

Short News

1. International Migration Outlook 2025

The International Migration Outlook is an annual report published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Permanent migration to OECD countries fell by 4% in 2024 after post-pandemic highs, but is still 15% above 2019 levels. In 2024, labor migration decreased, while humanitarian migration increased. Temporary work permits grew by 26%. Asylum applications hit a record 3 million, while international student inflows dropped by 13%. In 2023, 225,000 Indian citizens acquired nationality in OECD countries. India and China together account for one-third of all international students in the OECD.

2. Pampadum Shola National Park

Pampadum Shola is Kerala's smallest national park, located in the Idukki district. It is a high-altitude shola grassland mosaic in the Western Ghats (a system older than the Himalayas) and is a critical biodiversity hotspot, home to the endemic Nilgiri marten. The park's grasslands act as "natural sponges," feeding the Pambar and Vaigai rivers, which are crucial for Tamil Nadu. The ecosystem was severely degraded by the invasive Australian wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*), which was introduced by the British for its tannin-rich bark (used in leather production). The wattle aggressively displaces native grasses, dries up streams, and reduces biodiversity. A restoration drive, guided by Kerala's Eco-Restoration Policy (2021), involves manually uprooting the wattle and reseedling native grasses, often with local community help. The restoration has been successful – native grasses are reappearing, streams are reviving, and native fauna like the Nilgiri marten are returning.

3. Cheetahs

India will import eight more cheetahs from Botswana by December 2025 under Project Cheetah. Project Cheetah, launched in 2022, aims to reintroduce the species, which was declared extinct in India in 1952. The project is monitored by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). This follows the translocation of 8 cheetahs from Namibia (2022) and 12 from South Africa (2023). Despite initial setbacks, 16 cheetahs have been born in India so far, leading to a net population gain of seven. As of November 2025, India has 27 cheetahs (24 in Kuno National Park and 3 in Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary).

IUCN Status – The African Cheetah (reintroduced to India) is listed as Vulnerable, while the Asiatic Cheetah is Critically Endangered.