

To receive Daily news juice pdf on your WhatsApp, send name and city through WhatsApp on 75979-00000.

1. Establishment of International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

Approval for Establishment

The Union Cabinet approved the establishment of International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) with headquarters in India with a one-time budgetary support of Rs.150 crore for a period of five years from 2023-24 to 2027-28.

Unique list of Big Cat Range Countries

Range Country		
1. India	33. Ivory Coast	65. Kyrgyz Republic
2. Bangladesh	34. Mozambique	66. Mongolia
3. Bhutan	35. Rwanda	67. Tajikistan
4. Cambodia	36. South Africa	68. Uzbekistan
5. Vietnam	37. Tanzania	69. Libya
6. China	38. Oman	70. Algeria
7. Indonesia	39. Saudi Arabia	71. Argentina
8. Lao PDR	40. Yemen	72. Belize
9. Malaysia	41. Angola	73. Bolivia
10. Myanmar	42. Equatorial Guinea	74. Brazil
11. Nepal	43. Ghana	75. Suriname
12. Russia	44. Kenya	76. Colombia
13. Thailand	45. Namibia	77. Costa Rica
14. Pakistan	46. Senegal	78. Ecuador
15. Sri Lanka	47. South Sudan	79. French Guiana
16. Djibouti	48. Uganda	80. Venezuela
17. Ethiopia	49. Benin	81. Guatemala
18. Guinea - Bissau	50. Botswana	82. Guyana
19. Malawi	51. Burkina Faso	83. Honduras
20. Nigeria	52. Cameroon	84. Mexico
21. Somalia	53. Central African Republic	85. Nicaragua
22. Swaziland	54. Chad	86. Panama
23. Zimbabwe	55. Congo	87. Paraguay
24. Afghanistan	56. Democratic Republic of the Congo	88. Peru
25. Armenia	57. Eritrea	89. Burundi
26. Azerbaijan	58. Guinea	90. Zaire
27. Iran	59. Liberia	91. Mali
28. Iraq	60. Niger	92. Canada
29. Turkey	61. Sierra Leone	93. Chile
30. Turkmenistan	62. Sudan	94. El Salvador
31. Egypt	63. Zambia	95. United State of America
32. Gabon	64. Kazakhstan	96. Uruguay

Announcement

Acknowledging India's leading role in conserving tigers, other big cats and many of its endangered species, the Prime Minister of India during his speech on the occasion of Global Tiger Day, 2019 called for an Alliance of Global Leaders to curb poaching in Asia. He reiterated this on the occasion of Commemorating 50 years of India's Project Tiger in 2023 and formally announced launch of an International Big Cat Alliance aiming at securing the future of big cats and landscapes they thrive. The pioneering and long standing tiger and other big cat conservation good practices evolved in India may-be replicated in many other range countries.

Big Cats in India

Seven big cats include Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar and the Cheetah out of these five big cats viz. Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard and Cheetah are found in India.

Constituents

The International Big Cat Alliance has been conceived as a multi-country, multi-agency coalition of 96 big cat range

countries, non-range countries interested in big cat conservation, conservation partners and scientific organizations working in the field of big cat conservation besides business groups and corporates willing to contribute to the cause of big cats, to establish networks and develop synergies in a focused manner so as to bring to a common platform a centralized repository

of successful practices and personnel, backed by financial support which can be leveraged to strengthen the conservation agenda in the field to arrest decline in big cat population and reverse the trend.

This will be a demonstrative step in leadership position on big cat agenda, to bring range countries and others on a common platform.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: PIB

2. Cabinet approves PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana for installing rooftop solar in One Crore households

PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana

The Union Cabinet has approved PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana with a total outlay of Rs.75,021 crore for installing rooftop solar and providing free electricity up to 300 units every month for One Crore households. The Prime Minister had launched the scheme on 13th February, 2024.

The major highlights of the scheme include:

Central Financial Assistance (CFA) for Residential Rooftop Solar

- i. The scheme provides a CFA of 60% of system cost for 2 kW systems and 40% of additional system cost for systems between 2 to 3 kW capacity. The CFA will be capped at 3 kW. At current benchmark prices, this will mean Rs 30,000 subsidy for 1 kW system, Rs 60,000 for 2 kW systems and Rs 78,000 for 3 kW systems or higher.
- ii. The households will apply for subsidy through the National Portal and will be able to select a suitable vendor for installing rooftop solar. The National Portal will assist the households in their decision-making process by providing relevant information such as appropriate system sizes, benefits calculator, vendor rating etc.
- iii. Households will be able to access collateral-free low-interest loan products of around 7% at present for installation of residential RTS systems up to 3 kW.

Other Features of the Scheme

- i. A Model Solar Village will be developed in each district of the country to act as a role model for adoption of rooftop solar in rural areas,
- ii. Urban Local Bodies and Panchayati Raj Institutions shall also benefit from incentives for promoting RTS installations in their areas.
- iii. The scheme provides a component for payment security for renewable energy service company (RESCO) based models as well as a fund for innovative projects in RTS.

Outcome and Impact

Through this scheme, the households will be able to save electricity bills as well as earn additional income through sale of surplus power to DISCOMs. A 3 kW system will be able to generate more than 300 units a month on an average for a household.

The proposed scheme will result in addition of 30 GW of solar capacity through rooftop solar in the residential sector, generating 1000 Billion Units of electricity and resulting in reduction of 720 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions over the 25-year lifetime of rooftop systems.

It is estimated that the scheme will create around 17 lakh direct jobs in manufacturing, logistics, supply chain, sales, installation, O&M and other services.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: PIB

3. India's leopard population rises to 13,874; M.P. on top



Leopard Population in India

India's leopard numbers rose by 8% from 12,852 in 2018 to 13,874 in 2022, according to a report made public by the Environment Ministry.

Trends among States

While the highest number of leopards were reported in Madhya Pradesh (3,907), only three other States reported over 1,000 animals each — Maharashtra (1,985), Karnataka (1,879) and Tamil Nadu (1,070). While Uttarakhand reported a 22% decline in the big cat numbers — reportedly due to poaching and man-animal conflict, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and West Bengal saw a collective 150% rise to 349 animals.

About Survey

The survey covered 20 States of India, and focused on about 70% of the animals' expected habitat, which are India's tiger reserves and protected forest areas. Unlike tigers, which are largely confined to forest reserves, leopards are far more adaptable and tend to be found in significant numbers, in villages and sometimes, even in cities. They are also known to prey on cattle and thus be involved in conflict, resulting in higher mortality.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Economics

Source: PIB