



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 11-05-2026**

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## **Gulf of Aden**

**Syllabus: Prelims Bits – Mapping.**

**Context:**

- Yemen's coast guard reported that unidentified armed men hijacked an oil tanker off the coast of Shabwa province and diverted it towards the Gulf of Aden near Somali waters.

**Location & Extent**

- Extension of the Indian Ocean, located between the Arabian Peninsula (north) and the Horn of Africa (south).
- Connects the Red Sea in the west and the Arabian Sea in the east through the Strait of Bab el Mandeb.
- Named after "Aden," a port city on Yemen's coast.
- Approximately 900 km long and 500 km wide.
- Bounded by Somalia and Socotra Islands (south), Yemen (north), Arabian Sea (east), and Djibouti (west).
- Connected to the Somali Sea through the Guardafui Channel.
- Narrows into the Gulf of Tadjoura near Djibouti in the west.



### Physical Features

- One of the largest natural harbors in the world with about 70 sq. km. of sheltered water.
- Dominant relief feature: Sheba Ridge, an extension of the Indian Ocean ridge system running along the middle of the gulf.
- Gulf is filled with numerous islands belonging to Yemen and Somalia.

### Climatic & Oceanographic Features

- Strongly influenced by upwelling of cool, nutrient-rich waters during southwest and northeast monsoons.
- Characterized by a prevailing high-energy climate.
- Compared to the neighbouring Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden has lower saline content.

### Important Cities & Ports

- Major cities: Aden, Mukalla, Ahnwar, Balhaf, Berbera, Bosaso, and Djibouti City.
- Major ports: Aden (Yemen), Berbera and Bosaso (Somalia).

### Strategic & Economic Importance

- Critical part of the Suez Canal shipping route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.
- Around 21,000 ships pass annually, making it one of the busiest water bodies in the world.
- Nearly 11% of global seaborne petroleum passes through the Gulf of Aden en route to the Mediterranean or Arabian Seas.
- Strategically significant for global trade, energy security, and maritime connectivity.

## **Galapagos Archipelago**

### Syllabus: GS-1: World Geography – Islands and Archipelago.

#### Context:

- A newly installed monitoring system called **smart island monitoring model** promises to scale ecosystem conservation in the Galapagos Archipelago.

#### Location

- Situated in the Pacific Ocean, roughly 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador.



### Biodiversity

- Famous for unique endemic species such as:
  - Giant Galápagos tortoise (*Chelonoidis nigra*)
  - Marine iguana (*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*)
  - Flightless cormorant (*Phalacrocorax harrisi*)
  - Galápagos penguin (*Spheniscus mendiculus*)

### Special Feature

- The Galápagos penguin is the only penguin species found in the Northern Hemisphere.

## **Rusty Spotted Cat**

**Syllabus: Prelims Bits – Wildlife in news.**

### Context:

- Recently, for the first time in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR) and Haryana, a Rusty-spotted cat has been photographed.



### About

- Rusty-spotted cat is the world's smallest and lightest known cat.

### Appearance

- Weighs less than 1.5 kilograms and measures about 20–29 inches in length, nearly half the size of a domestic cat.

- Large eyes are considered an adaptation to its nocturnal behaviour.

### **Habitat**

- Prefers moist and dry deciduous forests, scrublands, grasslands, and rocky areas.

### **Distribution**

- Found in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.
- In India, its range extends from Tamil Nadu to Jammu & Kashmir, including Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Odisha.

### **Characteristics**

- Very active, agile, and extremely fierce cat.
- Primarily nocturnal; rests in dense cover during daytime.
- Marks its territory with urine like other cats.
- Excellent climber, enabling it to catch birds.

### **Diet**

- Preys on rodents, lizards, frogs, insects, and birds.

### **Threats**

- Habitat loss, farm expansion, and industrial growth threaten nearly 75% of its range.

### **Conservation Status**

- IUCN Red List: Near Threatened
- CITES: Appendix I
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I

## **Chief Minister Refuse to Resign**

**Syllabus: GS-2: Indian Polity – State elections and Chief Minister.**

### **Context:**

- A day after the All India Trinamool Congress lost the West Bengal Assembly Elections, Mamata Banerjee announced that she would not resign as Chief Minister.
- She alleged that the election outcome resulted from a “conspiracy” rather than the people’s mandate.

- She accused the winning party of misusing central forces to capture booths and manipulate the electoral process.
- The party stated that it would legally challenge the results while continuing its political struggle.

### **Can a Governor Remove a Chief Minister?**

#### **Constitutional Provision – Article 164(1)**

- Article 164(1) states that the Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor and holds office “during the pleasure of the Governor”.
- On a literal reading, this appears to give the Governor the power to remove a Chief Minister.

#### **Concerns in the Constituent Assembly**

- During Constituent Assembly debates, members expressed concern that such wording could enable arbitrary exercise of gubernatorial powers.
- Mohammad Ismail Khan proposed replacing “during the pleasure” with a provision stating that ministers hold office only as long as they enjoy the confidence of the Legislative Assembly.
- However, B. R. Ambedkar clarified that in a parliamentary system, the Council of Ministers survives only while it enjoys majority support in the Assembly, even if not explicitly stated in the Constitution.

#### **Supreme Court’s Interpretation**

##### **Constitutional Position of Governor**

- Over time, the Supreme Court of India has interpreted the Governor’s powers as largely bound by the “aid and advice” of the Council of Ministers.
- In *A.G. Perarivalan v. State Through Superintendent of Police*, the Court observed that the Governor generally acts as a constitutional head rather than exercising independent executive authority.

##### **Practical Implication**

- In practice, a Governor cannot arbitrarily dismiss a Chief Minister who continues to enjoy the confidence of the Legislative Assembly.
- The real test of legitimacy remains majority support in the House.

#### **Floor Test: Determining Majority Support**

##### **Need for Floor Test**

- A floor test becomes necessary when there is doubt regarding whether the Chief Minister still enjoys the confidence of the Legislative Assembly.

- It is especially relevant when the Governor asks the Chief Minister to resign and considers inviting another leader to form the government.

### **Constitutional Mechanism**

- Floor test is the constitutional mechanism to verify majority support in the House.
- The Chief Minister must demonstrate support of more than half of the sitting MLAs.

### **Outcomes**

- Failure to secure majority support during the floor test necessitates resignation.
- If no party or coalition proves a stable majority, the state may come under President's Rule under Article 356 as a last resort.

### **What Happens After the Assembly's Tenure Ends?**

#### **Constitutional Provision – Article 172**

- Article 172 states that a State Legislative Assembly normally continues for five years from the date of its first meeting, unless dissolved earlier.
- After five years, the Assembly automatically stands dissolved.

#### **Expiry of West Bengal Assembly**

- According to the Election Commission of India, the present West Bengal Assembly began its term on May 8, 2021, and its tenure is scheduled to end on May 7, 2026.

#### **Formation of New Government**

- After expiry of the Assembly's tenure, the Governor initiates the process of constituting a new Assembly.
- Newly elected MLAs take oath, after which a new government is formed based on majority support in the House.

### **What Happens After Electoral Defeat?**

#### **Constitutional Convention**

- Experts argue that resignation after losing an Assembly election is largely a constitutional convention rather than a strict legal requirement.

#### **Automatic Cessation of Office**

- Even if a Chief Minister does not resign, the office automatically ceases once the Assembly's tenure ends and the House stands dissolved.

### **Legal Remedies Against Election Results**

#### **Election Petitions**

- Election results can be challenged through an election petition before the High Court within 45 days of declaration of results.
- Under the Representation of the People Act, 1951, grounds include:
  - Corrupt practices
  - Procedural violations during conduct of elections

### Scope for Writ Petitions

- Writ petitions may also be filed when the integrity of the electoral process itself is questioned.
- Allegations such as arbitrary deletion of voters from electoral rolls may be challenged as violations of fundamental rights.
- Large-scale irregularities affecting voter participation could invite judicial scrutiny where constitutional rights and fairness of the democratic process are involved.

### Constitutional Significance / Analytical Insight

- Reflects the balance between:
  - Constitutional text (“pleasure of Governor”)
  - Parliamentary democracy and majority principle
  - Judicial interpretation limiting arbitrary gubernatorial discretion
- Reinforces that democratic legitimacy in India ultimately depends on majority support in the Legislative Assembly, not merely gubernatorial satisfaction.

## **International Big Cat Alliance**

### Syllabus: GS-3: Environment – Summits and Organisations

#### Context:

- Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the website and logo for the 1st International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit 2026 to be hosted by New Delhi, India.

#### About IBCA

- Inter-governmental international organisation launched in April 2023 during the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger.
- Focuses on conservation of seven big cats: Lion, Tiger, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma.

### **Objective**

- To facilitate collaboration and synergy among stakeholders by consolidating successful conservation practices and expertise for global conservation of big cats.

### **Members and Participation**

- Brings together:
  - 95 range and non-range countries
  - Conservation partners
  - Scientific organisations
  - Corporations
- Aim: Promote collaboration and sharing of conservation practices.

### **Implementation Agency**

- Implemented through the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

### **Founding Members**

- India, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ecuador, Kenya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Suriname and Uganda.

### **Membership**

- Open to all UN Member States, including:
  - Range countries – where big cats naturally occur.
  - Non-range countries – interested in supporting global conservation of big cats.

### **Institutional Support and Funding**

- India committed ₹150 crore (2023–2028) as budgetary support for:
  - Creating corpus fund
  - Building infrastructure
  - Covering recurring expenses of IBCA

### **Governance Structure of IBCA**

#### **Assembly**

- Main decision-making body.
- Composed of representatives of all member countries.

#### **Standing Committee**

- Established by the Assembly.
- Assists in effective and efficient functioning of IBCA.

**Secretariat**

- Based in New Delhi.