

CURRENT AFFAIRS

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HARMANPREET KAUR AND MOHAMMED RIZWAN SEAL ICC PLAYER OF THE MONTH CROWNS FOR SEPTEMBER

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the winners of the ICC Player of the Month awards for September 2022. India's inspirational captain **Harmanpreet Kaur** is named the recipient of the ICC Women's Player of the Month award, While Pakistan ace **Mohammad Rizwan** claims the ICC Men's Player of the Month award.



- **Harmanpreet Kaur** becomes India's first winner of the ICC Women's Player of the Month. The India skipper was at her brilliant best during the ODI series, scoring 221 runs across the three matches, maintaining a strike rate of 103.47 and only being dismissed once.

NOBEL PRIZE FOR ECONOMICS 2022: US TRIO, INCLUDING FORMER FED CHAIRMAN BERNANKE, WINS

Nobel Prize for Economics 2022: US Trio of Ben S. Bernanke, Douglas W. Diamond, and Philip H. Dybvig received the **Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences 2022 (Nobel Prize for Economics 2022)** in Memory of Alfred Nobel "for research on banking and financial crises." The prize money for the Nobel Prize for Economics 2022 total 10 million Swedish kronor, or roughly \$900,000. They will be distributed on December 10.

LEOPARDS IN ASOLA BHATTI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

- Leopards have been sighted in Delhi's Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary for the first time since 1940.

Key facts

- Eight leopards have been sighted in the Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary.
- This is a sign of a booming ecosystem.
- According to the Gazetteer of Delhi, this sanctuary has not recorded sightings of leopards since the year 1940.
- In 2019, the Delhi forest department recorded a fresh presence of leopard pug marks and scats in the protected region.
- A survey was jointly conducted by the Delhi forest and wildlife department and the Bombay Natural History Society from June 2021 to June 2022 using infra-red stealth camera traps.
- Among the 8 leopards, 4 males and a female appeared before these cameras.



- This survey also provided insights about the presence and spatial distribution of mammals like jungle cat, Indian hare, black buck, striped hyena, Indian boar, sambar deer, hog deer, spotted deer and others.
- The new study reveals that leopards have made urban forest their permanent settlement.
- These big cats were found to roam the same tracks once and even twice. This suggests that leopards can coexist alongside human settlements without human-animal conflicts.
- The neighbouring Sanjay Colony is a human-dominated area. Leopards are found to visit the region despite this fact.
- Periphery of the sanctuary bordering Neeli Jheel and Chhatarpur region saw the maximum sightings of the leopards.

About Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary

Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary is situated at the border between Haryana and Delhi on the Aravalli hill range's Southern Delhi Ridge. It spans across Southern Delhi and northern parts of Haryana's Faridabad and Gurugram districts. It is part of the Northern Aravalli Leopard Wildlife Corridor, which starts from Rajasthan's Sariska National Park, passes via Nuh, Faridabad and Gurugram districts and ends at the Delhi Ridge. The wildlife sanctuary holds the one of the last fragments of Delhi Ridge hill range and its semi-arid forest habitat as well as the fauna depending on it.

RAJASTHAN INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL

The 13th edition of the Rajasthan International Folk Festival was organized from October 6 to 10 this year.

Key facts

- The Rajasthan International Folk Festival (RIFF) was organized at the Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur after two years of hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It is a mixture of performances by both Indian and international artists with diverse linguistic, racial and national backgrounds.
- During this year's event, over 250 artists from 7 Indian states and 8 foreign countries (Mexico, Ireland, Wales, Netherlands, Mauritius, Brazil, Israel and Turkey) showcased their talent.
- This year's key highlight is the "Citadels of the Sun" – a Rajasthani-Irish collaboration that was commissioned by Jodhpur RIFF and Ireland's Earagail Arts Festival. The newly commissioned music was performed at the two historic forts – Grianan of Aileach fort in Ireland and Mehrangarh Fort.
- The event also featured performance by Turkey's Yurdal Tokcan – a popular oud player.



Background

The event was first organized in October 2007 as a not-for-profit partnership between Jaipur Virasat Foundation and Mehrangarh Museum Trust. It coincides with Sharad Purnima – the brightest full moon of the year. Its chief patron is HH Gaj Singh – who became the Maharaja of Jodhpur in 1952 and later served as the member of the Indian Parliament and High Commissioner of India. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognizes this event as "People's Platform for Creativity and Sustainable Development".

About Mehrangarh Fort

Mehrangarh Fort is a 15th century fort built by Rao Jodha Rathore, who reigned Mandore in the present-day Rajasthan. The name “Mehrangarh” means “fort of the sun”. It is designated as a National Geographical Monument since the rocky outcrop atop which the fort stands, known as Jodhpur Group-Malani Igneous Suite Contact, represents the last phase of igneous activity of the Precambrian period – the earliest part of the Earth’s geological history prior to the current geological eon of Phanerozoic Eon.

UNION HOME AND COOPERATION MINISTER AMIT SHAH PITCHES PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL CREDIT SOCIETIES (PACS) IN EVERY PANCHAYAT OF THE COUNTRY

Key Details:

- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah recently conveyed the union government’s intention to set up primary agricultural credit societies (PACS) in every panchayat of the country to boost various agriculture-related activities over the next five years.
- The minister noted that there are only 65,000 active PACS in the country at present, and it is imperative that all panchayats must have one such body by 2027 to promote farming and dairy activities at the grassroots level.
- Such PACS will carry out activities like the sale of gas and petrol and storage and marketing of dairy and farm products with an aim to alleviate poverty and empower women.
- The union minister also pointed out that the eastern and northeastern states will benefit the most from the establishment of the PACS as its farm and dairy products will be efficiently marketed, thus generating optimum financial benefits for people engaged in animal husbandry and allied sectors.

Primary Agriculture Credit Societies:

- PACS are ground-level cooperative credit institutions that provide short-term and medium-term agricultural loans to farmers for various agricultural and farming activities.
- PACS generally provide the following facilities to their members:
 1. Input facilities in the form of cash or kind component
 2. Agriculture implements on a hiring basis
 3. Storage facility
- It works at the grassroots gram panchayat and village levels.
- The first Primary Agricultural Credit Society was formed in 1904.
- In June 2022, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved to digitise around 63,000 PACS at a cost of RS 2,516 crore.
 - Each PACS will get around Rs 4 lakh to upgrade its capacity and even old accounting records will be digitised and linked to a cloud-based software.
 - Digitisation of PACS is aimed at increasing their efficiency, bringing transparency and accountability in their operations and facilitating them to diversify their business and undertake multiple services.
 - Digitisation software will be in vernacular language having the flexibility of customisation as per the needs of the States.

STRUCTURE OF COOPERATIVE CREDIT INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

