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National and International News

<p>Kaveri engine</p> 	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kaveri engine, developed by the Gas Turbine Research Establishment under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has received approval for inflight testing. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kaveri engine project was initiated in the late 1980s with the objective of powering the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas. • It is developed by the Gas Turbine Research Establishment under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). • Features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The current dry version of the Kaveri engine generates approximately 49-51 kN of thrust. ○ This thrust is ideal for UAV applications, such as the Ghatak, India's stealth UCAV program. ○ DRDO plans to incorporate an afterburner to increase thrust to 73-75 kN for more demanding conditions. ○ The Kaveri engine has undergone comprehensive ground testing, modifications, and improvements over the years. ○ It has been tested in high-altitude simulations in Russia and ground trials in India. ○ These tests have shown promising results in reliability, thrust output, and operational stability, meeting the necessary performance standards for inflight testing. • Significance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This marks a major milestone in India's progress toward self-reliance in aero-engine technology, especially for UAVs like the Ghatak stealth UCAV program. <p>About DRDO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRDO was formed in 1958 by merging the then-existing Technical Development Establishment (TDEs) of the Indian Army and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO). It is responsible for the indigenous design, development and production of state-of-the-art weapon systems required by the Armed Forces.
<p>Important Days: Veer Baal Diwas</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently, the Prime Minister of India participated in the Veer Baal Diwas event at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.



	<p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veer Bal Diwas is observed annually on December 26, beginning in 2022, to honor the martyrdom of Baba Fateh Singh and Zorawar Singh, the Sahibzade of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. • Guru Gobind Singh, his family, and disciples were forced to flee Anandpur fort as the Mughal Army encircled it. • Amidst the chaos, Guru Gobind Singh's youngest sons, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, were captured by the Mughal forces. • The two brothers bravely refused to renounce their faith, leading Wazir Khan to order their execution by being bricked alive around December 26, 1705. • To honor their bravery and loyalty to their religion, the Government of India declared December 26 as Veer Bal Diwas in 2022, to annually commemorate their sacrifice. • About Guru Gobind Singh: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guru Gobind Singh was the 10th Sikh guru, following the demise of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru. ○ He is renowned for founding the principles of Khalsa or the Five 'K's i.e kesh (uncut hair), kanga (wooden comb), kara (iron or steel bracelet), kirpan (dagger) and kachera (short breeches). ○ He declared Guru Granth Sahib as Sikhism's holy scripture in 1708, before his death.
<p>United Nations Disengagement Observer Force</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has honored Brigadier General Amitabh Jha from India, who was serving with the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was established by UN Security Council resolution 350 (1974) on May 31, 1974, following the disengagement of forces between Israel and Syria. • Mandate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNDOF's role is to maintain the ceasefire and supervise the separation area (a demilitarized buffer zone) and the limitation area, where Israeli and Syrian troops and equipment are restricted, in the Golan Heights. ○ The mission's mandate is renewed every six months and has been extended until June 2025. • Method of Financing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNDOF is financed through a separate account approved annually by the UN General Assembly. • Contributions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ India is one of the top three troop and police-contributing countries to this mission. • Headquarters:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The headquarters of UNDOF is located at Camp Faouar. ● About Golan Heights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is a hilly area overlooking the upper Jordan River valley on the west. ○ It is a Syrian territory occupied by Israel since 1967. ○ Borders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is bounded by the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee on the west, Mount Hermon on the north, the seasonal Wadi Al-Ruqqād River on the east, and the Yarmūk River on the south.
<p>Tiger Translocation from Madhya Pradesh</p>	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recently, the Madhya Pradesh government has announced the translocation of 15 tigers to the states of Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha. ● This initiative involves 12 tigresses and 3 tigers, subject to approval from the Central Government. ● The tigers will be relocated from the Bandhavgarh, Pench, and Kanha Tiger Reserves. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● About Kanha Tiger Reserve (KTR): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kanha Tiger Reserve, also known as Kanha National Park, is the largest national park in Madhya Pradesh. It spreads across Mandla and Balaghat districts, nestled in the Maikal range of Satpuras, forming part of the Central Indian Highlands. ○ It was established as a national park on June 1, 1955, and Declared a Tiger Reserve in 1973. ○ Flora: Lowland forests dominated by sal trees and mixed forests with meadows; highland forests with tropical trees and bamboo on slopes. ○ Fauna: Home to Royal Bengal Tigers, leopards, sloth bears, and Indian wild dogs. Renowned for saving the Barasingha (state animal) from extinction. ● About Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was declared a national park in 1968 and became a Tiger Reserve in 1993. ○ Vegetation: Primarily tropical moist deciduous forests with sal trees, grasslands, and bamboo on lower slopes. Notable species include Saj, Dhaora, Tendu, Arjun, Amla, and Palas. ○ Fauna: Home to the highest density of Royal Bengal Tigers globally, along with leopards, wild dogs, wolves, jackals, chital, sambar, barking deer, nilgai, and chowsingha. ● About Pench Tiger Reserve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pench Tiger Reserve spans the Seoni and Chhindwara districts in Madhya Pradesh and extends into the Nagpur district in Maharashtra. It includes the Indira Priyadarshini Pench National Park, Pench Mowgli Sanctuary, and a buffer zone.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flora: Diverse flora includes teak, saag, mahua, and various grasses and shrubs. ○ Fauna: Abundant populations of Chital, Sambar, Nilgai, Gaur (Indian Bison), and wild boar. ● About Project Tiger: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is a tiger conservation programme (a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the MoEF&CC) launched in 1973 by the Government of India and administered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
Wealth Tax	<p>Why in news?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During a recent panel discussion in New Delhi, French economist Thomas Piketty proposed the introduction of a wealth and inheritance tax on the super-rich in India, with the revenue potentially funding health and education. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wealth Tax is levied on the net market value of various assets owned by an individual, such as cash, bank deposits, shares, fixed assets, personal cars, and real property. ● The primary objective of the tax is to target unproductive and non-essential assets of individuals. ● Wealth Tax in India <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Wealth Tax Act was introduced in 1957, following the recommendations of the Kaldor Committee (1955), as part of tax rationalization efforts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It imposed a 1% tax on income exceeding ₹30 lakh per year for individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs), and companies. ○ Abolition: The wealth tax was abolished in 2015 due to challenges such as extensive litigation, increased compliance burden, and high administrative costs. ○ Replacement Measures: The wealth tax was replaced with an increase in the surcharge on the super-rich. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The surcharge for individuals earning over ₹1 crore and companies with income exceeding ₹10 crore was raised from 2% to 12%.



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