




31 July 2024

Kerala Regional News

<p><b>Landslide Risk in Kerala: ISRO and CAG Reports</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wayanad, a district in Kerala, has been highlighted for its significant landslide risk.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the <b>Landslide Atlas</b> prepared by the <b>National Remote Sensing Centre</b> (an ISRO division) in February 2023, Wayanad ranked <b>13th among 147 districts across 17 states and two Union Territories in India.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Kerala Districts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thrissur: 3rd</li> <li>Palakkad: 5th</li> <li>Malappuram: 7th</li> <li>Kozhikode: 10th</li> <li><b>Top Ranking: Rudraprayag in Uttarakhand</b> was ranked first, reflecting severe vulnerability in landslide-prone regions such as the Western Ghats and the Himalayan areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>CAG Report on Forest Fragmentation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Forest Land Reduction:</b> According to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report, the <b>forest area in Wayanad has significantly decreased.</b></li> <li>In <b>1950, it was 1,811.35 sq km</b>, which shrank to <b>863.86 sq km by 2021.</b></li> <li>This reduction has led to fragmentation of the once continuous vegetation cover.</li> <li><b>Impact on Wildlife:</b> The fragmentation of forest land has implications for human-wildlife conflicts, as detailed in the CAG's Compliance Audit Report for the year ended March 31, 2022, which was tabled in the Kerala Legislative Assembly on July 11, 2024.</li> </ul> <p><b>ISRO's Disaster Management Efforts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Database Coverage:</b> The ISRO Landslide Atlas includes <b>data from 1998 to 2022</b>, incorporating <b>seasonal, event-based, and route-wise landslide</b></li> </ul>
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	<p><b>inventories.</b> This includes major events like the 2021 landslide at Puthumala in Wayanad.</p> <p><b>Other Kerala Districts in Atlas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ernakulam: 15th</li> <li>• Idukki: 18th</li> <li>• Kottayam: 24th</li> <li>• Kannur: 26th</li> <li>• Thiruvananthapuram: 28th</li> <li>• Pathanamthitta: 33rd</li> <li>• Kasaragod: 44th</li> <li>• Kollam: 48th</li> <li>• Alappuzha: 138th</li> </ul> <p><b>ISRO Initiatives:</b> ISRO chairman S. Somanath emphasized the organization's commitment to landslide disaster response and mitigation through its Disaster Management Support (DMS) initiative.</p>
<p><b>Andamanese Charles Darwin's Frog</b></p> 	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Indo-American research team led by Malayali scientist S.D. Biju, also known as the Frogman of India, has identified a <b>unique breeding behavior in the Andamanese Charles Darwin's Frog.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Key findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The study highlights the <b>frog's distinctive reproductive practices</b> and the pressing issue of habitat loss affecting its breeding sites.</li> <li>• The findings, published in the July 2024 issue of Breviora, <b>underscore the frog's struggle with diminishing resources and human encroachment.</b></li> <li>• This species is endemic to the <b>Andaman Islands and is currently classified as 'vulnerable' on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Unique Breeding Behavior:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Andamanese Charles Darwin's Frog exhibits an <b>extraordinary reproductive behavior where it deposits terrestrial eggs above the water surface.</b></li> <li>• During mating, the <b>frog pair assumes a vertical, upside-down position on the walls of tree cavities, with their bodies entirely out of the water.</b></li> <li>• This behavior is unprecedented among frogs.</li> <li>• S.D. Biju emphasizes that <b>no other frog species is known to lay eggs in such an inverted</b></li> </ul>



## Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

	<p><b>manner within tree holes</b>, making this discovery crucial for understanding the frog's ecological interactions and essential habitats.</p>
<p><b>African eye worm infection</b></p>	<p><b>Context:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a notable medical discovery, Kerala reported its first case of African eye worm infection.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This <b>rare parasitic infection</b>, typically found in West and Central Africa, was identified in a coastal village in Thiruvananthapuram.</li> <li><b>Transmission:</b> The African eye worm infection is <b>typically transmitted through bites from deerflies</b>, which are found in rainforests in West and Central Africa. The parasite can infect humans, residing in the blood, lungs, lymphatic system, and under the skin.</li> <li><b>Potential Impact:</b> While the worm is not considered deadly, <b>it can cause significant discomfort and potential vision issues if it moves into the retina. Creating awareness about the infection remains crucial.</b></li> <li>This case is significant as it represents a new instance of this infection in India.</li> </ul>

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