

Daily Defence Current Affairs

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India, Bhutan Approve First Rail Links Projects

- In a transformative step for regional integration, India and Bhutan have approved their first-ever cross-border railway links, aimed at strengthening economic and strategic cooperation.
- These two new rail lines—Kokrajhar– Gelephu and Banarhat–Samtse—represent a major advancement in bilateral connectivity, with significant potential to reshape trade, mobility, and diplomatic ties between the two Himalayan neighbors.
- The Kokrajhar–Gelephu route, budgeted at ₹3,456 crore, will link Assam’s Kokrajhar district with Bhutan’s Gelephu in the Sarpang region.
- This 70-kilometer line will include six stations and nearly 100 bridges, traversing the challenging terrain of India’s northeast.
- The second line, Banarhat–Samtse, is a shorter connection stretching from West Bengal’s Banarhat in Jalpaiguri district to Bhutan’s Samtse.



Govt to Mandate Sound Alerts in EVs from Oct 2027

- The Indian government is set to introduce a mandatory sound alert system for electric vehicles (EVs) from October 1, 2027, to improve road safety.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has proposed that all new electric cars, buses, and trucks be equipped with an Acoustic Vehicle Alerting System (AVAS) to help pedestrians and other road users detect the otherwise near-silent EVs.
- The Acoustic Vehicle Alerting System (AVAS) is a safety mechanism that emits artificial sounds from EVs to alert pedestrians, cyclists, and other road users. Unlike conventional internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, EVs operate almost silently, which increases the risk of accidents in crowded urban areas.
- By mandating AVAS, India joins countries like the United States, Japan, and the European Union, which have already required sound alert systems in electric and hybrid vehicles.



India's FTA with EFTA to Start October 1 Announced by Goyal

- India is set to operationalize its first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with a European bloc as the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with EFTA countries—Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein—comes into effect on October 1, 2025.

- Announced by Union Minister Piyush Goyal, this FTA represents a landmark in India's global trade strategy, combining tariff concessions with a massive investment promise from advanced economies.
- The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) comprises four non-EU countries: Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein. The TEPA, signed in March 2024, opens Indian and EFTA markets to each other with progressive tariff liberalization and investment facilitation.
- **Key highlights include**
 - Phased tariff reductions across goods
 - Market access in services, investment, intellectual property
 - Commitment of \$100 billion in investments into India over 15 years
 - Focus on technology transfer, innovation, and skills development

Alignment with India's Trade Vision

- This FTA aligns with India's broader aim to become a \$5 trillion economy and a global manufacturing hub. It follows other recent FTAs signed with UAE and Australia, and ongoing talks with EU, US, New Zealand, Oman, and Chile.



Mukhi Becomes First India-Born Adult Cheetah at Kuno

- Mukhi, a female cheetah born in India, becomes the first India-born cub to reach adulthood.

- Born to Namibian cheetah Jwala at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh, Mukhi's survival is being hailed as a significant breakthrough amid concerns over high cub mortality and challenges in habitat adaptation.



Praveer Ranjan Takes Charge as CISF DG

- In a major leadership reshuffle among India's CAPFs two senior IPS officers of the 1993 batch have taken charge of key paramilitary organisations. **Praveer Ranjan** has been appointed as the DG of the CISF, while **Praveen Kumar** has been appointed as the Director General of the ITBP.
- Both officers assumed office on September 30, 2025, following the superannuation of their predecessors.
- The CISF plays a critical role in securing vital national assets, including:
 - Airports, ports, and metro systems.
 - Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
 - Nuclear plants and other high-security installations.



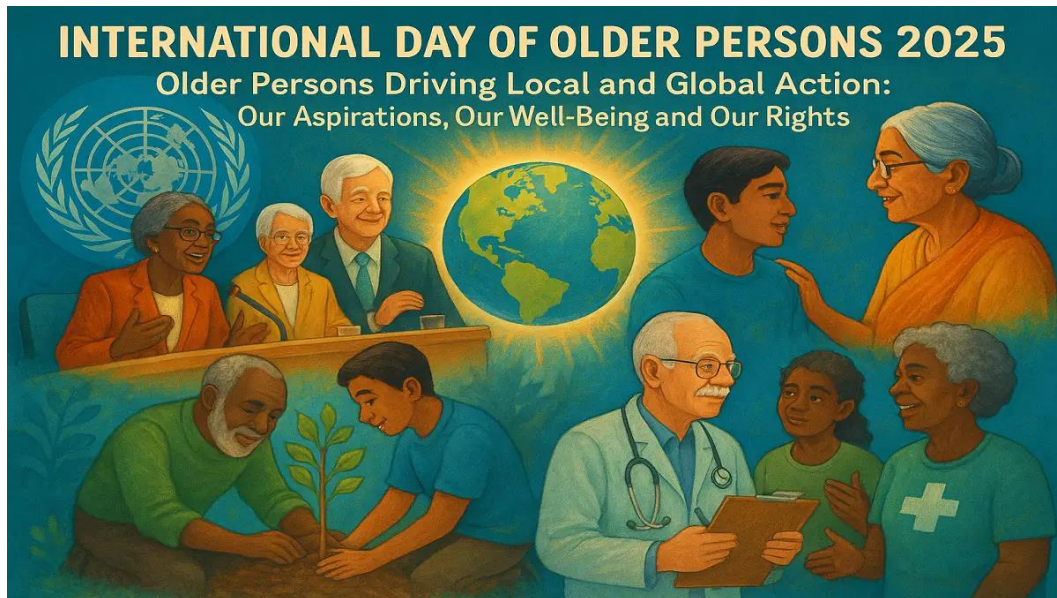
Telugu Language Day

- The Telugu Language Day was celebrated in Saudi Arabia with great enthusiasm, highlighting the rich cultural heritage of the Telugu-speaking community abroad.
- The event, organised by the Saudi Arabia Telugu Association (SATA) in collaboration with the TDP NRI Committee, also served as a platform to promote the innovative P4 model (Public–Private–People Partnership) championed by the Andhra Pradesh government.



International Day of Older Persons 2025

- Every year on 1st October, the world observes the International Day of Older Persons, as designated by the United Nations General Assembly in 1990 (resolution 45/106).
- The day aims to highlight the importance of older persons in society and the need to protect their rights, dignity, and well-being.
- In 2025, the theme is “**Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being and Our Rights**”.
- The number of people aged 65 years and above tripled from 260 million in 1980 to 761 million in 2021.
- By 2050, older persons will make up around 17% of the world’s population.
- The majority of this growth is expected in developing countries, where social protection systems remain weak.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Every year on which date is the International Day of Older Persons observed?
 - A. 21st June
 - B. 1st October
 - C. 15th August
 - D. 10th December

ANSWER: B

2. The International Day of Older Persons was designated by the UNGA in which year?
 - A. 1985
 - B. 1990
 - C. 1995
 - D. 2000

ANSWER: B

3. What is the theme of International Day of Older Persons 2025?
 - A. "Leaving No One Behind"
 - B. "Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being and Our Rights"

- C. "Resilience of the Elderly in a Changing World"
- D. "Healthy Ageing for All"

ANSWER: B

4. Which country recently celebrated Telugu Language Day with great enthusiasm?

- A. United States
- B. Saudi Arabia
- C. United Kingdom
- D. Australia

ANSWER: B

5. In India's cheetah reintroduction programme, which female cheetah became the first India-born cub to reach adulthood?

- A. Asha
- B. Mukhi
- C. Siya
- D. Kiran

ANSWER: B

6. Project Cheetah was launched on September 17, 2022, at which location?

- A. Gir National Park
- B. Kaziranga National Park
- C. Kuno National Park
- D. Jim Corbett National Park

ANSWER: C

7. Who has been appointed as the Director General (DG) of the CISF in the latest CAPFs leadership reshuffle?

- A. Rakesh Asthana
- B. Praveer Ranjan
- C. Praveen Kumar
- D. Subodh Jaiswal

ANSWER: B

8. India's first FTA with a European bloc, TEPA, comes into effect on October 1, 2025. Which group of countries does it involve?

- A. EU (European Union)
- B. NAFTA

- C. EFTA (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein)
- D. ASEAN

ANSWER: C

9. What is the purpose of the Acoustic Vehicle Alerting System (AVAS) in electric vehicles?

- A. Reduce carbon emissions
- B. Improve engine efficiency
- C. Emit artificial sounds to alert pedestrians and cyclists
- D. Increase battery life

ANSWER: C

10. India and Bhutan recently approved their first-ever cross-border railway links. Which of the following is NOT one of the approved routes?

- A. Kokrajhar–Gelephu
- B. Banarhat–Samtse
- C. Siliguri–Thimphu
- D. None of the above

ANSWER: C

