

7. Shortnews

1. Charaichung Royal Bird Sanctuary

Charaichung Festival was hosted in Assam's Majuli hosts to revive Asia's first protected royal bird sanctuary.

About Charaichung Festival

The second edition of the festival was held from 7–10 December in Majuli, Assam. It was organised by Majuli Sahitya Sabha and local communities.

Aim- Revive and conserve the nearly defunct Charaichung Royal Bird Sanctuary.

Charaichung Royal Bird Sanctuary- Established in 1633 AD by Ahom king Swargadeu Pratap Singha. It was Asia's first protected bird sanctuary. Located on Majuli, the world's largest river island and a major Indian bird habitat. The sanctuary is home to ~150 species of indigenous and migratory birds and holds significant ecological, cultural, and historical value.

Majuli Island- It is the world's largest river island, located on the Brahmaputra River in Assam. Majuli was declared India's first island district in 2016. Formed by the Brahmaputra and its tributaries Subansiri and Kherkutia Xuti

2. C. Rajagopalachari

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to C. Rajagopalachari on his birth anniversary.

About C. Rajagopalachari

Early Life- Born on December 10, 1878, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari was a prominent Indian statesman. Popularly known as Rajaji; he is remembered as a freedom fighter, thinker, writer, and statesman.

Entry into Freedom Struggle- After meeting Mahatma Gandhi in 1919, he left his legal practice to join the Indian independence movement, becoming a close associate of Gandhi.

Key Role in National Movements- Rajagopalachari was an active participant in major Indian freedom struggles. His involvement included

1. Protests against the Rowlatt Act
2. The Non-Cooperation Movement
3. The Vaikom Satyagraha
4. The Civil Disobedience Movement
5. His dedication led to imprisonment five times between 1912 and 1941 for his activities.
6. He also edited the 1922 edition of Young India while Gandhi was in jail.

Political Career and Governance- Served as the Premier of the erstwhile Madras Presidency. Became independent India's last Governor-General (1948–1950), and was the only Indian to hold this post. Later founded the Swatantra Party as a pro-market, anti-Congress political alternative. Legacy and Honors- He was awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, in 1954.

3. Places in News- Tanzania

Security was tightened across Tanzania with police and military seen patrolling major cities ahead of anticipated anti-government protests.

Recent anti-election protests in Tanzania- Triggered by Disputed Election Widespread protests erupted across Tanzania starting October 29, 2025, the day of the general election. Protesters denounced the process as a "sham election" after major opposition candidates were barred from running. President Samia Suluhu Hassan was declared the winner.

Violent Government Crackdown- The government responded to the protests with a severe crackdown.

Ongoing Political Crisis- The crisis has not subsided. Hundreds have been charged with treason, and the government continues to arrest activists and outlaw protests.

About Tanzania

Tanzania, officially the United Republic of Tanzania, is an East African country located just south of the Equator. It was formed in 1964 through the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

Bordering Nations- Kenya and Uganda to the North. Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and

Rwanda to the West. Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the South.

Bordering water bodies– Lake Victoria in the North, Indian Ocean in the East, Lake Tanganyika in West, and Lake Nyasa in the Southwest.

Capital– The official capital is Dodoma (since 1974), while Dar es Salaam remains the largest city, port, and economic hub.

Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 m), Africa's highest peak, and Lake Tanganyika, one of the world's deepest lakes are located in Tanzania.

4. *Senna Spectabilis*

Tamil Nadu has launched an aggressive state-wide mission to eradicate the invasive *Senna spectabilis* after it spread across key Western Ghats forests.

About *Senna spectabilis*

A fast-growing, yellow-flowering tree from the legume family that has become a major invasive alien species in India's Western Ghats.

Native Region– Indigenous to South and Central America, including Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, and Venezuela.

Key Features

1. Forms dense, tall stands (7–18 m) with heavy canopy cover that suppresses understorey vegetation.
2. Produces prolific seeds in long pods that enable rapid spread across disturbed landscapes.
3. Thrives in dry–moist deciduous forests, savannahs, and full-sun habitats, even on poor soils.

Ecological Threats

1. **Biodiversity Loss**– Creates monocultures that outcompete native flora and hinder natural forest regeneration.
2. **Wildlife Impact**– Reduces fodder for elephants, deer, and other herbivores, altering movement and feeding patterns.
3. **Fire Risk**– Accumulated dry biomass increases forest fire vulnerability.
4. **Habitat Degradation**– Alters ecosystem structure and delays recovery of native species.

Significance of Tamil Nadu's Eradication Drive

One of India's largest invasive-species removal programmes, targeting complete elimination of *Senna* from 2,446 ha by 2026. Demonstrates state-level implementation of the Invasive Plant Eradication & Restoration Policy. Integrates ecological restoration with circular economy as the removed biomass processed into eco-friendly paper pulp by TNPL and SPB. Supports long-term habitat recovery in elephant and tiger landscapes through post-removal restoration with native grasses and shrubs.

5. Orangutans

Cyclone-driven floods and landslides in North Sumatra have devastated orangutan habitats, forcing Tapanuli populations to flee as forest.

About Orangutans

Orangutans are highly intelligent great apes known for advanced problem-solving, cultural learning and complex tool use, making them one of the closest cognitively advanced species to humans.

Species– According to WWF, three species exist Bornean, Sumatran, and Tapanuli

Habitat– They inhabit the tropical rainforests of Borneo (Indonesia and Malaysia) and Sumatra (Indonesia), with the Tapanuli population confined to a small, mountainous forest region.

Features– All species possess shaggy reddish fur, while Sumatran orangutans have longer facial hair.

Behaviour– They are largely arboreal, moving between canopies for feeding and safety. They form stronger social bonds compared to the more solitary Bornean species.

Tool-Using Ability– Orangutans exhibit remarkable tool innovation using sticks for probing, stones for hammering, crafting sharp tools for cutting or extracting insects, and demonstrating foresight and

cultural learning from mothers or peers.

Diet- Their diet includes wild fruits like figs, lychees and durian, often bringing them close to farmlands during fruiting seasons.

IUCN Status- Critically Endangered

Emerging Threat- Rapid deforestation from logging and mining is fragmenting forest canopies, intensifying flood impacts and severely restricting orangutan movement, heightening extinction risks. Habitat fragmentation forces them to descend to the ground, increasing vulnerability and stress.

6. 2nd Who Global Summit on Traditional Medicine

India will co-host the 2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in New Delhi in December 2025 to advance innovation and evidence-based traditional healthcare.

About WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine

The Global Summit on Traditional Medicine is a WHO-led platform that brings together countries to strengthen evidence-based traditional, complementary and integrative medicine within public health systems.

Objectives

1. The Summit aims to promote scientific validation, innovation and safe integration of traditional medicine into national healthcare.
2. It focuses on expanding research, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and improving global cooperation on biodiversity and indigenous knowledge protection.
3. It also seeks to support universal health coverage and health-related Sustainable Development Goals.

Participants- The Summit hosts global leaders, Ministers, policymakers, researchers, health experts, practitioners, and representatives from academic and industry sectors.

The First Summit and Its Outcome

The first WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine was held in August 2023 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, co-hosted by WHO and the Government of India. It marked the beginning of a global initiative to integrate evidence-based traditional medicine into health systems.

The Summit produced the Gujarat Declaration, a global action agenda outlining commitments for research, regulation, sustainability, digital health adoption and responsible use of traditional medicine.

Traditional Medicine- The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Traditional Medicine (TM) as the total knowledge, skills, and practices from different cultures, based on theories, beliefs, and experiences, used to maintain health and treat physical/mental illnesses, distinct from biomedicine but evolving with science.

Examples- Ayurveda (India), Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) with acupuncture/herbs, Unani (Greco-Arabic roots), Siddha (South India), and Kampo (Japan)

It's holistic, nature-based, emphasizes balance (mind, body, environment), and includes plant-based remedies (like herbalism) and spiritual/manual therapies, existing alongside modern medicine

Significance- The Summit strengthens global confidence in scientifically validated traditional medicine and reinforces India's leadership in shaping future public-health integration of traditional healing systems.