

## INDIA HOLDS THE BRICS CHAIRSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2026

### 1. BACKGROUND & VENUE

- **Chairship:** India holds the BRICS Chairship for the year 2026.
- **Venue:** Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Dates:** 20-21 May 2026.
- **Organizing Body:** Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India (GoI).

### 2. THEME

- **Core Theme:** "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability"

### 3. KEY DIGNITARIES & PARTICIPATION

- **Virtual Address:** Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports.
- **Inauguration:** Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse, Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports (She will inaugurate the exhibition and deliver the inaugural address).
- **Other Dignitaries:** Shri Vishwas Kailash Sarang (Minister of Sports and Youth Welfare, Government of Madhya Pradesh) and Dr. Pallavi Jain Govil (Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs).

### 4. CORE OBJECTIVES & HIGHLIGHTS

- **Objective:** To strengthen youth-led entrepreneurship ecosystems across BRICS member nations.
- **Focus Areas:** Thematic sessions focusing on **Digital Innovation, Inclusivity, and Sustainability**.
- **Economic Relevance:** Advancing entrepreneurship as a primary driver of economic growth and social impact.

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### 💡 QUICK FACTS FOR EXAMS

- **BRICS Block:** Originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (with recent expansions adding new member nations).
- **2026 BRICS Chair:** India.
- **Indore's Significance:** Consistently ranked as India's cleanest city in the Swachh Survekshan awards, serving as the host city for this working group meeting.

## PROJECT CHEETAH - PROGRESS AND FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION

### 1. BACKGROUND & LATEST STATISTICS

- **Primary Objective:** To reintroduce the extinct cheetah in India using scientific methods and international cooperation.
- **Current Total Population:** The current population of cheetahs in India has reached **53**.
- **Indian-born:** Out of these 53 cheetahs, **33 cheetahs were born in India**. This indicates the successful reproduction and acclimatisation of cheetahs to the Indian environment.

- **Founder Population:** Initially, 20 cheetahs were translocated from Namibia and South Africa, which was later supplemented by 9 cheetahs from Botswana through international cooperation.

## 2. KEY HABITATS & EXPANSION

To ensure long-term sustainability, a **landscape-based approach** is being adopted instead of limiting the project to a single area:

- **Kuno National Park (Madhya Pradesh):** Developed as the primary and core site for establishing the cheetah population.
- **Gandhisagar Wildlife Sanctuary (Madhya Pradesh):** Prepared as an additional (second) habitat to support the expansion of the growing cheetah population.
- **Banni Grasslands (Gujarat):** Habitat readiness and prey augmentation measures to expand the project to new states have reached a satisfactory level.
- **Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary (Madhya Pradesh):** Special focus will be placed on developing this area as a new habitat for cheetahs in the upcoming next phase.

## 3. FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION & METAPOPOPULATION

- **Genetic Diversity:** To prevent inbreeding depression and maintain genetic diversity, it has been planned to consistently source more cheetahs from African countries.
- **Metapopulation Framework:** A framework will be strengthened to connect various sanctuaries across Central India to facilitate the natural dispersal and mutual genetic exchange among cheetah populations.

## 4. QUICK FACTS FOR EXAMS

- **Survival Rate:** Scientific monitoring indicates that the survival rates of the introduced cheetahs and their cubs are in line with, and in certain cases better than, global benchmarks.
- **Nodal Ministry:** This high-level review meeting was held under the chairpersonship of Shri Bhupender Yadav, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- **Ecological Significance:** This project is not just about saving a single animal species; it is crucial for the restoration of open natural ecosystems and grasslands in the country.

## INDIA-VIETNAM BILATERAL DEFENCE TALKS (MAY 2026)

### 1. MEETING BACKGROUND & VENUE

- **Key Leaders:** Indian Defence Minister **Shri Rajnath Singh** and Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of National Defence **General Phan Van Giang**.
- **Venue:** Hanoi, Vietnam.
- **Date:** May 19, 2026.
- **Significance:** The talks were held to review and further deepen the "**Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**" between the two nations.

### 2. REGIONAL SECURITY & INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

- **Indo-Pacific Region:** Both ministers reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining peace, stability, security, safety, and freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific region.

- **Areas of Cooperation:** They discussed expanding cooperation in military training, defence industry collaboration, maritime security, capacity building, cyber security, and United Nations (UN) peacekeeping.

### 3. TECHNOLOGY & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

- **Language Lab Inauguration:** Both Ministers virtually inaugurated a **Language Lab** at the Air Force Officers' College in Vietnam, which was established with Indian assistance.
- **AI Lab Announcement:** Shri Rajnath Singh announced the setting-up of an **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Lab** at the Telecommunications University at Nha Trang, Vietnam.
- **MoU Exchange:** India's Military College of Telecommunications Engineering (MCTE) and Vietnam's Telecommunications University exchanged an MoU to cooperate in the fields of **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Quantum Technology**.

### 4. OTHER DIPLOMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

- **High-Level Meeting:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called on the General Secretary and President of Vietnam, **Mr. To Lam**, to discuss digital transformation, trade, investment, and connectivity.
- **Ho Chi Minh's 136th Birth Anniversary:** Shri Rajnath Singh began his day by paying homage to the founding father and former President of Vietnam, **Ho Chi Minh**, at his Mausoleum in Hanoi on his 136th birth anniversary.

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#### 💡 QUICK FACTS FOR EXAMS

- **Strategic Defence Support:** India reiterated its resolve to support Vietnam's defence modernisation and capacity enhancement initiatives.
- **Quantum & AI Pact:** The Southeast Asian (ASEAN) nation with which India recently exchanged an MoU for cutting-edge defence technology (AI & Quantum) is **Vietnam**.
- **President of Vietnam:** Mr. To Lam.

### EASTERN REGIONAL AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE (MAY 2026)

#### 1. CONFERENCE BACKGROUND & VENUE

- **Inaugurated By:** Union Minister for Agriculture, Farmers Welfare and Rural Development **Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan** and Odisha Chief Minister **Shri Mohan Charan Majhi**.
- **Venue:** Mayfair Convention, Bhubaneswar (Odisha).
- **Date:** May 19, 2026.
- **Participating States:** Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal.
- **Primary Objective:** To transform Eastern India into the primary growth engine of the country's agricultural development and reshape the regional agricultural landscape.

#### 2. KEY POLICIES & CENTRAL GOVT DECISIONS

- **'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' (Save Farms Campaign):** A nationwide campaign set to launch on June 1, 2026. It will focus on balanced fertilizer usage, soil health protection, modern technology adoption, and farmer education.

- **Integrated Farming:** Combining crop cultivation with horticulture, fisheries, animal husbandry, beekeeping, and agro-forestry to boost the income of small and marginal farmers.
- **Self-Reliance in Pulses & Oilseeds:** Strengthening procurement systems like PM-AASHA, NAFED, NCCF, and state government agencies to make the country self-reliant in these sectors.
- **Farmer ID:** Introducing 'Farmer ID' as a single platform to provide crop loans, fertilizer distribution, and government scheme benefits in a transparent and faster manner.
- **Strict Action against Agricultural Crimes:** Treating the supply of fake fertilizers, spurious pesticides, and substandard seeds as serious crimes against farmers and enforcing stricter laws.

### 3. ODISHA STATE INITIATIVES

- **'Purvodaya' Vision:** Preparing a shared roadmap among eastern states to achieve climate-resilient farming and inclusive development.
- **CM-Kisan Scheme:** A state-level farmer financial assistance scheme provided by the Odisha government along with PM-Kisan.
- **Promotion of Millets:** Identifying millets as a 'super food' and extensively promoting them in tribal regions due to their low water and fertilizer requirements.

### 💡 QUICK FACTS FOR EXAMS

- **Strategic Campaign:** The national-level campaign starting from June 1 for balanced fertilizer use is – '**Khet Bachao Abhiyan**'.
- **Union Agriculture Secretary:** Shri Atish Chandra.
- **ICAR Director General:** Dr. Mangi Lal Jat.
- **Cooperative Institutions:** National agencies supporting the procurement of pulses and oilseeds – **NAFED** and **NCCF**.

## DEMISE OF FORMER UTTARAKHAND CHIEF MINISTER MAJOR GENERAL B. C. KHANDURI (MAY 2026)

### 1. PERSON IN NEWS

- **Name:** Major General Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri (Retd.).
- **Date of Demise:** May 19, 2026.
- **Significance:** A prominent leader who made invaluable contributions to the nation spanning both the armed forces and the political sphere.

### 2. POLITICAL CAREER & KEY POSITIONS

- **Chief Minister of Uttarakhand:** Served as the former Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, showcasing unwavering dedication to the state's development during his tenure.
- **Union Minister:** Served as an inspiring Union Minister in the central cabinet.
- **Contribution to Infrastructure:** Best known for his tireless and continuous efforts toward significantly improving road connectivity across the nation.

### 3. MILITARY BACKGROUND

- **Indian Army:** Prior to entering politics, he served in the armed forces and retired with the rank of Major General.
  - **Distinction:** One of the rare national leaders who successfully transitioned from a distinguished career in the military to high-ranking positions in public administration (as both a Chief Minister and a Union Minister).
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#### 💡 QUICK FACTS FOR EXAMS

- **State:** Major General B. C. Khanduri served as the Chief Minister of which state? – **Uttarakhand.**
- **Military Rank:** What was his rank prior to entering public life? – **Major General.**
- **Core Portfolios:** His contributions span across three main domains – **Defence Forces, Union Ministry (Connectivity/Infrastructure), and State Administration (Chief Minister).**



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