

## NATIONAL AUTOMATED FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM



Recently, the Centre has revised the procedure for the Foreigners Identification Portal (FIP) of the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) and asked States/UTs to use fingerprint scanners available in districts under districts police module (DPM) of Immigration Visa Foreigner Registration Tracking system (IVFRT).

- It is a pan-India searchable database of crime and criminal-related fingerprints.
- **Objective:** To collect **fingerprint data** of all the **criminals from all the states** and the Union Territories.
- It will enable law enforcement agencies to **upload, trace and retrieve information** from the database 24x7 in real-time.
- **Working of NAFIS:**
- It assigns a **unique 10-digit National Fingerprint Number** for each criminal, based on biometrics.
  - The unique ID will be **used for a lifetime of an offender**. Different crimes registered under different FIRs will be logged as incidents belonging to the same National Fingerprint Number.
  - The first **two digits of the ID will be the state code** of the state where the criminal is registered, followed by a sequence number.
  - The state partition will have IDs belonging to a state.
  - Apart from this, a digital record will be added as storage to match the fingerprints in the future.
- With NAFIS, it is possible to locate a person of interest in a matter of minutes and connect that individual's name to any active warrants, warnings, or information about related criminal conduct stored in other police information reference systems.
- It is managed by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** at the Central fingerprint bureau, based in New Delhi.

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### Current Affairs - 09 June 2025

#### INTENSIFYING ANTI-NAXAL DRIVE, SUSTAINING WELFARE FOCUS

- The government has intensified efforts to eliminate Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), aiming to end the decades-long Naxal insurgency by March 31, 2026, as declared by Union Home Minister.
- **Major Gains in Maoist Strongholds**
  - Security forces have made significant advances in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha, particularly in the Bijapur-Sukma-Dantewada tri-junction.
  - The use of forward operating bases, enhanced road connectivity, and targeted operations have been central to the strategy.
- **Surge in Maoist Casualties**
  - In Chhattisgarh alone, 209 Maoists were killed in the first five months of 2025—nearly matching the 219 killed in all of 2024.
  - In contrast, only 53 were killed across India in 2023.
  - The most notable success was the killing of CPI Maoist general secretary Basavaraju in May 2025.
    - Union Home Minister Amit Shah termed this the first time in 30 years that a leader of such high rank has been eliminated in India's fight against Naxalism.
- **Operation Black Forest: Massive Success**
  - Operation Black Forest was launched on April 21. It was a bold and carefully planned three-week joint campaign by the CRPF and Chhattisgarh Police.
  - It successfully dismantled the Maoists' strongest fortress in the Kurragutta hills on the Chhattisgarh-Telangana border.
  - As part of Operation Black Forest:
    - 54 Naxalites were arrested
    - 84 surrendered across Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Maharashtra

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#### Key Factors Behind the Success

- The progress is attributed to:
  - Strong political will
  - Intelligence-led operations
  - Enhanced state-centre coordination
  - Active participation of local units like Chhattisgarh's District Reserve Guards
- **Setbacks and Challenges Remain**
  - Despite gains, ambushes by Maoists in areas like Kolhan (Jharkhand) and Abujhmad (Chhattisgarh) have resulted in casualties among security forces, showing the rebels still retain strike capabilities.
- **The Road Ahead: Security and Development**
  - To fully neutralize LWE, the government must sustain military pressure while also ensuring governance, infrastructure, and welfare outreach in the affected regions.

#### INDIA'S FIRST GENE-EDITED SHEEP THRIVES AT SIX MONTHS

Six months ago, a team led by Professor Riyaz Ahmad Shah at Sher-e-Kashmir University (SKUAST), Srinagar, successfully birthed **India's first gene-edited sheep**—a Kashmir Merino. The breakthrough was kept under wraps until gene sequencing confirmed its success. This milestone marks a major step in India's genetic research, opening doors to transgenic advancements in livestock aimed at improving meat and milk yield, disease resistance, and climate resilience.

#### **Kashmir Merino**

- It is a sheep breed developed in Kashmir Valley, India, known for its fine, high-quality wool and good meat production.
- It is a dual-purpose breed, meaning it's used for both wool and meat, and it is well-suited to the harsh conditions of the Kashmir Valley.

- **Development**

- The breed was evolved around 1960 at Govt. Sheep Breeding and Reserch Farm Reasi (Jammu).
- It was developed through a cross-breeding program that involved native Kashmir sheep breeds like Poonchi, Gaddi, and Bakerwal, and exotic breeds like Australian Merino and Delaine rams.

- **Productivity**

- The breed is 3 to 4 times more productive than local sheep in terms of both wool and meat production, and is comparable to exotic fine wool breeds.

- **Adaptability**

- It is well-adapted to the harsh climatic conditions and diseases of the Kashmir Valley.

### India's First Gene-Edited Sheep: A Landmark Achievement

- Six months after its birth, India's first gene-edited sheep—a Kashmir Merino—is now healthy and thriving, marking a significant breakthrough in livestock biotechnology.
  - Gene editing is a precise technique that allows scientists to modify or alter specific DNA sequences within an organism's genome.
  - It's used to correct genetic defects, improve traits, or enhance disease resistance using tools like CRISPR-Cas9.
- **Targeting the Myostatin Gene for Muscle Growth**
  - The team used **CRISPR-Cas9 genome editing technology** to target the myostatin gene, a known negative regulator of muscle growth.
    - The myostatin gene (MSTN) plays a crucial role in regulating skeletal muscle growth and development in vertebrates.
    - It encodes a protein called myostatin, which acts as a negative regulator, limiting muscle growth.
  - Editing this gene resulted in a 30% increase in muscle mass, offering major potential in boosting meat yield in sheep.

### INDIA'S EV LOCALISATION POLICY: BALANCING IMPORTS AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

- India has taken a bold step to bolster its electric vehicle (EV) sector by unveiling a policy aimed at encouraging domestic manufacturing while permitting limited imports of fully built electric cars at reduced import duties.
- This Scheme to **Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars**, announced by the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI), is part of a broader effort to enhance clean mobility and industrial competitiveness.

#### Key Provisions of the Scheme

- The central feature of the policy is a **sharp reduction in customs duty on completely built units (CBUs) of electric cars, from the current 70-100% to just 15%**.
- This duty cut applies to vehicles priced at or above \$35,000 (approximately Rs. 29.75 lakh) for a five-year period. However, this **benefit is contingent on manufacturers investing a minimum of Rs. 4,150 crore in India over three years**.
- These investments must result in domestic value addition (DVA) of at least 25% within three years, increasing to 50% by the fifth year.
- A maximum of 8,000 vehicles can be imported annually under the concessional duty regime, and the total foregone customs duty is capped at Rs. 6,484 crore.
- MHI estimates that an imported EV under this scheme would incur a landing cost of Rs. 36 lakh, significantly lower than before.

#### Assessing Ecosystem Impact

- The policy aims to strike a balance between short-term affordability for Indian consumers and long-term self-reliance in manufacturing.
- According to FADA data for FY 2025, **EVs made up 7.8% of total vehicle sales, with three-wheelers leading at 57% within their segment**, followed by two-wheelers (6.1%), passenger vehicles (2.6%), and commercial vehicles (0.9%).

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- The **International Energy Agency (IEA)** identified **India** as the **largest global market for electric three-wheelers in 2024**, underscoring the importance of focusing not only on private four-wheelers but also on mass and last-mile mobility.
- Critics, however, caution that the **scheme could dilute India's domestic manufacturing ambitions if foreign firms are not compelled to transfer core technologies**.
  - Countries often resist exporting their technological edge, potentially reducing India to a component assembly hub.
- Another critic emphasized the importance of innovation, R&D, and skilling, elements that powered China and South Korea's emergence as global EV leaders. Without these, India may fail to build a truly indigenous ecosystem.

#### Concerns Over Industrial and Employment Policy

- Indian EV manufacturers, notably **Tata Motors** and **Mahindra**, have expressed reservations about the scheme.
- In December 2023, Tata opposed Tesla's demand for lower import duties, arguing that such a move would disrupt an investment climate based on a stable, protectionist tax regime.
- IEA data revealed that over 80% of electric cars produced in India in 2024 came from local manufacturers, while Chinese imports contributed less than 15% to EV sales, thanks in part to the earlier high-duty barriers and availability of affordable domestic options.
- Analysts argue that the new policy may tilt the scale in favour of foreign capital, thereby impacting domestic players and job creation.
- As EVs typically require fewer moving parts than traditional internal combustion engines, the shift could also mean fewer jobs in traditional manufacturing sectors unless accompanied by new skilling initiatives.
- Furthermore, S&P Global Mobility has pointed out that **India's continued reliance on imported batteries and components, along with the high upfront cost of EVs** (20–30% more than ICE vehicles), remains a barrier to mass adoption and localisation.



### JUDICIAL SENSITIVITY TO SENTIMENTS IS A SIGN OF REGRESSION

- India's constitutional promise of free speech, enshrined in Article 19(1)(a), was never meant to guarantee comfort, it was designed to empower dissent.
- However, in recent times, this cornerstone of democratic liberty is facing a quiet but disturbing erosion.
- Indian courts, once envisioned as protectors of fundamental rights, increasingly resemble custodians of cultural sentiment, preoccupied with civility over constitutionalism.
- Rather than shielding citizens from state overreach, the judiciary has begun managing speech, prioritising national pride and public sensitivity over the robust defence of individual liberty.

### The Distortion of Free Speech Protection by Courts

- **The Shift from Liberty to Licensing**
  - The judiciary's approach has undergone a subtle but significant transformation: from viewing speech as a right to treating it as a privilege granted under behavioural conditions.
  - This change is evident in cases such as the Allahabad High Court's refusal to quash an FIR against a young man who criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- **Outrage as a Legal Standard**
  - An alarming pattern emerging from recent judicial conduct is the validation of public outrage as a legitimate basis for legal action.
  - Courts are increasingly advising apologies for lawful speech, encouraging the idea that offensive or unpopular opinions must be tempered to appease collective sentiment.

### The Rise of Judicial Sentimentalism

- **Indian courts today are inching closer to becoming confessional booths**, where remorse substitutes for rights and apologies are offered not for wrongdoing but for the sake of public decorum.
- This **judicial sentimentalism is deeply corrosive**. It implies that **speech must be sanitised before it can be tolerated**, that public figures and institutions are too sacred to be criticised, and that dissent must dress in politeness to be legitimate.
- But **democracy is not a culture of uniformity; it is a culture of disagreement**.

### The Way Forward: Reclaiming the Spirit of Article 19

- What India needs is **a return to first principles, a robust, principle-centric approach to free speech** that does not cave in to the tyranny of sentiment.
- **Courts must recognise that the test for legality is not the depth of offense but the potential for real harm**.
- **Apologies, if ever necessary, should be voluntary acts of conscience**, not judicial directives masquerading as legal remedies.
- The **doctrine of the chilling effect** well-established in American and European jurisprudence, must find **firmer footing in Indian courts**.

### Conclusion

- **Judges are not the guardians of national emotions**; they are the stewards of constitutional freedoms. By prioritising institutional dignity over individual liberty, **Indian courts are drifting dangerously from their democratic mandate**.
- **Free speech is not a matter of etiquette; it is a matter of right**. And that right must be protected not just in principle but in practice, especially when it is uncomfortable, unpopular, or unsettling.
- In the words of **B.R. Ambedkar**, **the world owes much to rebels who would dare to argue in the face of the pontiff and insist that he is not infallible**.



### DUDHWA TIGER RESERVE



- **Location:** It is located on the Indo-Nepal border in Uttar Pradesh.
- It includes the **Dudhwa National Park**, and two nearby Sanctuaries, viz. **Kishanpur** and **Katerniaghat**,
- **Habitat:** It is a typical **Tarai-Bhabar** habitat of the upper **Gangetic plains** Biogeographic province.
- **Rivers:** The **Sharda River** flows by the Kishanpur WL Sanctuary, the **Geruwa River** flows through the Katerniaghat WL Sanctuary, and the **Suheli** and **Mohana** streams flow in the Dudhwa National Park, all of which are **tributaries** of the mighty **Ghagra River**.
- **Vegetation:** The vegetation is of the **Moist Deciduous** type, containing some of the finest examples of Sal forests (*Shorea robusta*) in India.
- **Flora:** The flora is predominantly Sal Forest along with its associate tree species like *Terminalia alata* (Asna), *Lagerstroemia parviflora* (Asidha), *Mitragyna parviflora* (Faldu), *Gmelina arborea* (Gahmhar), *Holoptelea integrifolia* (Kanju), etc.
- **Fauna:**
  - **Mammals include:** Gular, Tiger, Fishing cat, Monkey, Langur, Mongoose, Small Indian Mongoose, small Indian civet, Jackal, etc.
  - **Birds:** Dabchick, spot billed pelican, Large cormorant, Little cormorant, Grey Heron, White stork, Black stork, White Ibis, etc.
  - **Reptiles include:** Mugger, Gharial, Python, Sandboa, Banded krait, Russel's viper, Rat snake, etc.