



# STATE PCS CA

(CONSOLIDATION)

MADHYA PRADESH

**DECEMBER  
2024**

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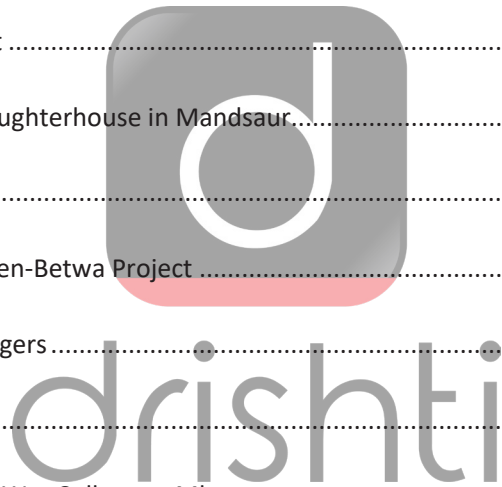
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## 40 Years of Bhopal Gas Tragedy

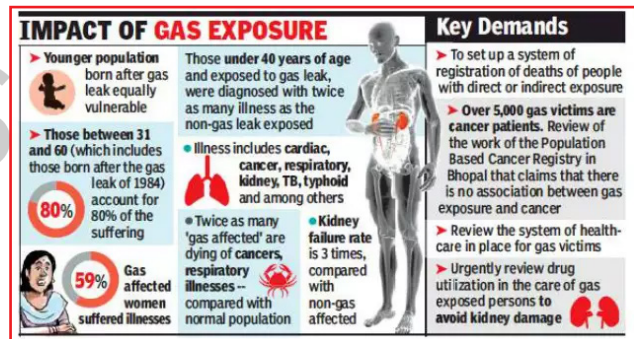
### Why in News?

Four decades after the **Bhopal gas tragedy**, government authorities have **failed to safely dispose of hundreds of tonnes of toxic waste** still present on the premises of **Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL)**, despite multiple court orders and warnings.

### Key Points

- **Historical Context and Disposal Challenges:**
  - The Bhopal gas tragedy was one of the **worst industrial accidents in history that occurred on the night of 2-3 December 1984** at the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant in Bhopal, MP.
    - It exposed people and animals to the highly toxic gas **methyl isocyanate (MIC)**, causing immediate and long-term health effects and deaths.
  - Toxic waste generated during **pesticide production** between 1969 and 1984 was dumped on-site, with hazardous practices and regulatory negligence worsening contamination.
  - In 2005, the Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board collected waste, with a portion incinerated and 337 MT stored in a shed.
    - In 2015, **the Central Pollution Control Board** incinerated 10 MT on a trial basis and recommended further disposal, which has not occurred.
- **Government Funding and Toxic Waste Disposal:**
  - The Union government released Rs 126 crore to the Madhya Pradesh government for disposing of 337 MT of toxic waste stored on the Union Carbide premises since 2005.
  - **A 2010 study revealed** the site also contains 11 lakh tonnes of contaminated soil, one tonne of mercury, and nearly 150 tonnes of underground dumps, with no disposal plans for this waste yet.
    - The report noted that the 2005 collection of waste was incomplete, **recommending excavation of buried toxic waste** for remediation.
  - The disposal of the 337 MT of waste has yet to begin due to **administrative hurdles**.

- **Groundwater Contamination:**
  - Studies have found **groundwater in residential areas** near the factory **contaminated with heavy metals and toxic substances**, raising **cancer** and health risks. Experts warn of further contamination during rainy seasons.
    - The government has sealed hand pumps and tube wells and expanded the distribution of safe drinking water to 42 localities near the factory. However, residents continue to use contaminated water for non-drinking purposes.
  - Despite these measures, **groundwater contamination continues to spread**, creating new victims 40 years after the gas tragedy.
    - Health impacts include severe diseases caused by prolonged exposure to toxic substances.
- **Judicial and Regulatory Oversight:**
  - The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** criticized the government's inaction, emphasizing the leachate's role in contaminating water bodies.
    - It **ordered waste disposal within six months** in March 2022, but the **directive remains unimplemented**.
  - Following complaints of groundwater contamination, **the Supreme Court** directed the state to enhance access to safe water and address contamination.



## Madhya Pradesh's 9th Tiger Reserve

### Why in News?

**The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** has approved the designation of **Madhav National Park** in **Shivpuri district** as a **Tiger Reserve**. This move will

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establish Madhav as the **9th tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh.**

- The committee also sanctioned the release of one male and one female tiger into the park.

### Key Points

- **Proposed Tiger Reserve Area:**
  - It will span 1,751 square kilometers, including a core area of 3
  - 75 square kilometers and a buffer zone of 1,276 square kilometers.
  - **Madhav National Park achieved a milestone in tiger conservation with the birth of tiger cubs in September 2024, following a successful breeding program.**
- **Second Phase of Tiger Reintroduction:**
  - The Madhya Pradesh Forest Department is preparing for the second phase of reintroductions, which includes bringing in additional tigers from **Bandhavgarh, Kanha, or Sanjay-Dubri National Parks.**
- **Long-Term Expansion Plans:**
  - Madhav Tiger Reserve is part of a **long-term plan to expand into a 1,600-square-kilometer area within five years.**
  - A tiger safari spanning 100 hectares is also planned, with an infrastructure investment of Rs. 20 crore, **expected to boost ecotourism and local economies.**
- **Conservation and Ecotourism Benefits:**
  - This initiative aims to strengthen wildlife management in Madhav and **Kuno National Parks.**
  - The project is expected to boost **ecotourism** and benefit local communities, contributing to regional development.
- **Madhya Pradesh's Pending Notifications:**
  - **Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary**, which was **granted in-principle approval as a tiger reserve in 2008**, still awaits official notification.
  - Reports suggest political **resistance due to mining activities near Ratapani** has delayed its formal designation.

### Madhav National Park

- **About:**
  - Madhav National Park is situated in Shivpuri District, Madhya Pradesh.
  - It is a part of the upper **Vindhyan hills.**
  - The Park was the hunting ground of Mughal emperors and Maharaja of Gwalior. It got the status of a National Park in 1959.
- **Ecosystem:**
  - It has a **diverse ecosystem** consisting of lakes, dry deciduous & dry thorn forests.
  - The forest is home to tigers, leopards, Nilgai, and **Chinkara** (*Gazella bennettii*) and **Chousingha** (*Tetracerus quadricornis*) and Deers (**Chital**, Sambar and Barking Deer) among others.
- **Tiger Corridor:**
  - The Park falls within one of the **32 major Tiger Corridors** of the country, which are operationalised through the **Tiger Conservation Plan**. Tiger Conservation Plan is implemented under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.**

## Modernization of Head Post Office in Madhya Pradesh

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Minister of Communications** laid the **foundation stone** for the **Head Post Office** at **Ashoknagar** district of Madhya Pradesh.

### Key Points

- **About the Head Post Office:**
  - The Head Post Office will be **constructed at a cost of Rs 2.1 crore**. It is scheduled for **completion within one year**.
  - The facility will **feature state-of-the-art, technology-enabled infrastructure** with modern amenities to enhance the customer experience.
  - The head post office will function as the **administrative center for 10 sub-post offices in Ashoknagar** district.
    - It aims to **improve service delivery and provide greater convenience** to the local population.

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### ➤ Legacy of India Post:

- With over 150 years of service, India Post remains one of the largest postal networks globally.
- **The Post Office Act of 2023** came into force repealing the **Indian Post Office Act, 1898**.
- The Department continues to bridge gaps and deliver excellence in both urban and rural areas, with a strong focus on modernization and grassroots outreach.

#### Indian Post Office Act, 1898

- It came into force on **1<sup>st</sup> July 1898** with the objective to **consolidate and amend** the law relating to the Post Offices in India.
- It provides for the **regulation of the postal services** offered by the central government.
- It grants the Central government **exclusive privilege over conveying letters** and establishes a monopoly of the Central government over conveying letters.

## World AIDS Day 2024 Event in Indore

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare** inaugurated the **World AIDS Day, 2024** commemoration in the presence of the Chief Minister at the **Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya Auditorium, in Indore, Madhya Pradesh**.

- The event emphasized the **theme "Take the Rights Path,"** highlighting equal rights, dignity, and access to healthcare for individuals affected by **HIV/AIDS**.

### Key Points

#### ➤ Government's Commitment:

- The Union Minister reiterated the government's dedication to **safeguarding the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, focusing on legal protections, healthcare access, and societal transformation**.
- He emphasized raising awareness, combating stereotypes, and ensuring effective AIDS control through community initiatives and campaigns.
- The program aligns with the global **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** to end AIDS by 2030.

- Activities emphasized collective action, **empathy**, and resilience, promoting a world free from discrimination and fear.

#### ➤ Achievements in AIDS Control:

- India has seen a **44% reduction in new HIV cases since 2010**, compared to the global reduction rate of **39%**.
  - **AIDS-related deaths** in the country **declined by 79%** during the same period.
- India is now a global leader in producing affordable, effective HIV medicines and supplies free **antiretroviral therapy (ART)** to AIDS patients.

#### ➤ Strategic Targets:

- India adopted the **90-90-90 target** to detect 90% of AIDS cases, treat 90% with ART, and suppress viral load in 90% of treated individuals.
- The revised 95-95-95 targets are nearing achievement, with 81% identified, 88% treated, and 97% achieving viral suppression.

#### ➤ Role of Madhya Pradesh:

- The Chief Minister commended the state's strides in healthcare, including plans to eradicate AIDS as a public health threat by 2028, two years ahead of the global 2030 target.
- He noted the significant expansion in medical colleges in Madhya Pradesh, from 5 to 31, with plans for 50 by 2026.

#### ➤ Key Initiatives and Releases:

- **SANKALAK 6th Edition:** Detailing India's AIDS control progress.
- **India HIV Estimates 2023:** Providing updated data on HIV prevalence, incidence, and mortality.
- **Coffee Table Book:** Highlighting the Intensified Information, Education & Communication (IEC) Campaign's achievements.
- **Prevention Progress Update 2023-2024:** Reporting on prevention activities for high-risk groups.
- **Research Compendium Volume II:** Sharing insights from state-specific studies on AIDS.

#### ➤ Community Engagement:

- The event featured exhibitions by **National AIDS Control Organization (NACO)**, live performances of a newly launched theme song, and narratives

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from beneficiaries of the **National AIDS Control Programme**.

- Diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, health workers, civil society, and development partners, attended the event, fostering collaboration.

#### HIV/AIDS Disease

##### ➤ About:

- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is an infection that attacks the body's immune system.
  - AIDS is the late stage of HIV infection that occurs when the body's immune system is badly damaged because of the virus.
- HIV attacks **CD4, a type of White Blood Cell (T cells)** in the body's immune system.
  - T cells are those cells that move around the body detecting anomalies and infections in cells.
- After entering the body, **HIV multiplies itself and destroys CD4 cells**, thus severely damaging the human immune system. Once this virus enters the body, it can never be removed.
- The CD4 count of a person infected with HIV reduces significantly. In a healthy body, CD4 count is between 500- 1600, but in an infected body, it can go as low as 200.

##### ➤ Transmission:

- HIV can spread through multiple sources, by coming in direct contact with certain body fluids from a person infected with HIV, who has a detectable viral load. It can be blood, semen, rectal fluid, vaginal fluid or breast milk.

##### ➤ Symptoms:

- Once HIV converts into AIDS then it may present in initial symptoms like **unexplained fatigue, fever, sores around genitals or neck, pneumonia etc.**

Bihar to strengthen the **Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G)**.

- The session aimed to **assess progress, tackle challenges, and streamline strategies** to ensure **sustainable sanitation outcomes in rural India**.

#### Key Points

- The Union Minister emphasized sanitation as a behavioral mission critical to the health and dignity of rural communities.
- He underlined the **importance of shaping a cleaner, healthier India through collective efforts**, noting that each State/UT has unique challenges but shares the common goal of achieving a Swachh Bharat.
- **State-Wise Progress:**
  - **Madhya Pradesh:**
    - **99%** of villages are **Open Defecation Free Status (ODF) Plus**, with 95% achieving ODF Plus Model status.
    - The state implemented innovative plastic waste management initiatives, including MoUs with RRDA Bhopal.
  - **Uttar Pradesh:**
    - **98%** of villages are ODF Plus. Over **1 lakh personnel have been trained** for SBM-G objectives.
    - Focused on waste-to-energy models and scrap dealer linkages for plastic waste management.
  - **Bihar:**
    - **92%** of villages are ODF Plus. Grey water management coverage is at 91%, and solid waste management at 80%.
    - Efforts are concentrated on improving outcomes in underperforming districts.
  - **Punjab:**
    - **98%** of villages are ODF Plus, with 87% achieving grey water management saturation.
    - Enhanced systems are under development.
- **Minister's Guidance for Collective Action:**
  - **ODF Plus Sustainability:** Establish robust monitoring mechanisms to verify and sustain ODF Plus Model villages.

## Review of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen Progress

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Minister of Jal Shakti led a high-level review meeting** with State Ministers responsible for rural sanitation from **Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and**

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- **Waste Management Gaps:** Address gaps in **solid and grey water management** by prioritizing household-level solutions.
- **Community Sanitation:** Strengthen functionality and asset management of community sanitation complexes.
- **Plastic Waste Management:** Forge partnerships with recyclers and utilize **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** frameworks.
  - EPR makes **producers responsible for the environmental impacts of their products** throughout their life cycle. It aims to **promote better waste management and reduce the burden on municipalities.**
- **Behavioral Change:** Promote sustained toilet use and waste segregation through targeted **IEC (Information Education and Communication)** campaigns.
- **Community-Led Approaches:** States to engage **women's self-help groups**, local leaders, and private sector enterprises to foster community-led sanitation efforts.
- **Broader Vision and Global Alignment:**
  - Swachh Bharat Mission is a cornerstone of rural transformation, integrating **sanitation, waste management, water conservation**, and community well-being.
  - The mission aligns with global goals, including **SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being).**
  - The focus extends beyond targets to **building ecosystems of health, dignity, and self-reliance.**

#### Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G)

- **About:**
  - It was launched in 2014 by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** to accelerate the efforts to achieve universal sanitation coverage and to put focus on sanitation.
  - The mission was implemented as a **nation-wide campaign/Janandolan** which aimed at **eliminating open defecation in rural areas.**

#### ➤ Swachh Bharat Mission (G) Phase-I:

- The rural sanitation coverage in the country at the time of launch of **SBM (G) on 2nd October, 2014** was reported as 38.7%.
- More than 10 crore individual toilets **have been constructed since the launch of the mission**, as a result, rural areas in all the States have declared themselves ODF as on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2019.

#### ➤ SBM(G) Phase-II:

- It emphasizes the sustainability of achievements under phase I and to provide adequate facilities for **Solid/Liquid & plastic Waste Management (SLWM) in rural India.**
- It will be implemented from 2020-21 to 2024-25 in a mission **mode with a total outlay of Rs. 1,40,881 crores.**
- The SLWM component of **ODF Plus will be monitored on the basis of output-outcome indicators for 4 key areas:**
  - Plastic waste management,
  - Biodegradable solid waste management (including animal waste management)
  - Greywater (Household Wastewater) management
  - Fecal sludge management.

## New Schemes Launched in MP

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister** launched '**Jan Kalyan Parv**' and '**Mukhya Mantri Jan Kalyan Abhiyan**' in the state. The two programmes are aimed at highlighting the works undertaken during his tenure and connecting more people to the government's welfare schemes.

### Key Points

- **Public Welfare Initiatives:**
  - **Jan Kalyan Parv** is scheduled from **11th to 26th December 2024**, focusing on **inaugurating and laying the foundation for development projects.**
  - **Mukhya Mantri Jan Kalyan Abhiyan** runs from **11th December 2024 to 26th January 2025**, aimed at

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connecting eligible beneficiaries to public welfare schemes through door-to-door surveys.

- These initiatives coincide with **Gita Jayanti**, commemorating the recitation of the **Shreemad Bhagwat Gita** by Lord Krishna.

#### ➤ Focus of the Campaigns:

- These campaigns targets the poor, youth, farmers, and women, linking them to:
  - 34 beneficiary-oriented schemes
  - 11 target-based schemes
  - 63 services
- The objective is to provide new opportunities and ensure accessibility of welfare schemes.

#### ➤ Cultural Recognition and Achievements:

- At the **Gita Mahotsav**, over 7,000 people, including 3,721 Acharyas and Batuks, participated in the mass recitation of Gita verses.
- The feat earned recognition in the **Guinness Book of World Records**, and the Chief Minister congratulated the participants.

## Baiga Tribal Artist Jodhaiya Bai Passed Away

### Why in News?

Recently, Jodhaiya Bai, a renowned **Baiga tribal artist** and **Padma Shri** awardee, passed away in Umaria district of Madhya Pradesh after a prolonged illness.

### Key Points

- **Contribution to Baiga Tribal Art:**
  - Jodhaiya Bai played a **pivotal role in gaining international recognition for Baiga tribal art.**
  - She was honored with the Padma Shri award in 2023 for her significant contributions to the field of arts.
- **Condolences from the Chief Minister:**
  - The Chief Minister expressed deep grief over her demise. He stated that both **Madhya Pradesh and**

the country have lost an artist who dedicated her life to promoting **tribal culture, art, and traditions** nationally and internationally.

### Baiga Tibe

- The Baiga (means sorcerers) is one of **the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).**
- They mainly live in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- Traditionally, the Baiga lived a **semi-nomadic life and practised slash and burn cultivation.** Now, they are mainly dependent on **minor forest produce** for their livelihood.
  - **Bamboo** is the primary resource.
- **Tattooing is an integral part of Baiga culture**, every age and body part has a specific tattoo reserved for the occasion.

## Madhya Pradesh plans New Home for Cheetahs

### Why in News?

The **Cheetah Action Plan** for **Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary** includes analyzing cheetah genetics, relocating **leopards**, and boosting prey numbers in preparation for the cheetah reintroduction in 2025.

### Key Points

- **Action Plan for Cheetah Introduction:**
  - **Initial Release:** 6-8 cheetahs **will be introduced** in a 64 sq. km **predator-proof enclosure in the sanctuary's West Range.**
  - **Prey Base:** The area supports adequate prey including **chinkara, nilgai, and other species**, with an estimated 1,560-2,080 prey animals required annually.
  - **Current Prey Availability:** The area currently has 475 animals, being supplemented with 1,500 additional prey like **chital and blackbuck.**

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- **Leopard Challenge and Mitigation:**
  - **Leopard Population:** The West Range has about 70 leopards, posing a threat to cheetahs, particularly cubs, due to competition for prey.
  - **Leopard Translocation:** All leopards within the fenced area will be captured and relocated before the cheetahs are introduced.
  - **Ongoing Strategy:** This effort is part of a decade-long strategy to stabilize the cheetah population, including **Global Positioning System (GPS)** tracking of 10 leopards for research on carnivore interactions.
- **Cheetah Population and Genetic Strategy:**
  - **Importing Cheetahs:** A population of 12-14 cheetahs (8-10 males, 4-6 females) will be imported from African reserves to create a genetically diverse population.
  - **Genetic Diversity:** Cheetahs will be selected based on genetic compatibility to avoid inbreeding, with analysis using micro-satellite and **genomic techniques**.
  - **Individual Monitoring:** Cheetah profiles will be maintained for demographic studies and to monitor survival and health.
- **Ecological Impact and Prey Species Management:**
  - **Ecological Effects:** The introduction of cheetahs will affect prey species' behavior, requiring potential supplementation of blackbuck, chital, and nilgai.
  - **Radio-Collaring Prey:** Some prey animals will be radio-collared to study their adaptation to the new predator presence.
  - **Restoration Plans:** The sanctuary's habitat restoration is part of a broader cheetah conservation plan, with other sites like Rajasthan's **Bhainsrorgarh Wildlife Sanctuary** and **Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve** also identified for cheetah populations.
- **Current Cheetah Status:**
  - **Kuno National Park** currently houses 24 cheetahs (including 12 cubs), with two cheetahs recently released into the open forest.

### Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary

- **Location:**
  - Notified in 1974, encompassing the districts of **Mandsaur and Neemuch** in western Madhya Pradesh, bordering Rajasthan.
  - The **Chambal River** bifurcates the sanctuary into two nearly equal parts, with the **Gandhi Sagar Dam** situated within the sanctuary.
- **Ecosystem:**
  - Its ecosystem is characterised by its **rocky terrain and shallow topsoil**, which supports a **savanna ecosystem**.
  - This comprises **open grasslands** interspersed with **dry deciduous trees** and shrubs. Additionally, the riverine valleys within the sanctuary are evergreen.

## India's First Zero-Waste Airport

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport** in **Indore** became **India's first zero-waste airport** with the inauguration of a **3000 sq ft material recovery facility**.

#### ➤ Waste Management System:

- The new **Material Recovery Facility** features a **comprehensive waste management system** to segregate and recycle waste from both the airport and aircraft.
- **Wet waste** will be converted into **fertilizer**, aligning with the airport's zero-waste initiative based on the **4R principle: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Restore**.

#### ➤ Expansion Plans:

- Also, the **Union Minister of Civil Aviation** announced the **capacity of Indore Airport** will be increased from **40 lakh passengers** to **90 lakh passengers annually** in the next **3 years**.
- Discussions are ongoing with airlines to enhance connectivity to **international destinations**, including **Thailand** and the **US**.

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### ➤ Infrastructure Development:

- The **new air traffic control tower** at the airport, built at a cost of **Rs 55 crore**, was also inaugurated by the Union Minister of Civil Aviation.

## MP High Court Give NOC to Slaughterhouse in Mandsaur

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Madhya Pradesh High Court** has ordered a civic official in Mandsaur to grant a **No Objection Certificate (NOC)** for a buffalo **slaughterhouse**, calling the denial of permission “unacceptable.”

### Key Points

#### ➤ Argument by Local Body:

- The local body **denied the NOC application**, citing that **Mandsaur is a religious city**, making it inappropriate to permit a slaughterhouse.
- The court termed this reasoning as “**wholly unacceptable**” during the hearing.

#### ➤ Sacred Area:

- The State government, in a **notification dated 9<sup>th</sup> December 2011**, declared a **100-metre radius around Lord Shiva’s Pashupatinath temple in Mandsaur** as a “sacred area.”

#### ➤ Court’s Observation:

- The Court clarified that the **entire city cannot be categorized as a sacred area** based on the notification.

#### Pashupatinath Temple

- It is also known as the **Mandsaur Shiva temple**.
- It is located on the **Shivna River** and is known for its **eight-faced Shiva Linga**. The temple’s sculptures are dated to the **5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century**.
- It is **made of a smooth, dark coppery rock block**.
  - The temple also has a 100 kg gold-plated pitcher.

## Van Vihar National Park

### Why in News?

According to the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, the **Van Vihar National Park** in Bhopal will get two **Asiatic lions** from Gujarat in exchange for two **Bengal tigers**.

### Key Points

#### ➤ Exchange Between MP and Gujarat:

- Under an animal exchange programme **two tigers have been relocated to the Junagadh zoo**.
- Two **pure-breed Asiatic (Gir) lions** will be brought from **Sakkarbaug Zoological Park in Junagadh to Van Vihar National Park in Bhopal** as part of the exchange.

#### ➤ Van Vihar National Park:

- It is located on the banks of the **Upper Lake in Bhopal**, and serves as a vital conservation area in the Madhya Pradesh capital.
- It has the unique distinction of being a **combination of National Park, a Zoo, Rescue Centre for wild animals and Conservation Breeding Centre for selected vital species**.
  - It is the **only place in central India** where its rescue centre harbours a number of Lions and Tigers rescued from the circuses, Sloth Bears rescued from the madaris, Tigers, Panthers and Bears rescued from the zones of human-wildlife conflict.
  - It is also a designated co-ordinating zoo and Conservation Breeding Centre for the **Hard Ground Barasingha**, the state animal of Madhya Pradesh and two species of **Gyps Vultures**.
- It is a natural habitat for a variety of herbivores and carnivores namely, **tiger, white tiger, leopard, hyena and sloth bear, chital, sambhar, blackbuck, blue bull, chousingha, common langur, rhesus monkey, porcupine, etc.**

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# Asiatic Lion

*Panthera Leo Persica*

## Features

- Asiatic lions are slightly smaller than African lions.
- The most striking morphological character, which is always seen in Asiatic lions, and rarely in African lions, is a longitudinal fold of skin running along its belly.

## Habitat

- At present Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary (Gujarat) is the only abode of the Asiatic lion.

## Protection Status



- Endangered: IUCN Red List
- Appendix I: CITES
- Schedule I: Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972

## Threats

- Human Animal Conflict
- Poaching
- Genetic Inbreeding
- Diseases such as plague, canine distemper

## Conservation Efforts

- Asiatic Lion Conservation Project
- Project Lion
- World Lion Day (10<sup>th</sup> August)

## PM Laid Foundation Stone of Ken-Betwa Project

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the **Ken-Betwa river linking project** at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh.

- It is the **first such initiative** under the **National river interlinking policy**.

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### Key Points

- **The Ken-Betwa Link Project:**
  - The project aims to provide drinking water to 44 lakh people of Madhya Pradesh and 21 lakh people in Uttar Pradesh.
  - 7.18 lakh farmer families in 2,000 villages will benefit from **improved irrigation**.
  - The project will generate **103 MW of hydropower** and **27 MW of solar energy**.
  - The project embodies cooperation between the central government, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, realising the late PM **Atal Bihari Vajpayee's** river-linking vision.
- **Economic and Environmental Impact:**
  - Ensures ample water for irrigation, drinking, and industrial uses.
  - Promotes economic growth, **tourism**, and employment opportunities in **Bundelkhand**.
  - Addresses groundwater scarcity in the **drought**-hit Bundelkhand region.
- **Conservation Efforts:**
  - Focus on restoring Chandela-era heritage ponds in Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, and Niwari districts.
  - Continuous water supply to wild animals in the **Panna Tiger Reserve**.
  - Flood relief for Banda district in Uttar Pradesh.

#### National Interlinking of Rivers Authority

- The **national interlinking of rivers (ILR)** is the idea that rivers should be inter-connected, so that water from the surplus rivers and regions could be transferred to deficient regions and rivers to address the issue of **water scarcity**.
- This led to the setup of the **National Water Development Agency (NWDA)** in 1982.

## Madhya Pradesh to Relocate Tigers

### Why in News?

Recently, **the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** has approved the **relocation of 15 tigers** from **Madhya Pradesh** to the states of Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

### Key Points

- **Largest Relocation of Tigers:**
  - The initiative will mark the **largest relocation of big cats** from a single state in India.
    - It aims to bolster **tiger conservation** efforts across the country.
  - No specific timeline for the relocation has been finalized yet.
  - Tigers will be relocated from three: **Bandhavgarh, Pench, and Kanha Tiger Reserves**.
  - Out of the total relocated tigers, **twelve will be tigresses**.
- **Destination States and Distribution:**
  - **Rajasthan:** Four tigresses.
  - **Chhattisgarh:** Two tigers and six tigresses.
  - **Odisha:** One male tiger and two tigresses.

#### National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)

- It is a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change**.
- It was **established in 2005** following the recommendations of the Tiger Task Force.
- It was constituted under enabling provisions of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, as amended in 2006, for strengthening tiger conservation, as per powers and functions assigned to it.

#### Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve

- It is located in the **Umria district of Madhya Pradesh** and is spread over the **Vindhya hills**.
  - It holds significant historical importance, evidenced by the **presence of the renowned Bandhavgarh Fort**, along with numerous caves, rock paintings, and carvings throughout the protected area.
- In 1968, it was **designated as a national park** and in **1993 was declared a tiger reserve**.
- It is known for the **Royal Bengal Tigers**.
  - Other important prey species consist of **chital, sambhar, barking deer, nilgai, chinkara, wild pig, chowsingha, langur** and **rhesus macaque**.
  - Dependent upon them are the major predators like **tiger, leopard, wild dog, wolf** and jackal.

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### Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR)

- PTR is the **joint pride of both Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra**.
- The Reserve is located in the **southern reaches of the Satpura hills in the Seoni and Chhindwara districts in Madhya Pradesh**, and continues in **Nagpur district in Maharashtra** as a separate Sanctuary.
  - It was declared a **National Park** by the Government of Maharashtra in 1975 and the identity of a **tiger reserve** was granted to it in the year 1992.
- However, PTR **Madhya Pradesh was granted the same status in 1992-1993**. It is one of the **major Protected Areas of Satpura-Maikal ranges of the Central Highlands**.
- It is among the sites notified as **Important Bird Areas (IBA)** of India.

### Kanha Tiger Reserve

- It stretches over an area of 940 square km in the **two districts - Mandla and Balaghat - of Madhya Pradesh**.
- The present-day Kanha area **was divided into two sanctuaries, Hallon and Banjar**. **Kanha National Park was created in 1955 and in 1973 was made the Kanha Tiger Reserve**.

## MP to Dispose Toxic Waste

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Madhya Pradesh government** has started disposing of 337 tonnes of **toxic waste** from **Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) in Bhopal**, **40 years after the Bhopal gas tragedy**. They plan to **transport the waste to Pithampur** in Dhar district.

### Key Points

- **Supervised Packing and Stacking:**
  - The factory administration is packing and stacking the waste under the supervision of **the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** and **Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board (MPPCB)**.
  - **Specially trained workers are involved** in the packing and loading process, taking necessary precautions.

- Twelve specially-designed airtight containers are being used for the waste.

### Short Worker Shifts:

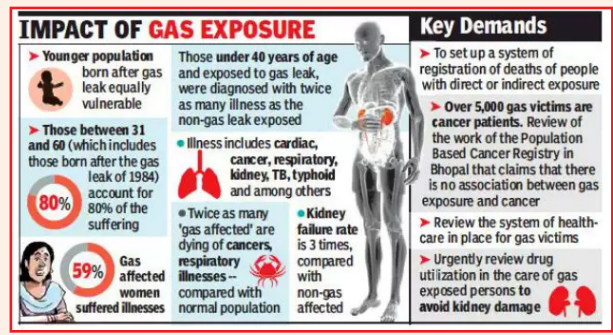
- Workers are operating in 30-45 minute shifts instead of regular 8-9 hour shifts to **minimize exposure to the toxic waste**.
- A 250-kilometer **green corridor** has been prepared to **facilitate the safe transportation of waste** from Bhopal to Pithampur.

### Trial Run and Safety Assurances:

- **In 2015, 10 tonnes of the waste were incinerated in Pithampur under scientific supervision**, with results submitted to the **High Court** showing no harmful effects.
- **Safety measures include** landfill sites with two-layer membranes to prevent contamination and a four-layer air filtration system.

### The Bhopal Gas Tragedy

- The Bhopal gas tragedy occurred on 2-3 December 1984, when **methyl isocyanate gas** leaked, **killing 5,479 people**.
- **More than five lakh people suffered long-term health impacts**, and multiple cases related to the tragedy are still pending in courts.



## Defence Minister Visit to Army War College at Mhow

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Defence Minister** visited the **Army War College, Mhow** in Madhya Pradesh. He pointed out **'unconventional methods' of warfare as new challenges** before the nation.

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### Key Points

#### ➤ Challenges in Modern Warfare:

- New forms of warfare such as **information warfare**, **AI-based warfare**, **proxy warfare**, **electro-magnetic warfare**, **space warfare**, and **cyber-attacks** are emerging as major challenges.
- Dominance in **electronic chip production** and monopolies on **rare earth materials** are also contributing to these challenges.
- **Hybrid warfare** and **Greyzone warfare** further complicate security concerns.

#### ➤ Role of Mhow Training Centres:

- In this complex environment, it is crucial for the Indian Army to remain **well-trained and equipped for all potential threats**.
- The training centres in Mhow play a significant role in preparing the forces for these modern challenges.
- Mhow has been known for its **military excellence for over 200 years**, making its training centres vital to the Army's preparedness.

#### ➤ Integration and Jointness Among Forces:

- The government is focused on increasing **integration and jointness among the three military branches**.
- This approach aims to better equip the forces to handle future challenges.
- **Mhow Cantonment offers high-level training to officers** from all branches of the military.

#### ➤ Vision for India's Development:

- India's goal is to become a **developed nation by 2047**, viewing the current period as a time of transition.
- The Indian military is **continuously upgrading with modern weapons**, not only equipping its own forces but also exporting domestically manufactured equipment to other countries.

#### ➤ Defence Minister's Visit:

- The Defence Minister visited the **Bhim Janm Bhoomi memorial** dedicated to **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, where he paid tribute to **the architect of the Indian Constitution**.
- He praised Dr. Ambedkar as a symbol of selfless service, dedicated to **social equality and empowerment**.

#### Grey-zone Warfare

- It refers to a **form of conflict characterised by actions that fall below the threshold of conventional war** but are intended to achieve strategic objectives through **ambiguity, deniability, and coercion**.
- In grey-zone warfare, adversaries employ tactics such as **cyberattacks, economic coercion, and proxy conflicts** to achieve their goals without directly engaging in open warfare.
- It blurs the lines between peace and conflict, posing significant challenges to **international security and stability**.

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