

1. New 'Trump Card' Offers US Residency for \$5 Million

What Is the Trump Card?

- A new visa scheme launched by the US Department of Commerce.
- Offers permanent US residency, work rights, and a path to citizenship.
- Requires a \$5 million payment from applicants.
- Intended for wealthy foreign individuals or businesses.
- A sample gold-colored card featuring former President Trump’s image was shown in April.

Why the Trump Card Was Launched

- Designed to help reduce the US budget deficit and national debt (\$36.2 trillion).
- Goal: Raise \$1 trillion by selling 200,000 cards.
- Trump claimed the program could generate \$5 trillion if a million cards are sold.

Comparison with Existing EB-5 Visa

Feature	Trump Card	EB-5 Visa
Cost	\$5 million donation	\$1M (\$800K in rural areas) investment
Return on Investment	None – a direct donation	Yes – invest in businesses that create jobs
Legal Framework	Not approved by Congress (yet)	Legally established under immigration law
2024 Issuance (EB-5)	N/A	14,000 visas issued

Legal and Practical Challenges

- No returns: The Trump Card is not an investment — just a \$5 million donation.
- Lack of legal backing: Immigration lawyers warn that it hasn’t been approved by Congress.
- Public confusion: Many potential applicants back out once they realize they’re not getting a return.
- Bipartisan criticism: Both Democrats and Republicans question the legality of this initiative.

Conclusion

While the Trump Card aims to attract wealthy foreigners and raise funds for the US Treasury, its legality, value proposition, and feasibility remain highly controversial.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Issues
Source: Indian Express

2. What Is the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)?

Launched by India in 2024



- Established by: Indian government through the National Tiger Conservation Authority
- Mandate: Conserve seven big cat species globally:
 - Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma
- Support: ₹150 crore allocated for 2023–2028
- Aim: Share and replicate

successful conservation practices among big cat range countries

First Assembly Held in New Delhi

- Date: June 16, 2025
- Venue: New Delhi
- Presided by: Bhupender Yadav, Union Environment Minister

Global Participation

- 95 Range Countries include: Canada, Brazil, China, USA, Iran, Nepal, Russia, etc.
- 25 Member Countries (as of Sep 2024): Include Bangladesh, Nigeria, Egypt, Kenya, Peru, Rwanda
- Membership Open to: All UN member states after signing a formal agreement (Note Verbale)

Why Was the IBCA Launched?

Commemorating Project Tiger

- Announced by PM Modi in 2023 on the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger
- Background:
 - 40,000 tigers in 1947 → Only 1,800 by 1970 due to hunting & poaching
 - Now, India has 3,600+ tigers, or 70% of the world's tiger population

Why Big Cats Matter

- Ecological Role: Control prey population, prevent overgrazing
- Ecosystem Benefits:
 - Prevent wildfires, spread of disease
 - Protect biodiversity
 - Conserve soil and water
 - Support climate adaptation
 - Store & sequester carbon — helping fight climate change

- **Call for Global Action:**

- Collective international conservation efforts emphasized by Bhupender Yadav
- Headquarters of IBCA to be located in India

Summary

The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) is a global Indian-led initiative to conserve the world's big cat species. Through shared knowledge, funding, and cooperation, it seeks to ensure that these apex predators — and the ecosystems they protect — continue to thrive.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: Indian Express

3. India Increases Nuclear Warhead Count to 180 in 2024: SIPRI Report

Key Findings from SIPRI 2025 Report

- India now has 180 nuclear warheads, up from 172 in 2024.
- Nine nuclear-armed nations, including India and Pakistan, are modernising their nuclear weapons.
- The world is entering a dangerous new nuclear arms race amid weakened arms control treaties.

India's Nuclear Developments

- India is developing new types of nuclear delivery systems, including:
 - Canisterised missiles: Can carry nuclear warheads in peacetime.
 - Potential to carry multiple warheads per missile in the future.
- Focus is on enhancing mobility, readiness, and survivability.

Pakistan's Nuclear Activity

- Pakistan is also:
 - Developing new delivery systems
 - Increasing fissile material production
- Its nuclear arsenal is expected to grow over the next decade.

India-Pakistan Tensions

- Early 2025 saw a brief armed conflict between India and Pakistan.
- Strikes on nuclear-related military targets and disinformation campaigns increased risk of escalation.
- Experts warn such incidents could trigger a nuclear crisis.

Global Nuclear Stockpile Overview (2025 Estimates)

- Total global inventory: 12,241 warheads
- Warheads in military stockpiles for potential use: 9,614
- Deployed with missiles or aircraft: ~3,912

WORLD NUCLEAR FORCES, JANUARY 2025

	Military stockpile ^a			Retired warheads ^d	Total inventory ^e
	Deployed warheads ^b	Stored warheads ^c	Total		
USA	1 770	1 930	3 700	1 477	5 177
Russia	1 718	2 591	4 309	1 150	5 459
UK	120	105	225	–	225
France	280	10	290	..	290
China	24	576	600	–	600
India	–	180	180	..	180
Pakistan	–	170	170	..	170
North Korea	–	50	50	..	50
Israel	–	90	90	..	90
Total	3 912	5 702	9 614	2 627	12 241

Call for Arms Control & Caution

- New START Treaty between the US and Russia will expire in February 2026.
- Without new agreements, strategic warhead deployments may rise.
- SIPRI urges global powers to prioritize arms control to avoid escalation.

Summary

India is expanding and modernising its nuclear arsenal, as are several other countries, sparking fears of a renewed global nuclear arms race. SIPRI stresses the urgent need for diplomatic action to control and reduce nuclear weapons worldwide.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Issues

Source: The Hindu

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