

Daily Current Affairs

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India's First Bio-Happy District

- The newly formed Keyi Panyor district is set to make history by becoming India's first Bio-Happy District. This pioneering initiative aims to integrate biodiversity conservation with human well-being, offering a new development model that balances ecology, livelihoods, and public health.
- The project revives the visionary concept of Bio happiness, introduced by the legendary agricultural scientist M. S. Swaminathan.
- The Bio-Happy District initiative is being implemented by the M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in collaboration with the district administration.
- According to Soumya Swaminathan, Chairperson of the Foundation, the project focuses on:
 - Livelihood assessment
 - Agro-biodiversity mapping
 - Ecological system evaluation
- Bio happiness refers to a state of human well-being achieved when biodiversity is conserved and sustainably used to enhance:
 - Nutrition
 - Public health
 - Income and livelihoods



Aspect	Impact
Clerical Delays	Significantly reduced
Court Visits	Minimized through digital access
Costs	Lower litigation expenses
Storage	No physical file storage needed
Order Communication	Instant digital delivery
Case Processing	Faster resolution

U.S. Withdraws from 66 International Organizations

- The United States has announced its withdrawal from 66 international organisations, marking a significant escalation in President Donald Trump's retreat from multilateral global cooperation.
- The decision, formalized through an executive order signed on January 7, 2026, represents a comprehensive recalibration of U.S. participation in international bodies, particularly those affiliated with the United Nations system.
- This action follows extensive review of U.S. participation and funding in international institutions, with the administration characterizing many targeted bodies as redundant, inefficient, or misaligned with U.S. national interests and sovereignty.
- **Key Exit:** UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- **Climate Alliance Exit:** International Solar Alliance (India-France led, launched 2015)
- **UNFCCC Adoption:** 1992 (foundational treaty for Paris Agreement)
- **U.S. Position:** Among world's largest historical greenhouse gas emitters
- **Previous Withdrawals:** WHO, UN Human Rights Council, UNESCO

- **Selective Engagement:** International Telecommunications Union, International Maritime Organization, International Labour Organization
- **Primary Focus:** Strategic competition with China
- A central feature of the withdrawals is U.S. exit from climate-related frameworks, most significantly the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the foundational treaty underpinning the Paris Agreement. Adopted in 1992, the UNFCCC represents the primary international legal framework governing global climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.



India Becomes First Country to Commercially Produce Bio-Bitumen

- India has achieved a historic global milestone by becoming the first country in the world to commercially produce bio-bitumen for use in road construction.
- This groundbreaking achievement marks a significant advancement in sustainable infrastructure development and represents a transformative step toward India's vision of clean, environmentally responsible highways.
- The announcement was made by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari at the CSIR Technology Transfer Ceremony held in New Delhi.
- Bitumen is a black, viscous hydrocarbon mixture derived from crude oil and serves as the primary binding material in road construction.

- Bio-bitumen represents a revolutionary alternative to petroleum-derived bitumen. It is an eco-friendly binding material produced using biomass and agricultural waste as primary raw materials.
- Both ministers underscored how bio-bitumen advancement supports **Atma Nirbhar Bharat** by promoting self-reliance through sustainable, home-grown technologies.

Facts & Figures

What is Bitumen?

Bitumen is a black substance produced through distillation of crude oil and is widely used to bind surfaces of paved road



3.21 MT

India's import
of Bitumen in
2022-2023

5.24 MT

India's indigenous
bitumen production
in the last FY

Usman Khawaja Announces Retirement

- Usman Khawaja, Australia's first Muslim Test cricketer, announced his retirement from international cricket in January 2026, following the final Ashes Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG).
- His 88th Test match marked the conclusion of a transformative 15-year career that transcended cricket statistics to become a symbol of religious and cultural diversity in Australian sports.
- Australia's first Muslim Test cricketer
- 6,206 Test runs in 87 matches, 43.39 average
- 16 centuries, 28 fifties
- 1,554 ODI runs in 40 matches
- Test Debut: 2010-11 vs England
- Career-Defining Moment: 2018 Ashes century at SCG (171 runs)
- Retirement: January 2026 at SCG



National Record-Holder Jinson Johnson Announces Retirement

- Jinson Johnson, India's celebrated middle-distance runner, announced his retirement from competitive athletics. The 34-year-old Kerala athlete represented India at the highest international level and achieved significant athletic milestones that earned him national recognition.
- His achievements elevated India's athletic profile globally:
- Asian Games Champion – Gold medal winner in prestigious continental competition
- National Record Setter – Broke records in two distance categories
- International Standard – Competed at Commonwealth Games level
- Youth Inspiration – Role model for emerging Indian distance runners
- Long Career – Sustained excellence over 15+ years in competitive athletics



Billiards Champion Manoj Kothari Passes Away

- In January 2026, the Indian sports fraternity mourned the passing of Manoj Kothari, one of the most distinguished figures in cue sports and a pioneering force in Indian billiards.
- The former World Billiards Champion and current Chief National Coach of the Indian billiards team breathed his last at the age of 67 years in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu.
- **World Billiards Titles Won:** 2 times
- **First World Title:** 1990 (IBSF World Billiards Championship)
- **Second World Title:** 1997 (World Doubles Billiards Championship with Ian Williamson, England)
- **National Coach:** From 2011 onwards (more than 15 years of service)
- **Major Dhyan Chand Award:** Received in 2005
- **State Champion Titles:** Won 16 times during his career
- **IBSF Lifetime Achievement Award:** Received in 2025



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which district is set to become India's first Bio-Happy District?

- A. Wayanad
- B. Keyi Panyor

- C. Tirunelveli
- D. Kalpetta

☒ **Answer: B. Keyi Panyor**

2. The concept of “Bio Happiness” was originally introduced by which renowned scientist?

- A. Verghese Kurien
- B. C. V. Raman
- C. M. S. Swaminathan
- D. Raghunath Mashelkar

☒ **Answer: C. M. S. Swaminathan**

3. India’s first fully paperless district court was inaugurated in which location?

- A. Kochi, Kerala
- B. Kalpetta, Wayanad
- C. Thiruvananthapuram
- D. Kozhikode

☒ **Answer: B. Kalpetta, Wayanad**

4. Who virtually inaugurated India’s first fully paperless district court?

- A. Justice D. Y. Chandrachud
- B. Justice Sanjiv Khanna
- C. Justice Surya Kant
- D. Justice U. U. Lalit

☒ **Answer: C. Justice Surya Kant**

5. Which major climate-related international framework did the U.S. exit in January 2026?

- A. Kyoto Protocol
- B. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

- C. UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- D. Green Climate Fund

☒ **Answer: C. UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

6. India became the first country to commercially produce which eco-friendly road construction material?

- A. Green Cement
- B. Fly Ash Concrete
- C. Bio-bitumen
- D. Polymer Asphalt

☒ **Answer: C. Bio-bitumen**

7. Who announced the commercial production of bio-bitumen in India?

- A. Piyush Goyal
- B. Narendra Modi
- C. Nitin Gadkari
- D. Dharmendra Pradhan

☒ **Answer: C. Nitin Gadkari**

8. Usman Khawaja retired from international cricket after his final Test at which venue?

- A. Melbourne Cricket Ground
- B. Adelaide Oval
- C. Lord's
- D. Sydney Cricket Ground

☒ **Answer: D. Sydney Cricket Ground**

9. Which Indian athlete, a national record-holding middle-distance runner, announced his retirement recently?

- A. Avinash Sable
- B. Mohammed Afsal

- C. Jinson Johnson
- D. Gagandeep Singh

☒ Answer: C. Jinson Johnson

10. Manoj Kothari won his first World Billiards Championship title in which year?

- A. 1985
- B. 1990
- C. 1997
- D. 2005

☒ Answer: B. 1990