

### UGC REFORM DEBATE, FAULTLINES IN POLITICS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Recent debates over proposed reforms to regulations issued by the University Grants Commission (UGC) have expanded beyond administrative concerns into a broader political contest over **caste privilege**, social discrimination, and the meaning of social justice in higher education.

#### Background of the UGC Regulations

- **Purpose of the Reforms**
  - The new UGC regulations were widely perceived as an attempt to address systemic inequalities faced by Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and other vulnerable groups in higher education institutions.
  - The Education Ministry has faced consistent criticism for failing to adequately implement reservation quotas for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and OBCs in central universities and premier institutions.
  - Parliamentary reports reveal that **OBCs constitute less than 3%** of faculty in central universities.
  - Recruitment processes often deploy the ambiguous criterion not found suitable, which disproportionately disadvantages candidates from marginalized communities.
  - Unlike SC/ST groups, OBCs have limited institutional support mechanisms to address caste-based discrimination.
- **Immediate Backlash and Judicial Intervention**
  - Despite being introduced by the Union government, the regulations were met with strong opposition from sections of the social elite.
  - Media narratives and social networks characterised the reforms as **anti-meritocratic** and discriminatory.

## Current Affairs - 04 March 2026

---

- The higher judiciary subsequently placed the policy in abeyance, effectively stalling its implementation.

### The Ruling Party's Political Dilemma

- **Balancing Elite Support and Subaltern Aspirations**
  - The UGC controversy exposes a critical contradiction in the ruling party's political strategy.
  - While inclusive Hindutva seeks to unify diverse caste groups under a broader Hindu identity, caste hierarchies continue to shape social power.
  - When policies threaten **elite dominance**, **resistance** is often framed as a defence of meritocracy or national interest.
  - The ruling party's hesitation to firmly defend the reforms reflects its dependence on upper-caste support.
- **Potential Political Consequences**
  - The perception that marginalised groups are electorally valuable but structurally expendable could generate political disillusionment.
  - If inclusive rhetoric is not matched by **tangible reforms**, DBA communities may reconsider their political alignment.
  - The controversy therefore represents not only a policy setback but also a potential inflection point in India's evolving caste politics.

### Conclusion

- The debate over the UGC regulations is emblematic of India's enduring struggle to reconcile democratic ideals with entrenched social hierarchies.
  - It reveals how higher education remains a **critical site of power** where caste privilege persists despite constitutional commitments to equality.
  - The episode also highlights the **internal tension** within the ruling party's inclusive Hindutva project. Symbolic unity cannot substitute for substantive justice.
-



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition

## Current Affairs - 04 March 2026



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

### DEBRIGARH WILDLIFE SANCTUARY



- It is situated in the Bargarh district of **Odisha**.
- It is located **near Hirakud Dam** (the longest dam in India and the longest earthen dam in the world) on the Mahanadi River.
- It is historically significant as the 19th-century guerrilla base for freedom fighter Veer Surendra Sai. Specifically, the Barapathara area within the sanctuary served as his stronghold against British colonial rule.
- **Vegetation:** Most of the plant sanctuary is covered with **mixed and dry deciduous forest**.

**Flora:** Major trees found here are **Sal, Asana, Bija, Aanla, Dhaura**, etc.

#### **Fauna:**

- **Indian leopards, sloth bears, chousingha** (four-horned antelope), sambar deer, gaurs (Indian bison), wild boars, and Indian wild dogs (dholes) are among the notable animal residents.
- It is one of the **most flocked wintering grounds of migratory birds** that visit the sanctuary from far-off places.
- Some of the most prominent among them are the **crested serpent eagle, Flower Peckers, red-vented bulbul, tree pie, drongo, and white eye oriental**.

#### **Key Facts about Indian Bison:**

- The Indian Bison, also known as **Gaur**, is the **largest species among the wild cattle** and the Bovidae.
- They have **strong and mightily built**, with a **high grey ridge on their forehead between their horns**, which **curve upwards from the sides** of the head.
- **Distribution:** Gaurs are indigenous to the **South and Southeast parts of Asia**.

## Current Affairs - 04 March 2026

---

- **Habitat:**
    - Gaurs are primarily found in evergreen and semi-evergreen forests along with moist deciduous forests with open grasslands.
    - They prefer hilly terrains below an altitude of 1,500-1,800 m with large and undisturbed forest tracts and abundant water.
  - **Conservation Status:**
    - IUCN Red List: **Vulnerable**.
- 

### WHAT IS PORCELAIN?



- It is a type of ceramic material that is highly durable and has high-performance characteristics due to its production process.
  - It is made from a combination of natural materials including kaolin (china clay), feldspar, and quartz.
  - Porcelain was first made in China—in a primitive form during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) and in the form best known in the West during the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368 CE).
- The word porcelain is derived from porcellana, used by Marco Polo to describe the pottery he saw in China.
  - There are three major types of porcelain historically used in dinnerware and decorative pieces: hard paste, soft paste, and bone china.

#### Properties of Porcelain:

- High material density.
  - Smooth, glossy surface, which is particularly translucent and gives porcelain products a refined, elegant character.
  - High resistance to scratches and breakage, making it ideal for everyday use as well as special occasions.
-



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition

## Current Affairs - 04 March 2026



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

### KARBI ANGLONG GINGER



Recently, Assam Agriculture Minister flagged off the first export of GI-tagged Karbi Anglong Ginger to London.

- It is grown as an important cash crop in **Singhasan Hills of Karbi Anglong** district of Assam.
- It is cultivated using the age-old system of **Jhum and Tila** cultivation.

#### **Properties of Karbi Anglong Ginger:**

- It is one of the most aromatic and **flavourful varieties** of ginger in India.
- It is renowned for its bold flavour, rich pungency, and high oil content.
- It is known for its pungent **aroma and medicinal properties**.
- The ginger has a distinct earthy flavour with a hint of spiciness that makes it perfect for cooking.
- It received the **Geographical Indication tag in 2015**.

#### **Key Facts about Geographical Indication tag**

- It is a sign used on products that have a **specific geographical origin** and **possess qualities** or a reputation that are **due to that origin**.
- It is used for **agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks, handicrafts and industrial products**.
- The **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.
- This GI tag is **valid for 10 years** following which it can be renewed.



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition

## Current Affairs - 04 March 2026



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

### TOMAHAWK MISSILE



The United States unleashed an array of weaponry against Iranian targets recently, including Tomahawk cruise missiles, stealth fighters, and for the first time in combat, low-cost one-way attack drones modeled after Iranian designs.

- It is an **American-made long-range subsonic cruise missile** used for **deep land attack warfare**.
- It is **launched from ships or submarines** through a Vertical Launch System.

The Tomahawk was **first conceptualised in the early 1970s** as a **Cold War-era weapon**.

#### Features:

- It can carry a **1,000-pound conventional warhead or cluster munitions**.
- It is powered by a **solid propellant during its launch phase**. Thereafter, it is powered by a **turbofan engine that does not emit much heat**, which makes **infrared detection difficult**.
- They **cruise at subsonic speeds** of 880 kmph and **fly as low** as 30-50 metres to avoid radar detection.
- Tomahawks are **guided by advanced GPS, inertial navigation, and terrain contour mapping**. This makes them highly accurate-with a margin of error of just 10 meters.
- They are built to follow a **non-linear path**, reducing the chance of interception.
- It has a **range** of up to approximately **2,400 km**.

### INDIA METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT (IMD)



An above-normal number of heatwave days are expected over most parts of the country between March and May, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in its monthly forecast.

- Established in 1875, IMD is the National Meteorological Service of the country and the principal government agency in all matters relating to meteorology and allied subjects.
- It functions under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- It is headquartered in Delhi and operates hundreds of observation stations across India and Antarctica.
- There are 6 Regional Meteorological Centres, each under a Deputy Director General, with headquarters at Mumbai, Chennai, New Delhi, Calcutta, Nagpur, and Guwahati.
- **IMD Mandate:**
  - To take meteorological observations and to provide current and forecast meteorological information for weather-sensitive activities like agriculture, shipping, aviation, offshore oil explorations, etc.
  - To warn against severe weather phenomena like tropical cyclones, norwesters, duststorms, heavy rains and snow, cold and heat waves.
  - To provide meteorological statistics required for agriculture, water resource management, industries, oil exploration, and other nation-building activities.
  - To conduct and promote research in meteorology and allied disciplines.
- IMD is also one of the six Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- It is responsible for forecasting, naming, and distributing warnings for tropical cyclones in the Northern Indian Ocean region, including the Straits of Malacca, the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf.



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition

## Current Affairs - 04 March 2026



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

### LCH PRACHAND



- It is an indigenously developed **Light Combat Helicopter (LCH)**.
- It is developed by state-run aerospace major **Hindustan**

**Aeronautics Ltd.**

- It is the only attack helicopter in the world that **can land and take off at an altitude of 5,000 metres (16,400 ft)**.

### Features of LCH Prachand

- It has the best stealth features, armored-shield systems, and **dark-mode attack capability**.
- Its crash-resistant landing gear gives it an added edge for better survivability, among other technologies like radar and IR signature.
- A pressurised cabin offers protection from nuclear, biological, and chemical contingencies.
- It is equipped with a **countermeasure dispensing system** that protects it from enemy radars or infrared seekers of enemy missiles.
- The multi-role attack helicopter has been customised as per the requirements of the Indian armed forces to operate both in desert terrains and high-altitude sectors.

### FOREST OWLET



Recently, in Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh forest owl has been spotted 113 years after it was last seen.

- It is a member of the typical owl family, Strigidae.



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition

## Current Affairs - 04 March 2026

---



CROSS & CLIMB  
MAKING THE ELIGIBLE ENTITLED

**Habitat:** It is mainly found in **tropical and subtropical moist lowland woods**, dense deciduous woodlands, open dry deciduous teak woods and tropical and subtropical dry forests.

**Distribution:**

- It is endemic to the **forests of central India**.
- It was observed in **Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra**, and Gujarat, and at a few locations in the Melghat Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra.

**Features of Forest Owlet:**

- It is a typical owlet with a rather unspotted crown, presence of full throat collar, thickly feathered legs, heavily banded wings, and a tail.
- These **birds are diurnal** and have been observed to hunt during the day.
- They **eat rodents**, reptiles such as lizards and skinks, and insects.

**Conservation Status:**

- **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
  - **CITES:** Appendix I
-