kabul invariably strengthened the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, also known as the Pakistan Taliban), which has stepped up attacks inside Pakistani territory.
- Islamabad-Rawalpindi accuses the Taliban regime of providing a safe haven to the TTP across the porous Af-Pak borders.
- India saw this as an opening to steer up the reorganisation of its ties with the Taliban.
- While improving ties with the Taliban has its strategic or tactical benefits, the key question India faces is whether it should offer formal recognition to the regime or wait for an agreement between the Taliban and the UN or other major countries.
- The international community continues to press the Taliban, which have barred women and young girls from going to schools and colleges, and imposed restrictions on women joining the workforce, to respect the fundamental freedoms of Afghans.
- If the regime gains international legitimacy without offering any concession, a window to force the Taliban to at least introduce some reforms would be closed.

India's jet-lagged fighter fleet

- Over the last decade, the Indian Air Force has been asking for a new generation of fighter jets.
- With the MiG-21 now decommissioned, the number of squadrons that fly fighter jets is 70% lower than the sanctioned strength.
- Delay in indigenous manufacture and international procurement is the reason behind the 'immediate gap'
- With the retirement of its last MiG-21 squadrons — No. 23 Panthers and No. 3 Cobras, which together operated 36 jets — the IAF has 29 fighter squadrons, against a sanctioned strength of 42. This has been the lowest since the 1960s.
- The new Tejas is meant to take the place of the now-decommissioned MiG. However, delays have resulted in a gap in the IAF, with the full Tejas fleet Mk1A only available about four years down the line.
- Also, experts say, India is producing fighter jets a couple of generations behind, compared to other countries like China.
- However, it also needed a new-generation substitute. There have been many policy promises through the decades, since the early 1980s, when India conceived of an indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) programme that would produce fighter jets to replace the aging MiG-21.
- For over a decade now, successive chiefs of the Indian Air Force (IAF) have flagged the urgent need for more fighter aircraft to maintain a combat edge over India's adversaries.
- AMCA (advanced medium combat aircraft) is India's first indigenous fifth-generation stealth fighter, touted as the next big leap. Expected to take flight within this decade and enter service by 2035, it represents India's ambition to compete in the high-end aerospace domain.
- The IAF chief has underlined the pressing arithmetic of force modernisation. "To maintain a comfortable strength, we need two squadrons — around 30 to 40 aircraft — produced every year," he said. "Replacement is not a choice; it's a necessity."
- The more advanced LCA Mk2, a 4.5-generation fighter intended to replace the Mirage-2000, Jaguar, and MiG-29 fleets, is still in development. Conceptualised in 2012, its first prototype has been delayed multiple times, with that now expected around 2026.



European Council approves 'New Strategic EU-India Agenda', efforts to conclude FTA

- The council called on the European Commission to take forward the articulation and implementation of this 'New Strategic EU-India Agenda' on the basis of the priorities set out in the Joint Communication last month.
- The Belgium-based council, responsible for the general political direction and priorities of the 27-member economic bloc, highlighted efforts on both sides to conclude an India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) by the end of the year.
- Its conclusions this week endorse the Joint Communication on the new agenda and its objective of deepening EU-India ties, including prosperity and sustainability, technology and innovation, security and defence, and connectivity and global issues.
- The European Council noted that closer collaboration between the EU and India on security and defence matters based on the principles of mutual trust and respect were of particular importance against the backdrop of an increasingly complex geopolitical outlook.
- It said the EU will continue to engage with India on all aspects of "Russia's war of aggression against the Ukraine".
- It also emphasised the joint capacity and responsibility of the EU and India to safeguard multilateralism and the rules-based international order with the UN Charter at its core, as well as the multilateral trading system, in particular the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
- The council takes note of the intention to pursue work towards the establishment of a security and defence partnership, which could also facilitate defence industrial cooperation when appropriate.
- Both sides committed to raising the Strategic Partnership to a higher level to boost shared prosperity, strengthen security, and tackle major global challenges together, the Joint Communication read.

India rapidly emerging as global hub for services exports: NSE

- "India will be to services, what China has been to manufacturing. It is emerging as global hub for services exports," NSE chief economist Tirthankar Patnaik said.
- "India is rapidly emerging as a global hub for services exports with a compound annual growth rate of 14.8% outpacing goods exports, which grew at 9.8%," National Stock Exchange (NSE) officials said.
- The NSE highlighted robust growth in the services sector, structural reforms, and demographic advantages driving the country's economic transformation.
- India's services exports have grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.8% over the past three decades, outpacing goods exports which grew at 9.8%.
- With a 4.3% share in global services exports, India now ranks seventh globally, led by telecom, IT, and business services that contribute nearly three-fourths of total service exports. Technology exports alone crossed \$200 billion in FY25.
- India has also emerged as the world's largest hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs). Their number has risen from 1,430 in FY19 to 1,700 in FY24, and is projected to touch 2,200 by FY30, employing up to 26 lakh professionals.
- Liberalisation through faceless assessments, simplified labour laws, and performance-linked incentive schemes have boosted investor confidence apart from privatisation and globalisation measures, including bank mergers, foreign trade agreements, FDI expansion, and the internationalisation of UPI, which have further strengthened the economy.
- India is poised to emerge as a \$5-trillion economy over the next few years, propelled by robust service exports, a young and expanding workforce, and increasing participation in capital markets.
- The presentations projected India's real GDP growth at 6.3-6.8%, with nominal growth estimated at around 12%. "At this pace, India is set to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027, overtaking Japan and Germany," the NSE data showed.
- The exchange outlined a multi-pronged growth strategy focussed on expanding private investment, strengthening MSMEs, bridging the education-employment gap and promoting green financing and agriculture-led growth.

INTERNATIONAL

Japan's Parliament elects Sanae Takaichi as nation's first female Prime Minister

- Sanae Takaichi will replace Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, ending a three-month political vacuum and wrangling since the Liberal Democratic Party's disastrous election loss in July.
- The ultraconservative Sanae Takaichi was elected a day after her struggling party struck a coalition deal with a new partner expected to pull her governing bloc further to the right.
- Mr. Ishiba, who lasted only one year as Prime Minister, resigned with his Cabinet earlier in the day, paving the way for his successor.
- Ms. Takaichi is running on deadline, as she prepares for a major policy speech later this week, talks with U.S. President Donald Trump and regional summits. She needs to quickly tackle rising prices and compile economy-boosting measures by late December to address public frustration.
- While she is the first woman serving as Japan's Prime Minister, she is in no rush to promote gender equality or diversity.
- Ms. Takaichi is among Japanese politicians who have stonewalled measures for women's advancement. Ms. Takaichi supports the imperial family's male-only succession and opposes same-sex marriage and allowing separate surnames for married couples.
- A protege of assassinated former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Ms. Takaichi is expected to emulate his policies including a stronger military and economy, as well as revising Japan's pacifist constitution.
- With her potentially weak grip on power, it's unknown how much Ms. Takaichi will be able to achieve.
- Also an admirer of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Ms. Takaichi was first elected to parliament in 1993 and has served in a number of senior party and government posts, including as ministers of economic security and internal affairs.



Myanmar military raids major cybercrime center, detains over 2,000 people

- Myanmar's military has shut down a major online scam operation near the border with Thailand, detaining more than 2,000 people and seizing dozens of Starlink satellite internet terminals.
- Myanmar is notorious for hosting cyberscam operations responsible for bilking people all over the world.
- These usually involve gaining victims' confidence online with romantic ploys and bogus investment pitches.
- The centers are infamous for recruiting workers from other countries under false pretenses, promising them legitimate jobs and then holding them captive and forcing them to carry out criminal activities.
- Scam operations were in the international spotlight last week when the United States and Britain enacted sanctions against organizers of a major Cambodian cyberscam gang, and its alleged ringleader was indicted by a federal court in New York.
- the army raided KK Park, a well-documented cybercrime center, as part of operations starting in early September to suppress online fraud, illegal gambling, and cross-border cybercrime.
- KK Park is located on the outskirts of Myawaddy, a major trading town on the border with Thailand in Myanmar's Kayin state.
- The area is only loosely under the control of Myanmar's military government, and also falls under the influence of ethnic minority militias.
- However, the Karen, who are part of the larger armed resistance movement in Myanmar's civil war, deny any involvement in the scams.
- Starlink is part of Elon Musk's SpaceX company and the terminals link to its satellites. It does not have licensed operations in Myanmar, but at least hundreds of terminals have been smuggled into the Southeast Asian nation.
- Facing pressure from China, Thailand and Myanmar's governments launched an operation in February in which they released thousands of trafficked people from scam compounds, working with the ethnic armed groups that rule Myanmar's border areas.

Prelims Corner: Explanations

Q1. Ans d

'CyTrain' portal: It is a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) platform, developed for capacity building of police officers/judicial officers through online courses on critical aspects of cybercrime investigation, forensics, prosecution, etc. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) was established in 1986 to act as a repository of information on crime and criminals.

It was set up based on the recommendations of the Tandon Committee, the National Police Commission (1977-1981) and the Task Force of the Home Ministry.

Nodal Ministry: It comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India.

Headquarters: New Delhi.

The NCRB has also launched CyTrain, a portal for online training of different stakeholders in cybercrime investigations and prosecution.

Q2. Ans a

It is a trans-boundary river which flows through India and Bangladesh. It also forms part of the boundary between the two countries.

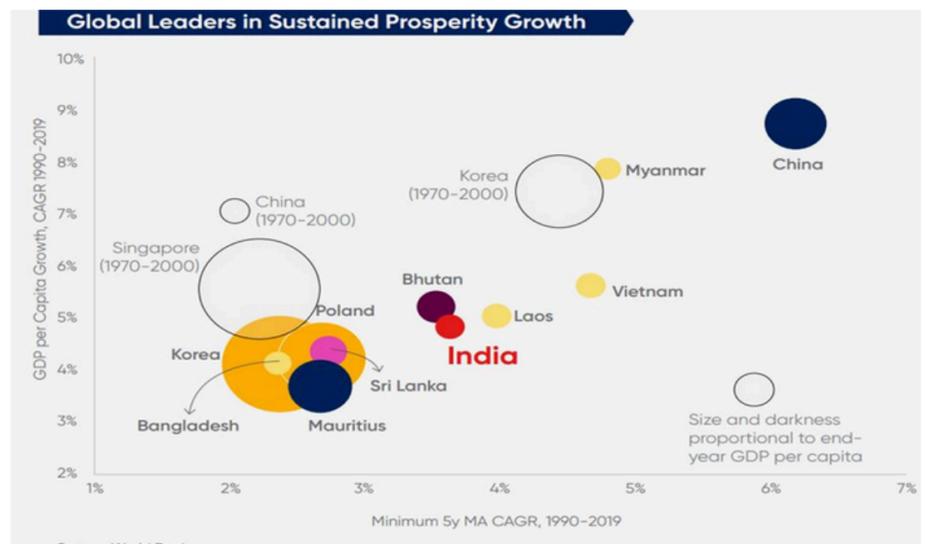
Course:

It is one of the bifurcations of the Mathabhanga River (a tributary of the Padma) and originates at Mahjdia village in the Nadia district of West Bengal. It flows through the Nadia and North 24 Parganas districts of West Bengal. Then it forms part of the India-Bangladesh international border. Later, it enters Bangladesh's Satkhira and Khulna districts. It covers a distance of around 216 km before discharging into the Kalindi River at Hasnabad in North 24 Parganas District and finally outfalls into the Bay of Bengal near Moore Island. Ichhamati River and its tributaries form a large oxbow lake complex in North 24-Paraganas district near Bangaon. The river is facing siltation leading to thin flow of water in the dry season and floods in the rainy season.



Q3. Ans d

The Competitiveness Roadmap for India@100 was released by the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the Prime Minister (PM). The roadmap, which is a part of the India Competitiveness Initiative, is a collaborative endeavour between the EAC-PM and The Institute for Competitiveness. It envisions setting new guiding principles for the country's growth journey over the following years and guiding different states, ministries, and partners in India's growth to develop sector-specific roadmaps for achieving targeted goals.



Q4. Ans b

Coco Islands and Preparis Island are a pair of geographically close but politically distinct island groups in the Bay of Bengal that belong to Myanmar. The Coco Islands are a small cluster just south of Preparis Island and about 55 km from India's Landfall Island, while Landfall Island is the northernmost island of the Indian Andaman and Nicobar Islands archipelago. Both islands are strategically located, with recent development on the Coco Islands sparking security concerns for India.



Case Study:



Indian wildlife champion Vivek Menon has been elected the new Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) — the first Asian to ever lead the global network. His win marks a big moment for conservation, bringing decades of experience, passion, and on-ground action to the heart of international wildlife protection.

Though much of his life's work has revolved around elephants — protecting them from the illegal ivory trade and rehabilitating orphaned calves into the wild using science-based methods — his love for all species remains boundless. A look at Menon's journey reveals a balance between duty to community and duty to the wild — a belief that one need not come at the cost of the other. As a wildlife conservationist, environmental commentator, author, and photographer, he has dedicated his life to creating meaningful, global change for wildlife and natural habitats. Over the years, he has led landmark conservation initiatives and trained enforcement personnel across more than 50 countries. His appointment, announced at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Abu Dhabi, marks a historic first: an Asian leading the science-based network of more than 11,000 volunteer experts dedicated to conserving biodiversity and ensuring species survival in its 75-year history. Menon says he is "deeply honoured" to take on this role and is determined to strengthen the SSC into a more resilient, inclusive, and globally impactful network.

Observed on October 21 every year, the Police Commemoration Day remembers the sacrifices of ten policemen who died in Chinese firing in 1959.



World Statistics Day was first observed in 2010 and is celebrated every five years on October 20th. The day was established by the United Nations Statistical Commission to honor the achievements of official statistics and the importance of reliable data for policy and development. World Statistics Day 2025 Theme is "Driving Change with Quality Statistics and Data for Everyone." The United Nations promotes and motivates countries to improve data quality and work together internationally.