



Kerala Renames Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary as Butterfly Sanctuary | National Current Affairs | 14 Jan 2026

Why in News?

The **Kerala government** has officially renamed the **Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary** in Kannur district as the **Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary**.

Key Points

- **Notification:** The renaming was officially notified under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
- **Reason:** Due to the presence of **rich abundance and diversity of butterfly species** in the region and the need to **protect and propagate their natural habitat**.
 - **Butterfly Diversity:** Aralam hosts about **266 butterfly species**, representing **over 80% of Kerala's total butterfly diversity**.
 - **Endemic Species:** **27 species** in Aralam are **endemic to the Western Ghats**.
- **WP Act Protection:** **Six butterfly species** recorded at Aralam are listed in **Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**
- **Historical Status:** The Aralam area was originally declared as a wildlife sanctuary in **1984**.
- **Global Significance:** The sanctuary holds **global ecological importance**, as part of the **Western Ghats**, which is recognised as a **World Natural Heritage site by UNESCO**.
- **Social and Environmental Impact:** The renamed sanctuary is expected to strengthen **biodiversity conservation**, promote **environmental education**, **ecotourism**, and generate **community engagement** in protecting butterfly populations.

Read More: [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act](#), [IUCN Red List](#), [UNESCO](#)

PFRDA NPS Outreach for MSMEs at Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference 2026 | National Current Affairs | 14 Jan 2026

Why in News?

Recently, the **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** conducted a specialized NPS outreach session for the MSME sector during the **Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference** held in Rajkot, Gujarat.

Key Points:

- **Objective:** To expand the social security net by encouraging MSME owners and their employees to adopt the **National Pension System (NPS)**.
- **Focus on Corporate Model:** PFRDA highlighted the "**NPS Corporate Sector Model**," which allows MSMEs to provide a structured retirement benefit to employees with minimal administrative

overhead.

- **Financial Literacy:** The session aimed to **bridge the gap in pension coverage** for the unorganized and semi-organized segments of the workforce in Gujarat's industrial hubs.
- **Dignified Aging:** MSMEs are a critical part of India's economy, and encouraging retirement savings culture among business owners and workers can help reduce future financial insecurity and ensure dignified aging.
- **MSME Contribution:** The MSME sector contributes nearly **30% to India's GDP** and is a critical target for achieving "Pensioned India" goals.
- **PFRDA:** A statutory regulatory body established under the **PFRDA Act, 2013**, to promote and regulate the pension sector in India.
- **NPS Structure:** It is a voluntary, defined contribution retirement savings scheme. It is regulated on the basis of **PRAN (Permanent Retirement Account Number)**.

Read more: [MSME](#), [PFRDA](#), [NPS](#)

Justice Indira Shah Appointed as First Female Chief Justice of Meghalaya High Court | National Current Affairs | 14 Jan 2026

Why in News?

Justice Indira Shah made history by being sworn in as the **first female Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court**, marking a significant milestone for gender representation in the North Eastern judiciary.

Key Points:

- **Appointment:** The appointment was made by the **President of India** under **Article 217** of the Constitution, following the recommendation of the Supreme Court Collegium.
- **Significance:** While India has seen several female judges in the North East, this is the first time a woman has headed the Meghalaya High Court.
- **Meghalaya High Court:** Established on **March 23, 2013**, after an amendment to the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.
- **Appointment Process:** The Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed by the President after consultation with the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)** and the **Governor** of the state.
- **Gender Parity:** In 2026, India continues to push for higher representation of women in the higher judiciary, where women currently constitute less than 15% of the total judge strength.

Read more: [President of India](#), [CJI](#), [Article 217](#)

VP Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan Inaugurates 'Drug-Free Campus' Campaign | National Current Affairs | 14 Jan 2026

Why in News?

Vice-President **Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan** inaugurated the "**Drug-Free Campus Campaign**" at

Key Points:

- **Vision:** The campaign is part of the broader **Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)**, targeting educational institutions to prevent substance abuse among the youth.
- **Strategy:** It involves the creation of student-led "**Anti-Drug Clubs**" and the integration of counseling services within the university health system.
- **The VP's Address:** He emphasized that a *Viksit Bharat @2047* is only possible if the youth are healthy, disciplined, and free from addiction.
- **Platforms Launched:** A dedicated **e-pledge platform** and mobile application under the campaign to encourage students across the country to take a pledge for drug-free campuses.
- **Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan:** Launched by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**, it focuses on the 272 most vulnerable districts in India.
- **Article 47:** The Constitution of India (Directive Principles of State Policy) directs the State to endeavor to bring about prohibition of the consumption of intoxicating drinks and drugs.
- **NCB Role:** The **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)** provides technical support to these campus campaigns to track and dismantle local supply chains near educational zones.

MoEFCC Launches 'NIRANTAR' Platform for Institutional Coordination | National Current Affairs | 14 Jan 2026

Why in News?

The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) chaired a high-level meeting in January 2026 to operationalize the **NIRANTAR Platform**.

Key Points:

- **NIRANTAR Dashboard:** It is a digital unified dashboard designed to strengthen coordination among MoEFCC institutions like the **Pollution Control Boards (CPCB/SPCBs)**, **Forest Survey of India (FSI)**, and **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)**.
- **Real-time Monitoring:** The platform enables the real-time tracking of environmental clearances, forest fire alerts, and wildlife trafficking data.
- **Data Integration:** It aims to eliminate "silo-based" functioning, ensuring that climate data from various research bodies is accessible for policy-making under one window.
- **MoEFCC:** The nodal agency in the Central Government for overseeing environmental and forestry policies.
- **Digital India in Environment:** NIRANTAR follows earlier initiatives like **PARIVESH** (for environment clearances), but offers a broader scope for inter-agency collaboration.
- **Sustainable Development:** The platform is a tool to meet **SDG 13 (Climate Action)** and **SDG 15 (Life on Land)** by ensuring data-driven conservation.

Read more: [CPCB](#), [SDG](#), [MoEFCC](#)