

Daily Current Affairs

19 September 2026

International Red Panda Day 2026

- **International Red Panda Day** is observed every year to spread awareness about the conservation of the **red panda**, an endangered mammal whose natural habitat is facing increasing threats. In **2026, the day is observed on September 19**, which falls on the third Saturday of September.
- The observance was established by the **Red Panda Network**, an organisation working for the protection of wild red pandas and their habitats, particularly in the Eastern Himalayan region.
- The red panda, scientifically known as **Ailurus fulgens**, is classified as an **Endangered species on the IUCN Red List**. According to the information in the source material, fewer than 10,000 red pandas are believed to remain in the wild, although estimates may vary.
- The natural range of the red panda extends across parts of **Nepal, Bhutan, India, Myanmar and China**. Within India, the species is found mainly in **Sikkim, the hills of Darjeeling in West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh**.
- Sikkim is particularly significant for red panda conservation because the **red panda is the state animal of Sikkim**.



QDENGGA : India's First Approved Dengue Vaccine

- India set to get its first approved dengue vaccine with QDENGGA to be marketed in the private sector in the first six months of 2027.
- The vaccine, which has been developed by the Japanese drug manufacturing company, Takeda, has received marketing authorisation from the Indian Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) in July 2026 for use among people aged between 4 and 60 years.
- QDENGGA, also referred to as TAK-003, is a live attenuated tetravalent dengue vaccine.
- It is intended to provide protection from the four types of the virus,
 - DENV-1
 - DENV-2
 - DENV-3
 - DENV-4
- In 2024, WHO provided prequalification to QDENGGA. It is given in two doses, three months apart.
- According to the approved indication, it is not necessary to carry out tests on dengue infection before administering the vaccine.
- In India, QDENGGA has been licensed by CDSCO for use among the individuals aged 4-60 years.
- But just because of such a license, this doesn't mean all individuals aged between 4 and 60 would be able to get the vaccine. QDENGGA will first become available in the private sector, and its price has not yet been disclosed.
- Healthcare professionals can decide whether vaccination is necessary for the person.
- Dengue is mainly spread through infected Aedes mosquitoes and may lead to symptoms like fever, body pain, and even severe dengue.
- Vaccination would act as another prevention technique along with controlling of mosquitoes, removal of breeding sites, and protection from mosquito bites.



Yugan Sakthivel Muthukumaar Wins Gold at ISSF

- The gold medal in the men's trap event at the ISSF Junior World Cup Shotgun 2026 was bagged by Yugan Sakthivel Muthukumaar from India in Porpetto, Italy on September 18. The 15-year-old shooter fired at 27 of 30 targets in the eight-shooter final and won the gold medal.
- Yugan qualified sixth for the final with a score of 114/125 and qualified for the eight-shooter medal round in a shoot-off.
- In the final round, the young Indian shooter made good use of the chance by firing at 27 out of 30 targets. Italy's Francesco Tanfoglio was one target away from him.
- It was the first medal for India in the junior ISSF World Cup Shotgun held in Porpetto.
- Sabeera Haris was the only Indian performer who managed to make the finals in the women's trap category.
- The junior Asian champion made it to the final ranking sixth with 108/125. She also qualified for her final round through a shoot-off.
- But in the medal round, Sabeera could not maintain her qualification-round performance. She hit 9 out of 15 targets and ended up sixth.



Luke Lindberg Appointed New World Food Programme Chief

- The World Food Programme (WFP) of the United Nations has selected Luke J. Lindberg to be its next Executive Director, who will take charge of overseeing the UN body's activities concerning offering food aid in cases of conflict, disaster and humanitarian crisis.
- Lindberg, who is an American agriculture official, will take over as the WFP executive director following the departure of Cindy McCain, who held that post between April 2023 and May 2026.
- The World Food Programme is an international organization within the United Nations that provides food assistance worldwide. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and the leading provider of school meals. Founded in 1961, **WFP is headquartered in Rome** and has offices in 87 countries.
- **Founded:** 1961, headquartered in Rome, Italy.
- **Mission:** To end global hunger, save lives in emergencies, and help communities build resilience.
- **Recognition:** Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 for its efforts in combating hunger and fostering peace in conflict areas.
- **Leadership:** Headed by the UN and executive leadership, operating across more than 120 countries and territories.



India Ranked No. 1 in Swedish Business Climate Survey

- India emerges as the top country for its business climate amongst 41 global markets in the 2026 Global Business Climate Survey by the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in India (SCCI).
- The Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal made a mention about the ranking on September 18, calling out that the business environment of India is a good performer in an uncertain global economy scenario.
- The survey reflects the economic and business situation prevailing in the main export markets from the point of view of Swedish companies. India also ranks among those markets that offer great growth and investment opportunities in the Asia Pacific region.
- The Global Business Climate Survey 2026 includes 41 markets and focuses on how Swedish companies perceive business conditions outside Sweden.
- The survey helps to benchmark economic performance, expectations for the future and business environment in the key export markets of Sweden.
- Asia-Pacific (APAC) turned out to be the most optimistic region according to the survey.
- The most optimistic countries included India and Vietnam, which demonstrates positive business sentiments towards the region from Swedish companies.
- Meanwhile, business sentiments varied greatly across other regions. While Middle East & Africa were less optimistic regions, the perceptions of Europe & Americas were somewhat positive compared to 2025 year.



1965 War Hero & Vir Chakra Awardee Alfred Dies

- Flight Lieutenant Alfred Tyrone Cooke, a Vir Chakra awardee of the Indian Air Force, died on 18 September 2026 at Base Hospital, New Delhi, at the age of 87. He was known for an air engagement during the 1965 Indo-Pak War over Kalaikunda in West Bengal, where he flew a Hawker Hunter against Pakistani Sabre jets.
- The Vir Chakra is India's third-highest wartime gallantry award, after the Param Vir Chakra and the Maha Vir Chakra. Alfred Tyrone Cooke received the Vir Chakra on 7 September 1965 for courage and tactical skill during aerial combat.
- The 1965 Indo-Pak War was fought between India and Pakistan in September 1965. During the Kalaikunda air battle, Cooke engaged six Pakistani Sabre jets attacking the airfield and shot down one aircraft while damaging another.
- Cooke served in No. 14 Squadron of the Indian Air Force, which is also known as the "Bulls". He retired from the Indian Air Force in 1968 and later settled in Australia.

- After retirement, Alfred Tyrone Cooke lived in Australia and remained connected with his former squadron. He donated his Vir Chakra medal to No. 14 Squadron in 2016.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. International Red Panda Day 2026 was observed on which date?

- A. September 17
- B. September 18
- C. September 19
- D. September 20

Answer: C. September 19

2. The red panda is scientifically known as:

- A. *Panthera pardus*
- B. *Ailurus fulgens*
- C. *Ursus arctos*
- D. *Vulpes vulpes*

Answer: B. *Ailurus fulgens*

3. QDENGGA, India's first approved dengue vaccine, is also known by which name?

- A. TAK-001
- B. TAK-002

- C. TAK-003
- D. TAK-004

Answer: C. TAK-003

4. QDENG is designed to protect against how many dengue virus types?

- A. Two
- B. Three
- C. Four
- D. Five

Answer: C. Four

5. Who won the gold medal in the men's trap event at the ISSF Junior World Cup Shotgun 2026 in Porpetto, Italy?

- A. Francesco Tanfoglio
- B. Yugan Sakthivel Muthukumaar
- C. Sabeera Haris
- D. Manu Bhaker

Answer: B. Yugan Sakthivel Muthukumaar

6. Who has been selected as the next Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP)?

- A. Cindy McCain
- B. Luke J. Lindberg
- C. António Guterres
- D. David Beasley

Answer: B. Luke J. Lindberg

7. How many global markets were covered in the 2026 Global Business Climate Survey conducted by the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in India?

- A. 31
- B. 35
- C. 41
- D. 51

Answer: C. 41

8. Which country ranked first in the 2026 Global Business Climate Survey?

- A. Sweden
- B. India
- C. Vietnam
- D. Germany

Answer: B. India

9. Alfred Tyrone Cooke, who died on September 18, 2026, was a recipient of which Indian gallantry award?

- A. Param Vir Chakra
- B. Maha Vir Chakra
- C. Kirti Chakra
- D. Vir Chakra

Answer: D. Vir Chakra

10. Alfred Tyrone Cooke served in which Indian Air Force squadron?

- A. No. 1 Squadron
- B. No. 14 Squadron
- C. No. 17 Squadron
- D. No. 28 Squadron

Answer: B. No. 14 Squadron