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## Kendriya Vidyalayas to be set up in Rajasthan | Rajasthan | 10 Dec 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, **the Union Government** has approved the opening of nine new [Kendriya Vidyalayas](#) in Rajasthan that will **increase opportunities for quality education in the State.**

### Key Points

- **Approval for New Schools:**
  - The Union Cabinet approved the establishment of **85 new Kendriya Vidyalayas and 28 new Navodaya Vidyalayas across the nation.**
  - These schools will provide **affordable and high-quality education to over 82,000 students.**
  - In Rajasthan, the newly approved Kendriya Vidyalayas are in **Jodhpur, Ganganagar, Karauli, Nagaur, Rajsamand and Dausa District.**
  - The move aims to **expand quality education, enhance educational infrastructure, and contribute to the holistic development of the younger generation.**
- **Broader Implications:**
  - The initiative aligns with the government's mission to **improve access to quality education nationwide.**
  - It supports the growth and empowerment of India's youth, **contributing to the nation's overall development trajectory**

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## Rising Rajasthan Global Investment Summit 2024 | Rajasthan | 10 Dec 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister inaugurated the [Rising Rajasthan Global Investment Summit, 2024](#) and the [Rajasthan Global Business Expo](#) at [Jaipur Exhibition and Convention Centre \(JECC\).](#)

### Key Points

- **Global Investment Summit 2024:**
  - The Investment Summit **theme** is "**Replete, Responsible, Ready,**" with discussions on [sustainable mining](#), [water security](#), and [women-led startups](#).
  - Over 32 countries and 20 international organizations will join thematic sessions and expos showcasing Rajasthan's potential.
- **Rajasthan's Development Potential:**

- Rajasthan holds significant [mineral reserves](#), vast [natural resources](#), and a rich [cultural heritage](#), positioning it as an **investment destination**.
- Rajasthan benefits from projects like the [Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor](#) and [Dedicated Freight Corridor](#), improving industrial logistics.
- With unique attractions like [Ranthambore](#) and Jaipur, Rajasthan is a **hub for wildlife, heritage, and adventure tourism**.
- **Role in Renewable Energy and Manufacturing:**
  - Rajasthan **contributes to India's renewable energy goals** with large [solar parks](#) supporting the 500 GW capacity target by 2030.
  - Under [Make in India](#) and [Production Linked Incentive \(PLI\) schemes](#), Rajasthan is building capacity in automotive, [Electric Vehicles](#), and electronics manufacturing.
- **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs):**
  - Rajasthan is **among the top 5 states in MSMEs**, with over 27 lakh units employing 50 lakh people.
  - New MSME policies and credit schemes like the [Emergency Credit Linked Guarantee Scheme](#) have doubled credit flow to MSMEs since 2014.
  - MSMEs in Rajasthan are playing a pivotal role in enhancing global supply chains.

## Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme

- ECLGS was launched in 2020 as part of the Centre's [Aatmanirbhar package](#) in response to the [Covid-19 crisis](#).
- The objective was **to support small businesses struggling to meet their operational liabilities** due to the imposition of a nationwide lockdown.
- **A 100% guarantee is provided by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC) to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs)** - banks, financial institutions and [Non-Banking Financial Companies \(NBFCs\)](#).
- **The credit product for which guarantee would be provided under the Scheme shall be named as 'Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL)'**

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## Markhor | Jammu & Kashmir | 10 Dec 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, **Markhor**, a [wild goat](#) with **spiral-shaped horns**, was spotted in **Baramulla district of North Kashmir**.

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### Key Points

- **About:**
  - Markhor is the **largest wild goat** in the world. It is known for its thick fur, flowing beard and corkscrew horns.
- **Legal Protection and Species Status:**
  - Markhor, scientifically known as *Capra falconeri*, is classified as "**Near Threatened**" by the [IUCN](#) and protected under Schedule I of India's [Wildlife Protection Act, 1972](#).
- **Threats to Survival:**
  - Primary threats include **habitat loss** from fencing, illegal [grazing](#), [poaching](#), and [encroachment](#). [Climate change](#) is also affecting food resources, driving Markhor closer to human settlements.
- **Global Recognition and Initiatives:**
  - Recognizing its ecological importance, the [UN General Assembly](#) designated **24<sup>th</sup> May as the International Day of the Markhor** to encourage conservation efforts.
- **Significance as a Flagship Species:**
  - Markhor serves as a flagship species for conservation in J&K, helping protect other regional wildlife, such as [Musk Deer](#) and [Brown Bear](#).
- **Distribution and Habitat:**
  - The endangered Markhor inhabits **moist to semi-arid mountain regions** across **Pakistan, India (Jammu & Kashmir), Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan**.
  - In J&K, it's found in areas like **Shopian, the [Pir Panjal range](#), and Kazinag Uri**, but its population is fragmented due to human interference and habitat loss.

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## Green Cess in Uttarakhand | Uttarakhand | 10 Dec 2024

### Why in News?

According to the officials, the **Uttarakhand Government** will soon impose a [green cess](#) on out-of-state vehicles.

- A Green cess is a **form of tax** levied by the government with the **purpose of [environmental conservation](#)**.

### Key Points

- **Introduction of Green Cess in Uttarakhand:**
  - The cess will **range from Rs 20 to Rs 80** and will apply to both **commercial and private vehicles**.
  - Two-wheelers, [electric vehicles](#) and [Compressed Natural Gas \(CNG\)](#) vehicles, ambulances, fire brigades, and vehicles registered in Uttarakhand **will be exempted**.
- **Implementation and Technology:**
  - The system is targeted to become **operational by the end of December 2024**.
  - Automatic **number plate recognition cameras** will identify vehicles, and cess amounts will be **deducted directly from** vehicle owners' [FASTag](#) wallets.

### FASTag

- It is a device that employs [Radio Frequency Identification \(RFID\) technology](#) for making toll payments directly while the vehicle is in motion.
- [National Highways Authority of India \(NHAI\)](#) **launched two mobile Apps** - MyFASTag and FASTag Partner to facilitate the availability of FASTags.

- The **tag is valid for 5 years** from the date of issuance and comes in seven different color codes.

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## Landslide Zones Successfully Treated in Uttarakhand | Uttarakhand | 10 Dec 2024

### Why in News?

According to the [Border Roads Organisation \(BRO\)](#), the **rock bolt technology** is successfully treating **active landslide zones** in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand.

### Key Points

- **Landslide Challenges in Uttarakhand:**
  - **Landslides** occur regularly in the hill areas, especially during the [monsoon season](#), causing roadblocks and inconveniences for **Chardham pilgrims**.
  - These landslides often **result in loss of lives** and have long been a major concern.
  - Persistent landslide zones on the [Gangotri and Yamunotri highways](#) have posed significant risks for years.
- **Adoption of Australian Rock Bolt Technology:**
  - The BRO is using **Australian rock bolt technology** to **treat active landslide zones at Raturisera and Bandarkot** on the Gangotri highway in Uttarkashi district.
  - Previously, the technology was **successfully applied at Nalupani and Chungi Badethi landslide zones**.
    - The technology has been instrumental in treating landslide zones active for years as part of the [Chardham road-widening project](#).
- **Effectiveness and Techniques:**
  - The technology has been 90% effective in preventing landslides.
  - It **involves soil nailing to stabilize loose soil and rock bolting in bedrock** to strengthen vulnerable areas.

### Border Roads Organisation (BRO)

- Established in 1960 with only two projects, **Project Tusker (now Vartak) in the East and Project Beacon in North India**, the BRO has grown to become a vibrant organisation with 18 projects operating in 11 States and three Union Territories.
  - It is now recognised as the leading infrastructure construction agency in high-altitude and difficult snow-bound areas.
- In 2023-24, the BRO completed 125 infrastructure projects, including the construction of [the Sela Tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh on Balipara-Chardwar-Tawang Road](#).
  - The BRO will soon start construction on **the 4.10-km long Shinkun La Tunnel, which will become the world's highest tunnel at 15,800 ft** once completed, bypassing **China's Mila Tunnel at 15,590 ft**.
- The BRO is an Indian executive force under the **Ministry of Defence**, to secure India's borders and develop infrastructure in remote areas of the north and north-eastern states.
- It operates under the **Border Roads Development Board (BRDB)** and is responsible for road networks in border areas and neighbouring countries.
  - The **motto of BRO is "Shramena Sarvam Sadhyam"**, which translates to **"Everything is achievable through hard work."**

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## Pilibhit Tiger Reserve | Uttar Pradesh | 10 Dec 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, a **probe has been ordered** after a viral video surfaced, showing a fleet of vehicles allegedly belonging to a minister in Uttar Pradesh passing through the **core area** of the [Pilibhit Tiger Reserve](#). This raised concerns about the [breach of forest regulations](#).

### Key Points

- As per forest department regulations, **private vehicles are strictly barred** from entering the core area, allowing **access only to forest department vehicles or those authorized for [safari tours](#)**.
- **Pilibhit Tiger Reserve:**
  - It is located in **Pilibhit and Shahjahanpur district of Uttar Pradesh**.
  - It was notified as a [Tiger Reserve](#) in 2014.
    - In 2020, it bagged [international award TX2](#) for doubling up the number of tigers in the past four years.
  - It forms part of [Terai Arc Landscape in the upper Gangetic Plain](#).
  - The northern edge of the reserve lies along the Indo-Nepal border while the southern boundary is marked by the river Sharada and Khakra.
  - **Flora and Fauna:**
    - It is home to a habitat for over 127 animals, 326 bird species and 2,100 flowering plants.
    - Wild animals include **tiger**, [swamp deer](#), [bengal florican](#), [leopard](#), etc.
    - It has high [sal forests](#), plantations and grasslands with several water bodies.

### Tiger Reserves

- A protected area designated for the **conservation of the striped big cats (tigers)** is referred to as **Tiger Reserve**. However, a tiger reserve may also be a **national park** or **wildlife sanctuary**.
  - **For Example:** The [Sariska Tiger Reserve](#) is also a national park. It is so because the place was originally created as a **national park and later dedicated to tiger conservation**.
- Tiger Reserves are notified by State Governments as per provisions of **Section 38V of the [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#)** on advice of the [National Tiger Conservation Authority](#).

### TX2 Award

- It goes to one site that has **achieved remarkable and measurable increase in its tiger population since 2010**.