

THEIAS AKADEMIA · MORNING EDITION · 08:00 IST

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PART II · ENVIRONMENT TO DIRECT HIT TRACKER

Wednesday, 29 July 2026

§1 · ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

ENV

International Day · Species Conservation

29 July 2026 · Source: NTCA / PIB / Current Affairs Trackers

International Tiger Day 2026: India Home to Over 70% of the World's Wild Tigers

Why in News: International Tiger Day (Global Tiger Day) was observed on July 29, 2026, marking the anniversary of the 2010 St. Petersburg Tiger Summit, with India reaffirming its position as home to over 70% of the world's wild tiger population.

Background: The day traces to the 2010 St. Petersburg Declaration, where 13 tiger range countries committed to the "TX2" goal of doubling wild tiger numbers by 2022; India's tiger conservation itself traces back to Project Tiger (1973), now overseen by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), established 2005.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- India's minimum tiger population: 3,167 (5th cycle, All India Tiger Estimation, 2022) — over 70% of the world's wild tigers.
- India has 58 tiger reserves as of 2026; NTCA (established 2005 under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, as amended in 2006) oversees them.
- The TX2 goal (doubling wild tiger numbers 2010-2022) originated at the St. Petersburg Tiger Summit, 2010.
- Monitoring uses the M-StrIPES (Monitoring System for Tigers – Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) app-based patrolling tool.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: don't confuse "International Tiger Day" (July 29, St. Petersburg 2010 origin, tiger-specific) with "World Wildlife Day" (March 3, CITES-linked, all species) — and remember NTCA (2005) administers reserves while Project Tiger (1973) was the original centrally sponsored scheme that preceded it.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "Tiger conservation in India — Project Tiger, NTCA, and the All India Tiger Estimation." | GS3: M-StrIPES and technology in wildlife monitoring.

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. International Tiger Day originated from a declaration made at a 2010 summit held in: (a) New Delhi (b) St. Petersburg (c) Nairobi (d) Bangkok. **Answer: (b).**

ENV

International Tiger Day

NTCA

Project Tiger

§2 · PLACES IN NEWS — 29 JULY 2026

📌 PLACES IN NEWS — 29 JULY 2026 | ANTIM ASSURED 100+



- ① New Delhi (SC transgender-rights notice, Delhi Assembly session, IIP data) ● ② Malé, Maldives (Muizzu's SAARC-revival mediation offer)
- ③ Goa (Coast Guard indigenous waterjet propulsion FATs) ● ④ Hyderabad, Telangana (Skyroot Aerospace, space-chip push)
- ⑤ Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand (India's first tiger reserve, 1973) ● ⑥ Islamabad, Pakistan (named by MEA in SAARC "stymying" remark)

① New Delhi, India

Supreme Court issues notice on the transgender-rights exclusion clause; Delhi Assembly's Monsoon Session convenes; MoSPI releases June IIP data.

② Malé, Maldives

President Mohamed Muizzu calls for SAARC revival during Maldives' 61st Independence Day address, offering to mediate.

③ Goa, India

Site of the Indian Coast Guard's successful Factory Acceptance Tests for indigenous MJP waterjet propulsion.

④ Hyderabad, Telangana

Home base of Skyroot Aerospace, at the centre of India's push for domestic space-grade semiconductor chips.

⑤ Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand

India's first tiger reserve (1973), a symbolic site for International Tiger Day 2026.

⑥ Islamabad, Pakistan

Named by India's MEA as the country responsible for "stymying" SAARC's revival.

§3 · ETHICS & INTEGRITY CASE STUDIES

Case 1 · Self-Identification vs Statutory Definition

A bureaucrat drafting rules under the Transgender Persons Amendment Act must operationalise "self-perceived identity" without diluting it into a bureaucratic certification requirement. **GS4 Values:** Human dignity, non-discrimination, fidelity to judicial intent.

Case 2 · Regional Diplomacy and the Language of Blame

A foreign service officer drafting India's response to a neighbour's mediation offer must balance firmly rebutting misinformation with keeping the door open for future regional cooperation. **GS4 Values:** Tact, long-term national interest, restraint in public rhetoric.

Case 3 · Import Substitution vs Certification Rigour

An engineer certifying newly indigenised waterjet propulsion for naval use faces pressure to fast-track approval in the name of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, risking safety if testing is compromised. **GS4 Values:** Professional integrity, safety over symbolism, accountability.

Case 4 · Session Brevity vs Substantive Debate

A Speaker managing a two-day Assembly session with a full pending agenda must decide how much time goes to substantive debate versus procedural formalities. **GS4 Values:** Deliberative democracy, institutional accountability, procedural fairness.

Case 5 • Administrative Efficiency vs Natural Justice

A Foreigners Tribunal member under pressure to clear case backlogs must decide whether to rely on ex-parte orders over clerical discrepancies or grant more time for a fair hearing, knowing either choice affects a person's citizenship. **GS4 Values:** Natural justice, empathy, resisting bureaucratic expediency at the cost of rights.

§4 • PRELIMS MCQS — 29 JULY 2026 (19 QUESTIONS)

Q1. The proviso challenged before the SC in July 2026, found in Section 2(k) of the Transgender Persons Amendment Act, excludes: (a) Persons above 18 years (b) Persons with self-perceived gender identities (c) Foreign nationals (d) Persons without Aadhaar

✓ Answer: (b).

Q2. The constitutional principle of self-identification for transgender persons was first laid down in: (a) Puttaswamy case (b) NALSA case (c) Navtej Singh Johar case (d) Shafin Jahan case

✓ Answer: (b) — NALSA v. Union of India, 2014.

Q3. Under Article 239AA, which subject is EXCLUDED from the Delhi Assembly's legislative competence? (a) Health (b) Land (c) Education (d) Transport

✓ Answer: (b).

Q4. The gap between two sessions of a State/UT Legislature cannot exceed how many months under Article 174? (a) 3 (b) 6 (c) 9 (d) 12

✓ Answer: (b).

Q5. Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu called for SAARC revival during which occasion in 2026? (a) A SAARC Summit (b) Maldives' Independence Day address (c) UN General Assembly (d) BIMSTEC Summit

✓ Answer: (b).

Q6. SAARC's last full summit was held in 2014 in: (a) Islamabad (b) Kathmandu (c) Colombo (d) Dhaka

✓ Answer: (b).

Q7. BIMSTEC, India's preferred regional grouping since 2016, notably excludes: (a) Bangladesh (b) Myanmar (c) Pakistan (d) Nepal

✓ Answer: (c).

Q8. A Factory Acceptance Test (FAT) is conducted: (a) After commissioning into service (b) At the manufacturer's site before installation (c) Only for imported systems (d) Post-decommissioning

✓ Answer: (b).

Q9. Waterjet propulsion systems, tested via FAT in Goa, are especially suited for: (a) Deep-sea submarines (b) Shallow-water, high-maneuvrability craft (c) Aircraft carriers (d) Nuclear-powered vessels

✓ Answer: (b).

Q10. Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 achieved which milestone? (a) First Indian satellite (b) First privately-developed Indian rocket to reach orbit (c) First reusable Indian rocket (d) First Indian crewed spacecraft

✓ Answer: (b).

Q11. India's semiconductor push for space launch vehicles targets indigenising components such as: (a) Only solar panels (b) Processors, controllers, and guidance electronics (c) Only rocket fuel (d) Only ground-station antennas

✓ Answer: (b).

Q12. India's IIP growth in June 2026 was recorded at: (a) 5.1% (b) 6.5% (c) 7.3% (d) 8.9%

✓ Answer: (c).

Q13. The IIP currently uses which base year? (a) 2004-05 (b) 2011-12 (c) 2015-16 (d) 2017-18

✓ Answer: (b).

Q14. International Tiger Day traces its origin to a declaration made at a 2010 summit in: (a) Nairobi (b) St. Petersburg (c) Rio de Janeiro (d) Kathmandu

✓ Answer: (b).

Q15. Consider the following statements on India's tiger conservation: (1) NTCA was established in 2005. (2) India's 5th All India Tiger Estimation (2022) recorded a minimum of 3,167 tigers. (3) India has fewer than 40 tiger reserves. Which is/are correct? (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

✓ Answer: (a) — statement 3 is incorrect; India has 58 tiger reserves.

Q16. Foreigners Tribunals in Assam derive their power primarily from: (a) The Citizenship Act, 1955 (b) The Foreigners Act, 1946 (c) The Passports Act, 1967 (d) The NRC Rules, 2003

✓ Answer: (b).

Q17. The National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme (NVHCP), which marked 8 years in 2026, was launched in: (a) 2014 (b) 2018 (c) 2020 (d) 2022

✓ Answer: (b).

Q18. India's stated target under its sporting-nation roadmap is to become a top-10 Olympic/Paralympic nation by: (a) 2028 (b) 2032 (c) 2036 (d) 2040

✓ Answer: (c) — and top-5 by 2047.

Q19. India's gross GST collection for June 2026 grew year-on-year by approximately: (a) 5.1% (b) 8.4% (c) 13.9% (d) 20.2%

✓ Answer: (c) — the highest growth rate in 13 months.

§5 · MAINS QUESTIONS — 29 JULY 2026

GS2 Fundamental Rights Q1. "Judicial recognition of a fundamental right can be diluted through subsequent legislative or subordinate action." Discuss with reference to the evolution from NALSA (2014) to the Transgender Persons Amendment Act, 2026. (250 words)

Hints: self-identification principle; DM-certification dilution (2019 Act); 2026 exclusionary proviso; judicial review as a corrective mechanism; comparative gender-recognition frameworks.

GS2 Polity Q2. Discuss the constitutional constraints on the legislative competence of Union Territory legislatures, with reference to the Delhi Legislative Assembly. (250 words)

Hints: Article 239AA; excluded subjects (Police, Public Order, Land); Centre-UT friction over administrative control; session periodicity under Article 174; Puducherry comparison.

GS2 IR Q3. "SAARC's revival depends less on individual member enthusiasm than on resolving the trust deficit between India and Pakistan." Examine. (250 words)

Hints: SAARC's 1985 origin and consensus-based functioning; 2016 Uri attack and summit cancellation; rise of BIMSTEC; Maldives' mediation offer; India's Neighbourhood First policy.

GS3 Defence Q4. Assess the significance of import substitution in critical naval and space-sector components for India's strategic autonomy. (250 words)

Hints: Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence manufacturing; waterjet propulsion FATs; space-grade semiconductor chips; balancing indigenisation speed with certification rigour.

GS3 Economy Q5. Discuss the significance of the Index of Industrial Production as a high-frequency economic indicator, and analyse the drivers of its recent growth. (250 words)

Hints: IIP methodology, base year, sectoral weights; Eight Core Industries sub-index; manufacturing vs electricity contributions; limitations of IIP.

GS3 Environment Q6. "Tiger conservation success in India owes as much to institutional innovation as to protected-area expansion." Discuss with reference to NTCA, M-STrIPES, and the All India Tiger Estimation exercise. (250 words)

Hints: Project Tiger (1973) vs NTCA (2005); technology-driven monitoring; community-based conservation and human-wildlife conflict; India's role in the global TX2 goal.

GS2 Citizenship Q7. "Administrative expediency in citizenship determination cannot come at the cost of due process." Examine with reference to the Supreme Court's recent intervention in Assam's Foreigners Tribunal cases. (250 words)

Hints: Foreigners Act, 1946 and Tribunal procedure; ex-parte orders and clerical-error cases; burden of proof in citizenship disputes; NRC/Assam Accord context; balancing sovereignty concerns with individual rights.

GS2 Social Sector Q8. Assess India's twin-track approach to sports development through the Khelo India Scheme and the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS), and its adequacy for meeting the 2036 top-10 target. (250 words)

Hints: grassroots pipeline (KIRTI, Khelo India Centres) vs elite podium support (TOPS); budgetary trends; private-sector/PPP role in sports infrastructure; lessons from other emerging sporting nations; convergence with health/education policy.

§6 · ANSWER WRITING VALUE ADDITION

DATA — IIP GROWTH

7.3% in June 2026 (fastest in ~2 years); Manufacturing +7.8%, Electricity & Gas +10.6%; base year 2011-12. Use in: GS3 economic-indicator answers.

DATA — TIGER CONSERVATION

3,167 tigers (2022, 5th cycle AITE); 58 tiger reserves; over 70% of the world's wild tigers found in India. Use in: GS3/ENV wildlife conservation answers.

QUOTE — ON SAARC

"Everyone in South Asia is aware of which country... is responsible for stymying SAARC" — MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, July 2026. Use in: GS2 regional cooperation answers.

DATA — SPACE SEMICONDUCTOR PUSH

Domestic chips for launch-vehicle processors/controllers announced July 27, 2026; ISRO targets indigenous semiconductor manufacturing within 4 years. Use in: GS3 space self-reliance answers.

DATA — NVHCP (WORLD HEPATITIS DAY)

21.06 crore beneficiaries screened, 6.12 lakh Hepatitis B/C patients treated (as of March 2026); 1,153 treatment sites; 7.64 crore pregnant women screened. Use in: GS2 health-policy answers.

DATA — GST COLLECTIONS

₹1,94,812 crore gross GST, June 2026 (+13.9% YoY); net revenue ₹1,62,377 crore (+11.2% YoY) — highest growth in 13 months. Use in: GS3 fiscal/indirect-tax answers.

§7 · AKADEMIA DIRECT HIT TRACKER — 29 JULY 2026

#	TOPIC	GS	PRIORITY	ONE-LINE RECALL
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1	SC Notice — Transgender Amendment Act Exclusion	GS2	 HIGH	Section 2(k) proviso challenged; NALSA self-ID principle at stake
2	SC — Assam Foreigners Tribunal Fair-Process Ruling	GS2	 HIGH	27 residents' cases remanded; ex-parte clerical-error declarations set aside
3	Delhi Assembly Monsoon Session	GS2	 MEDIUM	2-day session, Jul 29-30; Article 174 gap rule
4	NVHCP — 8 Years, World Hepatitis Day	GS2	 MEDIUM	21.06cr screened, 6.12L treated; launched 2018
5	Khelo India — Top-10 Sporting Nation by 2036	GS2	 MEDIUM	KIRTI, 1,067 KICs; TOPS handles elite podium athletes separately
6	SAARC Revival Rebuffed	GS2	 HIGH	Muizzu's mediation offer; MEA blames Pakistan for stymying SAARC
7	Indian Coast Guard MJP Waterjet FAT	GS3	 MEDIUM	Indigenous propulsion FAT completed in Goa
8	Space-Grade Semiconductor Chips	GS3	 HIGH	Vaishnaw-Skyroot announcement, Jul 27; launch-vehicle self-reliance
9	IIP Growth 7.3% (June 2026)	GS3	 HIGH	Fastest in ~2 years; manufacturing +7.8%, electricity +10.6%
10	GST Collections +13.9% YoY (June 2026)	GS3	 MEDIUM	₹1.94 lakh crore gross; highest growth in 13 months
11	International Tiger Day 2026	ENV	 HIGH	Jul 29; 3,167 tigers, 58 reserves, 70%+ global share
12	NALSA v. Union of India (2014)	GS2	 LOW	Self-identification principle for transgender persons
13	Article 239AA — Delhi's UT Status	GS2	 LOW	Excludes Police, Public Order, Land
14	BIMSTEC vs SAARC	GS2	 MEDIUM	India's shift since 2016 Uri attack/summit cancellation
15	Skyroot Vikram-1 Orbital Milestone	GS3	 LOW	First private Indian rocket to reach orbit (context for chip story)
16	NTCA & M-STripES	ENV	 MEDIUM	Established 2005; tech-driven tiger monitoring tool

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UPSC CSE Prelims 2026 Results

In what critics called the most unpredictable Prelims paper in a decade —

48

QUESTIONS FROM
ANTIM ASSURED 100+

7

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE DOCUMENT

6

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE CLASS

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