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The Hindu



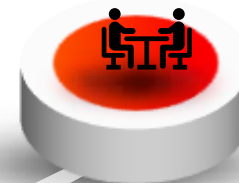
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10 MCQ QUIZ



- “Man may have discovered fire, but women discovered how to play with it. They are more mature than man, so trust their instinct



... ..

3 terrorists behind Pahalgam killed: govt.

Pak.-based LeT terrorists were tracked for 2 months and killed in Dachigam, says Home Minister Shah

Ballistic, forensic reports and testimony of four witnesses used to confirm their identities, he adds

PM slams Opposition for failing to acknowledge operation's success and questioning its timing

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Three Pakistani terrorists who had carried out the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam were killed in a security operation at Dachigam in Srinagar on Monday, the Union government told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday. Both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah confirmed the operation, and that the three slain terrorists had been involved in the Pahalgam attack that left 26 people dead.

In his speech during a debate on Operation Sindoor, the Prime Minister said that despite the security forces' success in eliminating these terrorists, some sections of the Opposition were raising questions on the timing of the operation. "What has hap-

pened to these people?" he said, pointing to Opposition MPs.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Shah informed the Lok Sabha about Operation Mahadev. "The three terrorists who killed our civilians at Baisaran meadow in Pahalgam have been killed," the Minister said. Since local residents in Jammu and Kashmir are not joining the militant ranks, Pakistan is sending terrorists from across the border to strike terror, he added. "We ensured that the terrorists do not flee to Pakistan," Mr. Shah said, in his own speech during the Operation Sindoor debate.

Voter cards, chocolates Sharing the details, Mr. Shah said that the three terrorists have been identified as Suleman, alias Faizal Jatt; Hamza Afghani; and Zibran, all Pakistani nationals and members of



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during the debate on Operation Sindoor on Tuesday. PTI

the Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Suleman was an A-category terrorist who was also involved in the Gagangir terror attacks in October 2024.

The three men were tracked with the help of human and technical intelligence provided by the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Army, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and J&K police, the Minister said.

Mr. Shah said that the identity of the terrorists and their involvement was confirmed with the help of ballistic and forensic reports and the testimony of four other witnesses, including two accused, who had given them shelter a day before the attack.

Pakistani voter identity cards and chocolates made in Pakistan were found on the two terrorists, esta-

No one asked India to stop Operation Sindoor: Modi

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

India had put Pakistan on notice of retaliation over terror attacks through Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday during a

debate on the military action that followed the Pahalgam attack.

"Not a single world leader asked us to stop it. Our actions were precise."

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 5

blishing that they came from Pakistan, he said.

"Two AK-47 rifles and an M4 carbine rifle were recovered from their bodies. The spent cartridges recovered from Baisaran (Pahalgam) meadow were matched with the weapons recovered during Operation Mahadev yesterday. These weapons were flown on a special plane to the Chandigarh forensic labo-

ratory last night. I had a video call with six ballistic experts at 5 a.m. today, and they confirmed the use of these weapons at Pahalgam," the Minister added.

He said that the first information about the presence of terrorists in the Dachigam area was received on May 22.

"On May 22, IB got human intelligence that the

presence of terrorists has been tracked in Dachigam. Communication signals were tracked from May 22 to July 22 and continuous attempts were made to track them. IB and Army set out on foot patrol to catch the signals, we got the first confirmation on July 22 with the help of sensors. 4 Para unit of the Army, CRPF, and J&K police jawans cornered the terrorists. Five human assets were also sent and we killed the three terrorists," Mr. Shah said.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) had earlier arrested two men who provided food and shelter to the terrorists a day before the attack.

He said the NIA interviewed 1,055 people, including all the victims of the terror attack.

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1. Attack Background:

- April 22, 2024: **Terror attack in Pahalgam, J&K.**
- Resulted in **26 civilian deaths** at Baisaran meadow.

2. Terrorists Neutralized:

- Operation conducted by **Army, CRPF, IB, and J&K Police.**
- Killed in **Dachigam forest area.**
- Neutralized terrorists:
 - Suleman
 - Hamza Afghani
 - Zibran
- All three were **Pakistani nationals**, affiliated with **Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).**

3. Tracking & Confirmation:

- Surveillance began on **May 22**, confirmed via sensors on **July 22**.
- Communication intercepts used to locate them.
- Confirmed using:
 - Ballistic & forensic reports
 - Witness testimony (4 total, 2 accused who gave shelter)
 - Pakistani voter ID cards and chocolates found
 - Matching spent cartridges with those from Pahalgam.

4. Operation Support:

- **4 Para unit**, IB, CRPF, and J&K Police involved.
- **5 human assets** deployed for confirmation.
- **Weapons flown to Chandigarh lab** to match attack forensics.

5. Political Context:

- **PM Modi** and **HM Amit Shah** addressed Lok Sabha.
- PM criticized Opposition for **raising doubts** on operation timing.
- Emphasized: **"Not a single world leader asked us to stop it."**

6. NIA Investigation:

- **Over 1,000 people** interviewed.
- **2 men arrested** for sheltering the terrorists.

Tiger's tale



Stripe speak: A folk performer takes part in the International Tiger Day celebrations in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The July 29 event promotes awareness about tiger conservation and threats from poaching. J. ALLEN EGENUSE

“Securing the future of Tigers with
Indigenous Peoples and Local
Communities at the heart.”

54	Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve	Madhya Pradesh	Central India	2023	1414.28
55	Dholpur-Karauli Tiger Reserve	Rajasthan	Aravali Range	2023	599.64
56	Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve	Chhattisgarh	–	2024	2,829.38
57	Ratapani Tiger Reserve	Madhya Pradesh	–	2024	1,271.4
58	Madhav Tiger Reserve	Madhya Pradesh	Gwalior-Chambal region	2025	1,751

Manipur preparing for special intensive revision, says Joint CEO

BLO training, meetings with political parties under way: Joint CEO adds no specific timelines have been communicated for SIR in Manipur. Opposition parties, including Congress, criticise exercise as a roundabout way of implementing the NRC

Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Manipur has begun training sessions for household level officers (HLOs) and meetings with political parties for a special intensive revision (SIR) of the photo electoral rolls of the State, an exercise that the Election Commission is currently holding in order to draw flak from opposition parties for allegedly being a roundabout way to a National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Election officials in the State said the training and meetings were being conducted as per communication from the EC "both formally and informally".

Joint Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur, Kanamanda Nongmekapam told *The Hindu*, "This is the last remaining district — said the meeting would be about SIR, house-to-house survey, and rationalisation of polling stations "under Pre-Revision exercise".

On July 25, at a meeting chaired by the Joint CEO, "The participating parties were sent about the EC's proposal to hold SIR across the country, aimed at updating the rolls".

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According to notification made public by the office of the district Election Officers across Manipur for meeting with political parties, there is a reference to "the ongoing special intensive revision".



Revision exercise: A meeting between election officials and representatives of political parties was held in Imphal on July 25 to discuss the revision of electoral rolls, government.

body in the State said. Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee president in Kaitum, who attended the July 25 meeting, told *The Hindu*, "It seemed like through the SIR, they also want to change voting address of internally displaced persons to the relief camp locations where they are temporarily living. This was opposed by us as it would lead the State away from peace."

Training sessions: According to the CEO's official posts on social media, training sessions with BLOs and BLO supervisors will also be done.

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Form panel to address exam grievances, HC tells NTA

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has directed the National Testing Agency (NTA) to constitute a standing grievance redressal panel to address issues raised by candidates who suffer loss of examination time due to technical difficulties for which they are not responsible.

The court was hearing a petition where a NTA-UC 2020 candidate sought compensatory marks after allegedly losing time and suffering mental distress due to biometric verification irregularities at the exam centre. Such issues were not addressed by the NTA, the court said.

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DRDO successfully holds back-to-back Pralay test flights

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted consecutive test flights of the Pralay missile from the A.P.J. Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha on Monday and Tuesday.

The test flights were carried out as a part of evaluation trials to validate the maximum and minimum range of the missile system, the Defence Ministry said. The missiles precisely followed the intended trajectory and reached the target point with pinpoint accuracy, meeting all the test objectives. All subsystems performed as per expectations.

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Maharashtra onion farmers seek MSP hike as prices drop

Purnima Sah
MUMBAI

As wholesale onion prices fell by nearly 10% over the past two weeks at Asia's largest onion market in Latur, Maharashtra, farmers' associations have urged both the State and Central governments to intervene immediately.

In a meeting held at the Latur, Maharashtra State Onion Producers Farmers Association (SOPFA) passed multiple resolutions seeking price support and long-term policy measures.

The meeting, chaired by the association's founding president Bharat Dighe, was attended by farmer representatives, APMC members, and cooperative leaders from across the State.

The primary demand put forth was for an assured Minimum Support Price (MSP) of ₹2,000 per quintal — significantly above the current average market rate of ₹1,275 per quintal.

"Farmers are receiving prices far below their production costs, which range between ₹1,000 and ₹2,000 per quintal. This is not just economic exploitation — it's a disrespect to their year-round labour," Mr. Dighe said. He added that if the government does not respond by August 10, farmers would be compelled to launch a State-wide agitation. "We will wait till August 10. If the government doesn't care to address our concerns, we will hold a Statewide protest," he said.

According to the Latur APMC, the wholesale price of onions dropped from ₹1,800 on July 16 to ₹1,275 per quintal on July 28.

No decision has been taken to update National Population Register: Centre

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union government informed the Lok Sabha on Tuesday that no decision had been taken to update the National Population Register (NPR) during the 2027 Census exercise.

The NPR is the first step for the creation of a National Register of Citizens (NRC) under the Citizenship Act, 1955. The NPR database, which has the details of every resident, was updated in 2015-16.

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Disputed projects: Activists protest against the CAA, NRC and NPR at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi in March 2020. (Source: AP)

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This is India's first outreach to Syria since the fall of Assad, who was ousted in Dec. 2024.

der his rule and that of his father Hafez al-Assad, who was President for three decades, from 1970 onwards.

Since the end of the Assad era though, India has been championing a "Syrian-led" government to resolve the political crisis, but the Syrian provisional government's Foreign Minister, Ahmad al-Sharaa, on Monday in Damascus, according to officials here.

Marking a fresh beginning in ties with Damascus in the post-Assad era, India reached out to the Syrian provisional government under the leadership of President Ahmed Huseini al-Sharaa, also known as Abu Mohammad al-Jolani.

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The DRDO successfully conducted two consecutive flight-tests of Pralay missile off the coast of Odisha on Tuesday. ANI

DRDO successfully holds back-to-back Pralay test flights

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted consecutive test flights of the Pralay missile from Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha on Monday and Tuesday.

The test flights were carried out as a part of user evaluation trials to validate the maximum and minimum range of the missile system, the Defence Ministry said. The missiles precisely followed the intended trajectory and reached the target point with pinpoint accuracy, meeting all the test objectives. All sub-systems performed as per expectations.

Pralay is an indigenously developed solid-propellant quasi-ballistic missile with state-of-the-art gui-

dance and navigation to ensure high precision. The missile is capable of carrying multiple types of warheads against various targets.

The test flights were witnessed by senior scientists of the DRDO, representatives of users from the Indian Air Force and the Indian Army, as well as the industry representatives.

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh praised the DRDO, the armed forces, and the defence industry for the successful test flights.

Congratulating the teams, the Secretary, Department of Defence R&D, and DRDO Chairman Samir V. Kamat said the successful completion of the first phase of test flights paved the way for the induction of the system into the armed forces in the near future, the MoD said.

1. Type:

- **Solid-propellant quasi-ballistic missile**
- Indigenous development

2. Capabilities:

- **State-of-the-art guidance and navigation systems**
- **Pinpoint accuracy:** Met all objectives with precise target hit
- Can carry **multiple types of warheads**

3. Test Objective:

- Validate **maximum and minimum range**
- All **subsystems performed as expected**

4. Significance:

- Tests pave the way for **induction into armed forces**
- System viewed as crucial for enhancing India's missile capabilities

Aspect	Details
Name	Pralay (<i>Rigveda</i> : 'Apocalypse')
Launched By	Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Govt. of India
Development Start	Sanctioned in March 2015 Wikipedia +15
Type	Short-range, surface-to-surface quasi-ballistic missile (SRBM)
Range	150–500 km (conventional precision strike capability) Wikipedia Defence Blog The Times of India
Payload Capacity	350–1,000 kg conventional warheads (fragmentation, penetration, anti-runway) Swarajyamag Defence Blog The Times of India

Accuracy	<10 m Circular Error Probable (CEP) Wikipedia Defence Blog
Trajectory	Flat, depressed quasi-ballistic with mid-air manoeuvres (MaRV) to evade missile defences Swarajyamag The Economic Times
Speed	Up to Mach 1.6 in terminal phase Wikipedia The Economic Times
Launch Platform	8x8 / 12x12 TEL based on Ashok Leyland / BEML chassis Wikipedia Defence Blog
Key Technologies	Two-stage solid rocket + MaRV, INS, terminal radar/scene-match guidance Wikipedia Defence Blog
Development Agencies	DRDO's Research Centre Imarat, HEMRL, ASL, ARDE, TBRL, R&DE (E), DMRL; industry partners BDL, BEL, MSMEs The Times of India Press Information Bureau
Test Milestones	Dec 2021 maiden flight; July 28 & 29, 2025 Twin User Evaluation Trials validated full range & accuracy tribuneindia.com The Times of India The Times of India The New Indian Express Press Information Bureau
Purpose / Role	Battlefield precision strikes against high-value targets (radar sites, logistics hubs, enemy HQ) utkarsh.com tribuneindia.com
Strategic Significance	Boosts India's conventional deterrence; evades ABM systems; contributes to Integrated Rocket Force Swarajyamag The Economic Times The Times of India

Q. With reference to the recent tests of the Pralay missile, consider the following statements:

1. Pralay is a solid-propellant, surface-to-air missile developed by DRDO.
2. The missile is capable of carrying multiple types of warheads and follows a quasi-ballistic trajectory.
3. The test flights were aimed at validating the missile's accuracy and range through user evaluation trials.
4. The missile test was conducted off the coast of Gujarat at the Pokhran testing range.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 4 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1, 2 and 3 only
- D. 2, 3 and 4 only

DGCA audit flags 51 safety lapses in Air India's operations

Reuters

NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has found 51 safety lapses at Air India in its July audit, including lack of adequate training for some pilots, use of unapproved simulators and a poor rostering system, according to a government report seen by *Reuters*.

The Tata Group-owned airline is already facing warning notices for running planes without checking emergency equipment, not changing engine parts in time and forging records, along with other lapses related to crew fatigue management.

The 11-page confidential report from the DGCA said there were seven "Level 1" significant breaches which need to be fixed by Wednesday, and 44 other non-compliances classified which need to be resolved by August 23.

Officials said they found "recurrent training gaps" for some unspecified Boeing 787 and 777 pilots, saying they had not completed their monitoring duties ahead of mandatory periodic evaluations.

The annual audit was not related to the deadly Boeing 787 crash last



The annual audit was not related to the deadly crash last month in Ahmedabad.

month that killed 260 people in Ahmedabad, but its findings come as the airline faces renewed scrutiny after the accident.

The officials wrote in their report that Air India did not do "proper route assessments" for some so-called Category C airports – which may have challenging layouts or terrain – and conducted training for such airfields with simulators that did not meet qualification standards. "This may account to non-consideration of safety risks during approaches to challenging airports," the report said.

Air India said it was "fully transparent" during the audit. It added it will "submit our response to the regulator within the stipulated time frame, along with the details of the corrective actions."

◆ Key Safety Concerns Raised

1. Pilot Training:

- Recurrent training gaps in Boeing 787 and 777 pilots
- Incomplete monitoring duties

2. Simulators:

- Use of **unapproved simulators** for training
- Inadequate simulation for **Category C airports** (challenging layouts)

3. Crew Management:

- Poor **rostering system**
- **Crew fatigue** not properly addressed

4. Technical Oversight:

- Operating flights **without checking emergency equipment**
- **Delayed engine part replacements**
- **Forging records**

5. Route Planning:

- Lack of **proper route assessment** for difficult airports

Lols issued for campuses of 4 foreign varsities; Pradhan announces projects worth ₹4,000 cr.

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday issued Letters of Intent (LoIs) to four foreign universities for establishing their campuses in India. They are Western Sydney University (WSU), Victoria University, and La Trobe University of Australia and the University of Bristol of the U.K.

Speaking at the Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam (ABSS), an event to commemorate five years of the National Education Policy, 2020, Mr. Pradhan said that up to 15 international universities would establish their campuses in India.

“Of these, Australia’s Deakin University and University of Wollongong have already established campus in Gujarat’s GIFT city and U.K.’s Southamp-



Dharmendra Pradhan issues Letters of Intent to representatives of foreign universities at an event to mark five years of NEP 2020. PIB

ton University in Delhi NCR’s Gurugram,” Mr. Pradhan said.

The ABSS serves as a platform for policymakers, educators, industry leaders, and government representatives to review progress under the NEP, 2020 and chart the way forward.

The WSU will open a campus in Greater Noida and Victoria University in

Noida. La Trobe University will establish its campus in Bengaluru. The University of Bristol will establish a campus in Mumbai.

The WSU plans to offer BA programmes in business analytics and business marketing and MBA in innovation and entrepreneurship, and logistics and supply chain management on its Greater Noida campus.

Victoria University proposes to offer undergraduate degrees in business, data science and cybersecurity and MBA and Masters in Information and Technology.

La Trobe University is proposing to offer undergraduate degrees in business (finance, marketing, and Mmanagement), computer science (AI, software engineering), and public health and open a Joint Ph.D. academy with the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur for health, water and urban planning.

The University of Bristol, planning to start operations in 2026, will offer joint undergraduate-to-Master’s programmes, student exchange, and collaborative research in AI, design, and digital technologies in collaboration with ATLAS SkillTech University in Mumbai and a “3+1” degree pathway

with Krea University (Sri City), enabling students to complete undergraduate studies in India and pursue masters degrees at Bristol in innovation, policy, and analytics.

NEP features

Mr. Pradhan said various States had drawn up plans to implement pre-school or foundational level education in their mother tongue, which is the spirit of the NEP, 2020. He said introduction of new-age textbooks by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was a paradigm shift in education. He announced education projects worth over ₹4,000 crore while inaugurating the ABSS. These include infrastructure upgrades in Central Board of Secondary Education, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas.

Aspect	Details
Ministry	Ministry of Education
Minister	Dharmendra Pradhan
Event	Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam (ABSS)
Occasion	5 years of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020
Key Outcome	Lols issued to 4 foreign universities
Investment Announced	Projects worth ₹4,000 crore for education infrastructure

University	Country	Campus Location in India	Proposed Programs
Western Sydney University (WSU)	Australia	Greater Noida	BA in business analytics, MBA, logistics & supply chain
Victoria University	Australia	Delhi NCR's Gurugram	UG in business, cybersecurity; PG in IT & data science
La Trobe University	Australia	Bengaluru	UG in business, AI, public health; joint Ph.D. with IIT Kanpur
University of Bristol	UK	Mumbai (starting in 2026)	UG-to-Master, AI, digital tech (with ATLAS SkillTech Mumbai)

Other Foreign Campuses Already Operational

University	Country	Indian Campus Location
Deakin University	Australia	Gujarat's GIFT City
University of Wollongong	Australia	Gujarat's GIFT City
Southampton University	UK	Gurugram (Delhi NCR)

Kaziranga in Assam records third-highest tiger density in India after Bandipur, Corbett

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The Kaziranga Tiger Reserve (KTR) in Assam has recorded the third-highest tiger density in India after the Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Karnataka and the Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand, says a report on the status of tigers in the reserve, which is better known for its one-horned rhinoceros.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma released the report online to mark Global Tiger Day on Tuesday.

The report stated that 148 tigers were recorded across the 1,307.49-sq. km expanse of the KTR in 2024. The “remarkable” increase since the 2022 estimation was attributed to



A royal Bengal tiger inside the Kaziranga National Park. AP

were recorded.

The tiger count grew from 104 in 2022 to 115 in 2024 in the core Eastern Assam Wildlife Division, while the Nagaon Wildlife Division maintained a count of six tigers.

“From Kaziranga to Manas, Assam is not only limited to protecting the tig-

third-highest tiger density in the world, extensive forest cover and bold steps against infiltration, the tiger, the treasure of Assam’s forests, is walking proudly and bravely today,” Mr. Sarma said.

The report said the KTR has 18.65 tigers per 100 sq. km – behind Bandipur’s 19.83 tigers in 1,456 sq. km and Corbett’s 19.56 in 1,288 sq. km. KTR officials said the survey was conducted between December 2023 and April 2024 using camera traps, following the protocol of the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Wildlife Institute of India.

The spatially explicit capture-recapture method, which provides a more precise and ecologically re-


Number of countries to join International Big Cat Alliance

24 The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) is an India-led global initiative to protect seven species of big cats. 12 countries — India, Armenia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Guinea, Liberia, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Somalia and Surinam — are members of the alliance. PTI

Parameter	Details
Location	Kaziranga Tiger Reserve (KTR), Assam
Tiger Density Rank (India)	3rd highest
Tiger Density Rank (World)	3rd highest
Highest Tiger Density in India	1. Bandipur (19.83 tigers/100 sq.km) 2. Corbett (19.56/100 sq.km)
Kaziranga Tiger Density	18.65 tigers per 100 sq.km
Total Tiger Count in 2024	148 tigers (up from 104 in 2022)
Area Surveyed	1,307.49 sq.km
First-time Survey	Biswanath Wildlife Division – 27 tigers found
Techniques Used	Camera trap, spatially explicit capture-recapture method
Survey Period	December 2023 – April 2024
Conducted by	National Tiger Conservation Authority & Wildlife Institute of India

Aspect	Details
Name	International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)
Launched by	Government of India
Year of Launch	2023 (Officially announced in April 2023)
Initiative by	National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)
Objective	Conservation of big cats globally through collaborative efforts
Headquarters	India (Proposed)
Initial Funding	₹100 crore (India's contribution for 5 years)
Members Targeted	97 range countries of big cats (including Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Cheetah etc.)

Big Cats Covered	Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Jaguar, Cheetah, Puma
India's Role	Founding country and host; aims to lead global big cat conservation efforts
Key Focus Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Capacity building2. Research & development3. Best practices sharing4. Combatting illegal wildlife trade
Significance	Enhances India's soft power in wildlife conservation; global leadership role
Why Important for India	India hosts 5 of the 7 big cats: Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah
Related Initiatives	Project Tiger, Project Lion, Project Snow Leopard, Cheetah Reintroduction
First Global Meet	April 2023 in Mysuru, Karnataka (marking 50 years of Project Tiger)

Aspect	Details	
Name	Project Tiger	
Launched By	Government of India	
Year of Launch	1st April 1973	
Nodal Agency	National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) (since 2006)	
Ministry	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)	
Objective	Ensure viable population of tigers in India and protect their habitat	
Initial Reserves	9 Tiger Reserves in 1973	
Current Tiger Reserves	54 (as of 2024) across 18 states	

Area Covered	Over 78,000 sq km under tiger reserves
Tiger Population Trends	2006: 1,411 2010: 1,706 2014: 2,226 2018: 2,967 2022: 3,167
Latest Census	2022 Tiger Census – India has ~75% of world's wild tiger population
Important Features	Core-buffer strategy, relocation of villages, anti-poaching squads
Key Components	Habitat restoration, eco-development, voluntary relocation, monitoring via M-STrIPES
Funding Model	Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) – 60:40 (Centre: State)
M-STrIPES	Monitoring System for Tigers – Intensive Protection and Ecological Status
Significance	One of the most successful conservation initiatives globally

Q. With reference to the recent tiger population data from the Kaziranga Tiger Reserve (KTR), consider the following statements:

- 1.** Kaziranga Tiger Reserve has the highest tiger density in India as per the 2024 report.
- 2.** The 2024 tiger survey in Kaziranga was conducted using a spatially explicit capture-recapture method.
- 3.** The Biswanath Wildlife Division was included for the first time in the 2024 Kaziranga tiger estimation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

EXPOSURE OVER LONG TERM TO AIR POLLUTION INCREASES DEMENTIA RISK, SAYS A LARGE NEW STUDY

LONG-TERM exposure to air pollution is linked to an increased risk of developing dementia, a new large-scale study by Cambridge University researchers has found. The report, published in *The Lancet Planetary Health* last week, is the most comprehensive assessment of its kind, involving a systematic review of 51 studies and drawing on data from more than 29 million participants who had been exposed to air pollutants for at least one year.

The findings

The study, the most comprehensive of its kind, found a positive and statistically-significant association between three common air pollutants and dementia.

PM2.5: Predominantly produced by vehicle emissions and thermal power plants, PM2.5 is extremely fine particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometres or less. The study found that for every 10 micrograms per cubic metre ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) of long-term exposure to PM2.5, an individual's relative risk of dementia would increase by 17% from the baseline. For context, the average PM2.5 levels at Delhi's ITO pollution AQI monitoring station over the last 24 hours (as of Tuesday, 8 pm) was 72.

NO₂: Nitrogen dioxide is produced primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels by vehicles, thermal power plants, and various industrial processes. The study found that for every 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ of long-term exposure to nitrogen dioxide, the relative risk of dementia increased by 3%. The average NO₂ levels at the ITO station over the last 24 hours (as of Tuesday, 8 pm) was 86.

SOOT: Soot or black carbon PM2.5 comes from sources such as vehicle exhaust emissions and burning wood. The study reported that dementia risk jumped by 13% for each 1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ of long-term soot exposure. The Central Pollution Control Board does not separately report BC/PM2.5 levels.

The explanation

Over the years, scientists have proposed several mechanisms to explain how air pollution may cause dementia. These primarily involve inflammation in the brain and oxidative stress (caused by



Delhi covered in a thick blanket of smog in 2023. *Praveen Khanna*

an imbalance between the production of reactive oxygen species and the body's ability to detoxify them, leading to cellular damage).

Both oxidative stress and inflammation play a role in the onset and progression of dementia, and air pollution is thought to trigger these processes through direct entry of pollutants into the brain or via the mechanisms that underlie lung and cardiovascular diseases.

Why this matters

Dementia is a term for several diseases that affect memory, thinking, and the ability to perform daily activities. The illness gets worse over time, and mainly affects older people. According to WHO, some 57 million people had dementia worldwide in 2021, with the number expected to increase to at least 150 million by 2050.

The rise in air pollution, especially in developing countries, might lead to an even sharper rise in cases. WHO data show that 99% of the global population breathes air that exceeds WHO guideline limits and contains high levels of pollutants, with low- and middle-income countries suffering from the highest exposures.

"These findings underscore the need for an interdisciplinary approach to dementia prevention. Preventing dementia is not just the responsibility of healthcare: this study strengthens the case that urban planning, transport policy, and environmental regulation all have a significant role to play," said Dr Christiaan Bredell from the University of Cambridge, and the study's first author. **ENS**

Aspect	Details
Study By	University of Cambridge researchers
Published In	The Lancet Planetary Health
Participants Covered	Over 29 million across 51 studies
Core Finding	Statistically significant link between air pollution and dementia
Pollutants Studied	PM2.5, NO2 (Nitrogen Dioxide), Black Carbon/Soot
Study Period	At least 1 year exposure required for inclusion

Key Pollutants and Dementia Risk

Pollutant	Source	Relative Dementia Risk	Delhi Level (as of Tuesday, 8 PM)
PM2.5	Vehicle emissions, thermal power plants	↑ 17% per 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	72 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
NO ₂	Fossil fuels, vehicles, thermal power plants, industry	↑ 3% per 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	86 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
Soot (BC)	Diesel exhaust, burning wood	↑ 13% per 1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Not separately reported



Scientific Mechanism Behind Dementia Due to Air Pollution

- **Inflammation & Oxidative Stress:** Pollution causes imbalance between **reactive oxygen species** and detoxifying ability → leads to **cellular & brain damage**.
 - **Pathways:**
 - Direct brain entry
 - Via bloodstream (cardio-pulmonary link)
-



Global Concern

- **2021 WHO Estimate:** 57 million dementia patients worldwide
- **By 2050:** Expected to rise to **150 million**
- **Air Quality Crisis:**
 - 99% of the global population breathes air exceeding **WHO standards**
 - **LMICs** (Low & Middle-Income Countries) suffer disproportionately

Q. With reference to the recent findings published in *The Lancet Planetary Health* regarding air pollution and dementia, consider the following statements:

1. Long-term exposure to PM_{2.5} was found to increase the relative risk of dementia by over 15% for every 10 µg/m³.
2. The study found no significant link between nitrogen dioxide exposure and dementia risk.
3. Black carbon or soot was identified as increasing dementia risk even at 1 µg/m³ exposure.
4. WHO estimates that global dementia cases will decrease by 2050 due to pollution control measures.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 2 and 4 only
- C. 1, 2 and 3 only
- D. 1 and 4 only

Shailesh Jejurikar gets P&G top post

● First India born president & CEO in global giant's 187-year history

VIVEAT SUSAN PINTO
Mumbai, July 29

MUMBAI-BORN SHAILESH JEJURIKAR made history on Tuesday when he was appointed the first Indian-origin president and CEO of Procter & Gamble (P&G) in its 187-year existence. Jejurikar, 58, currently the chief operating officer at P&G, will succeed incumbent Jon Moeller, effective January 1, 2026. P&G has also nominated Jejurikar for election to the director's post at the annual shareholder meeting in October.

Moeller will become executive chairman as part of the top-level rejig, the company said, as the maker of Tide detergent and Pantene shampoo battles slow-down concerns across the globe.

India contributes about 2.5% to its global revenue, which pales in comparison to rival Hindustan Unilever (HUL), which contributes about 12% to parent Unilever's global rev-

IN ELITE COMPANY OF INDIAN-ORIGIN GLOBAL LEADERS



Shailesh Jejurikar, incoming CEO, P&G



Leena Nair
CEO, Chanel



Devika Bulchandani
CEO, Ogilvy



Sundar Pichai
CEO, Alphabet



Satya Nadella
CEO, Microsoft



Arvind Krishna
CEO, IBM



Sanjay Mehrotra
CEO, Micron

enue.

A P&G veteran of 36 years, who began as an assistant brand manager at P&G India, he rose rapidly through the ranks. He has had close ties with the Indian operations throughout his nearly four-decade journey with the company. An IIM Lucknow alumnus, who did his schooling in Hyderabad and undergraduate studies (BA in

Economics) from Elphinstone College in Mumbai, Jejurikar joins the growing league of Indian-origin executives to lead top companies across the world.

Like HUL, P&G India has been a top exporter of talent to international markets, with over 350 Indian executives placed in roles across the world.

"Shailesh has been an integral part of P&G's leadership

team with substantial contributions across multiple businesses and in both developed and developing regions, notably in fabric care and home care and most recently in P&G's enterprise markets. He has consistently delivered strong results in the businesses and markets he has led.

Continued on Page 11

Word of the day

Hewn:

cut or shaped with the hard blows of a heavy cutting instrument like an axe or chisel

Synonyms: cut, carve

Usage: *While walking up the street, we saw a path hewn through the hedge of the mansion.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/hewnpro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /hju:n/



Thank you 😊

