



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 23, 2026

INTERNATIONAL

India Delays First Big Cat Alliance Summit, Impacting Wildlife Diplomacy and African Partnerships

- India has postponed the inaugural International Big Cat Alliance Summit, which was scheduled for June 1, 2026, in New Delhi, following the rescheduling of the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit.
- The decision was taken after consultations with the African Union and the African Union Commission to ensure wider international participation, especially from African nations vital to global big cat conservation.
- African countries are central to protecting species such as lions, leopards, and cheetahs, making their involvement essential for stronger wildlife cooperation and biodiversity conservation efforts.
- India continues to position itself as a global leader in big cat conservation through initiatives like Project Tiger and programs supporting tigers, Asiatic lions, snow leopards, and cheetah restoration.

Saudi Arabia Joins India-Led International Big Cat Alliance, Taking Global Wildlife Partnership to 26 Nations

- Saudi Arabia has officially joined the International Big Cat Alliance, the India-led platform focused on protecting major big cat species and strengthening global biodiversity conservation efforts.
- Launched by Narendra Modi in 2023, the alliance now includes 26 member countries and five observer nations, reflecting growing international cooperation in wildlife protection.
- The IBCA works to conserve seven major big cat species – tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma – through knowledge sharing, habitat management, capacity building, and collaborative conservation programmes.
- The alliance aims to protect ecosystems and biodiversity worldwide by supporting sustainable wildlife management and stronger international environmental partnerships.

Deadly Coal Mine Explosion in China's Shanxi Kills Dozens, Massive Rescue Operation Underway

- A deadly explosion at the Liushenyu Coal Mine in Shanxi has reportedly killed at least 90 people and injured more than 100 workers, making it one of China's worst recent mining disasters.
- The blast occurred while around 247 workers were inside the mine, prompting a massive rescue operation involving over 345 emergency personnel, medical teams, ambulances, and evacuation units.
- Preliminary reports suggest the explosion may have been caused by dangerous gas conditions, including excessive carbon monoxide levels, though authorities are still investigating the exact cause.
- Xi Jinping ordered authorities to intensify rescue efforts, ensure treatment for the injured, investigate the disaster thoroughly, and hold those responsible accountable.

NATIONAL

Why India Became Home to 97 of the World's 100 Hottest Cities in 2026

- India is facing an intense heatwave crisis in 2026, with reports showing that 97 of the world's 100 hottest cities were located in the country on a single day, including areas in Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh where temperatures crossed 48°C.
- The extreme conditions are largely driven by a "heat dome," a high-pressure atmospheric system that traps and intensifies hot air while blocking rainfall, clouds, and cooling winds.
- Climate change, weak Western Disturbances, El Niño effects, deforestation, urban expansion, and shrinking water bodies have further worsened the crisis by increasing heat retention and creating urban heat islands.
- The prolonged heatwave is severely impacting public health, agriculture, water availability, and electricity demand, raising concerns about India's growing vulnerability to climate-related disasters.

AWARDS

Chandrayaan-3 Wins Prestigious 2026 AIAA Goddard Award for Historic Lunar Mission

- Chandrayaan-3 received the prestigious AIAA Goddard Astronautics Award in Washington, D.C., recognizing India's historic achievement in lunar exploration.
- The mission made history when India became the first nation to successfully soft-land a spacecraft near the Moon's south pole, a scientifically important region believed to contain water ice and other valuable resources.
- The award was accepted on behalf of Indian Space Research Organisation by Vinay Kwatra, India's Ambassador to the United States.

- Chandrayaan-3's success strengthened India's position in global space exploration by demonstrating advanced lunar landing capability and generating important scientific data for future Moon missions.

DEFENCE

Agni-1 Missile Successfully Tested by India

- India successfully test-fired the Agni-I ballistic missile from the Integrated Test Range Chandipur on May 22, 2026, under the supervision of the Strategic Forces Command.
- The successful launch confirmed that all mission objectives were achieved, reinforcing India's strategic defense preparedness and missile readiness capabilities.
- Agni-I is a short-range ballistic missile designed for quick deployment through road and rail mobile launch systems and plays a vital role in India's deterrence strategy.
- The test also highlights the progress of India's indigenous Agni missile program, which supports long-term defense modernization and strategic security objectives.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Turtle Day

- World Turtle Day is observed every year on May 23 to raise awareness about the protection of turtles and tortoises, some of Earth's oldest surviving species.
- Founded in 2000 by American Tortoise Rescue, the day highlights the growing threats these reptiles face from habitat destruction, plastic pollution, climate change, illegal wildlife trade, and fishing bycatch.
- Turtles play a vital ecological role by supporting healthy marine, freshwater, and land ecosystems, making their conservation important for overall biodiversity and environmental balance.
- World Turtle Day encourages people worldwide to support conservation efforts through awareness campaigns, reducing plastic use, protecting habitats, participating in clean-up drives, and promoting wildlife-friendly practices.

