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1 Cheer Pheasant (Source: *Down To Earth*)

Cheer Pheasant is a ground dwelling bird famous for its loud calls.

Distribution and Habitat

- **Distribution:** Western Himalayan grasslands, from northern Pakistan across Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand to central Nepal.
- **Habitat:** Steep, rocky hillsides studded with scrub, stunted trees and grassy slopes between 1,200 and 3,350 metres.



Key Important Characteristics

- The Cheer Pheasant makes a ground nest (a shallow scrape under grass or rocks).
- It shows high natal philopatry. (Philopatry - birds stay near or return to their birthplace to breed.)
- It depends on early successional grasslands maintained by traditional controlled grass cutting and seasonal burning, where moderate disturbance helps sustain suitable habitat.
- Habitat is shrinking due to:
 - Human activities
 - Livestock grazing pressure
 - Hunting
 - Rapid land use changes

IUCN Status: Vulnerable



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2 SAHI and BODH Initiatives (Source: *The Hindu*)

Why in the news?: Union Minister of Health and Family launched SAHI and BODH Initiatives to Strengthen Responsible Health AI Ecosystem at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

SAHI (Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare for India)

- A national framework to guide the **safe, ethical, transparent and people-centric use of AI** in the healthcare sector – promoting secure, interoperable and trustworthy AI solutions.
- It is a governance framework and national roadmap for responsible AI adoption in health.
- The platform will serve as a knowledge-sharing and governance hub, promoting best practices in health AI development and implementation.
- It will provide strategic direction on governance, **data stewardship, validation, deployment and monitoring of AI health solutions.**

BODH (Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI)

- A benchmarking platform developed by Indian Institute of Technology - Kanpur with the National Health Authority.
- It will enable systematic evaluation of AI models using diverse, anonymized real-world health datasets.
- Assesses AI systems for performance, reliability, bias and real-world readiness before large-scale use.
- Designed as a digital public good under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission to strengthen trust, transparency and quality of AI in healthcare.



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3 Royal Indian Navy Mutiny, 1946 (Source: *The Hindu*)

Why in the news?: February 18 marks the 80th anniversary of the Royal Indian Navy's (RIN) revolt of 1946.

- The Royal Indian Navy (RIN) Mutiny started at HMIS Talwar in Bombay in 1946.
- It was a five-day armed uprising.

Background

- Ratings (Indian sailors) went on strike over bad food, poor living conditions, racial discrimination and abusive treatment by British officers.
- The appointment of overtly racist officers, including **Arthur Frederick King at HMIS Talwar**, further intensified resentment among the sailors.
- B.C. Dutt was arrested after painting "**Quit India**" on the walls of Talwar.
- Another major factor behind revolt – Demand to release all prisoners detained in connection with the INA trials, including Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

The Revolt:

- Within days, the revolt spread to 78 ships and 20 shore establishments, involving around 20,000 sailors across Bombay, Karachi, Calcutta, Madras and other ports.
- The naval ratings organized a procession in the city, carrying a portrait of Subhas Chandra Bose.
- The sailors formed the **Naval Central Strike Committee (NCSC)**, led by M.S. Khan and Madan Singh, and symbolically hoisted the Congress, Muslim League and Communist flags together on their ships.

Political Impact

- Leaders like Sardar Vallabhai Patel and M.A Jinnah urged the sailors to surrender.
- The **Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League** did not support the armed revolt. The **Communist Party** supported the revolt.
- The British used force to suppress the revolt, resulting in over 200 deaths.
- The ratings surrendered on February 23, 1946.

Amid the deepening communal tensions of the time, the RIN Revolt of 1946 stood out as a rare and powerful moment of Hindu-Muslim unity.



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4 Election Process to the Rajya Sabha (Source: PIB)

Why in the news?: EC announces biennial polls to 37 Rajya Sabha seats.

Historical Background:

- The idea of bicameral legislature (Council of States and Legislative Assembly) was introduced under the **Government of India Act 1919 (Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms)**.
 - Franchise - Limited to elites and British interests.
- **Government of India Act 1935**- retained bicameralism at the Centre
- The first election to the Rajya Sabha was held in 1952(after the Constitution came into force in 1950 and following the first general elections of 1951-52)



Rajya Sabha Elections:

- **Article 80(4)** of the Indian Constitution - manner of election of members of the Rajya Sabha representing the States.
- Members of the Rajya Sabha are not elected directly by the people. They are elected by the elected members of State Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) (Indirect elections).

The Election is Conducted Using:

- **Proportional Representation** - Parties get seats in proportion to their strength in assemblies.
- **By means of the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system**, MLAs rank candidates in order of preference (1, 2, 3 etc). Votes can be transferred based on preferences if a candidate gets surplus votes or is eliminated.
- **Through an open ballot** - MLAs must show their marked ballot to their party's authorized agent (to prevent crossvoting)



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5 Bee Corridors (Source: PIB)

Why in the news?: NHAH to Develop First-of-Its-Kind 'Bee Corridors' Along the National Highways.

What are Bee Corridors?

- Bee Corridors are linear stretches of land, along infrastructures like highways, which are planted and managed with nectar and pollen-rich vegetation to support bees and other pollinators.
- They function as ecological pathways which allows pollinators to move, feed and survive across fragmented landscapes.

How it works?

- It involves planting diverse flowering trees, shrubs and grasses that provide nectar and pollen, while preserving natural elements like weeds and dead wood to support pollinators.

Key plant species:

- Native, nectar-rich trees such as **Neem, Karanj, Mahua, Palash, Bottle Brush, Jamun and Siris.**

Implementation

- Corridors will be developed along suitable stretches of National Highways and vacant NHAH land based on local agro-climatic conditions.
- NHAH field offices will identify sites and plan at least three pollinator corridors during 2026–27.
- Around 40 lakh trees will be planted along National Highways in 2026–27, with around **60 % under the Bee Corridor initiative.**

What are the benefits?

- Helps **enhance ecological outcomes and support pollinator conservation** by ensuring the availability of nectar and pollen throughout the year.
- Aims to **reduce ecological stress on honeybees and other pollinators** that is adversely affecting pollination services, agricultural/horticultural productivity and ecological balance.

