

INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY 2025

THEME: 'YOGA FOR ONE EARTH, ONE HEALTH'

Yoga connects mind, body, and Earth. This year's theme, "Yoga for One Earth, One Health," highlights its role in individual wellness and global sustainability. Mass events, environmental drives, and inclusive sessions mark the celebrations, encouraging people to embrace yoga as a daily habit for a balanced, eco-conscious life.



History of International Yoga Day

Yoga is considered to be an ancient practice that originated 5,000 years ago in India. Yoga was developed as a way to interconnect the mind, body and soul to step closer into enlightenment. As the practice became popular in the west, it became popularized as an exercise and relaxation method, with claims to help the body's general well-being.

The idea of International Yoga Day was first proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 27, 2014, during his speech at the UN General Assembly, where a resolution to establish June 21 as International Yoga Day was introduced by India's Ambassador.

The date of June 21 was chosen as it is the Summer Solstice, the day where there is the most sun out of every other day of the year. Overall, it received support from 177 nations, the highest number of co-sponsors for any UN resolution.

Yoga is a traditional Indian practice that helps people stay balanced, calm, and in shape. Since the United Nations declared June 21 to be International Yoga Day in 2014, people from all over the world have gathered to commemorate this unique day.

One Earth: All living things, including humans, animals, and plants, call our planet home. We must take care of it by coexisting peacefully with the natural world.

One Health: The state of the environment has a direct impact on our health as well. Everyone benefits when we take care of our environment and ourselves.

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BHASHINI PLATFORM



• BHASHINI, or the BHASHa Interface for India, is an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered language translation

platform developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) under its National Language Translation Mission.

- It aims to build a National Public Digital Platform for languages to develop services and products for citizens by leveraging the power of AI and other emerging technologies.
- It aims to help people translate content into various Indian languages.
- BHASHINI also aims to increase the content in Indian languages on the Internet substantially in the domains of public interest, particularly governance and policy, science & technology, etc., thus encouraging citizens to use the Internet in their own language.
- It uses cutting-edge AI and natural language processing (NLP) technologies to bridge the language divide, enabling users to access content and services in their preferred language.
- It is implemented by Digital India BHASHINI Division, a division under Digital India Corporation, a Section 8 Company of the MeitY.
- Bhashini currently supports more than 22 languages, enabling inclusivity for a broad range of linguistic communities.
- Since its launch, it has enabled features like text-to-text translation in 22 languages, automated speech recognition, text-to-speech synthesis, optical character recognition, video translation, document translation, language detection, and voice-based payments, among others.
- Bhashini has an app which can be used by people.

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- It also provides API (application programming interface) integration to startups which want to use Bhashini's language features on their platforms, such as chatbots, etc.
- This online platform also has a separate 'Bhasadaan' section, which allows individuals to contribute to multiple crowdsourcing initiatives.
- The National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) has collaborated with Bhashini to allow users to make conversational payments through UPI in Indian languages.

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2026



- It is published annually by global higher education consultancy Quacquarelli Symonds.
- The QS rankings evaluate universities on several parameters, including academic reputation, overall score, employer reputation, and employment outcomes.
- The 2026 edition evaluated 8467 institutions and featured over 1,500 institutions from more than 100 countries, marking shifts in global higher education performance.
- This year's rankings introduced a new International Student Diversity (ISD) metric as an unweighted indicator.

Highlights of 2026 Rankings:

- The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), United States, holds the top position for the 14th straight year.
- It is followed by Imperial College London and Stanford University, which climbed from sixth to third.
- Other institutions in the top ten include the University of Oxford, Harvard University, the University of Cambridge, ETH Zurich, the National University of Singapore (NUS), University College London (UCL), and Caltech.
- The US remains the most represented country overall, with 192 institutions featured in the list, and most showing improved positions.

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- China continues its strong presence, with **Peking University at 14th** (92.6), and **Tsinghua University rising to 17th** with a score of 91.2. Fudan University, another university from China, climbed nine spots to reach the 30th position, while the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) secured the 32nd rank.
- **India** has achieved an **all-time high in the rankings**, with **54 institutions featured** in the 2026 list-a significant **rise from 46 in 2025** and 45 in 2024.
- With this, **India** has become the **fourth most represented nation** globally, following the **United States, the United Kingdom, and China**.
- **Eight Indian universities** are **new entrants** this year, the **highest from any country**, marking India's position as the fastest-growing G20 nation in the QS rankings, with a remarkable **390% increase in representation over the past decade**.
- Leading the Indian contingent is the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) **Delhi**, which has climbed to the **123rd position** globally, jointly ranked with the Georgia Institute of Technology, USA. This marks the institute's highest-ever rank, up from 197th in 2024 and 150th in 2025.
- **IIT Bombay**, although down from its all-time high of 118 last year, continues to feature in the global top 130, **ranking 129th**
- Meanwhile, **IIT Madras** recorded a remarkable jump of 47 spots to reach **180th**, entering the global top 200 for the first time.
- Nearly half (48%) of India's ranked institutions improved their positions this year.

Top 10 Indian Institutes in QS World University Rankings 2026:

IIT Delhi - Rank 123

IIT Bombay - Rank 129

IIT Madras - Rank 180

IIT Kharagpur - Rank 215

IISc Bangalore - Rank 219

IIT Kanpur - Rank 222

University of Delhi - Rank 328

IIT Guwahati - Rank 334

IIT Roorkee - Rank 339

Anna University - Rank 465.

NAKSHATRA



- It is the state-of-the-art **high-performance computing (HPC)** cluster for **virological research**.
- The NAKSHATRA cluster includes 12 compute nodes, 700 cores, and a total storage **capacity of 1 petabyte**.
- It will support advanced bioinformatics workflows such as next-generation sequencing (NGS), transcriptomics, metagenomics, phylogenetics, and structural bioinformatics.
- It enables enhanced storage and **optimises the pipeline for genomic research**, which ensures better viral genomic surveillance capacity and national preparedness for any future pandemic.
- The facility supports **faster analysis of complex genomic data**, allowing **scientists to detect new disease threats** sooner, respond to outbreaks more efficiently, and accelerate AI-driven vaccine and drug development.
- Developed under the **Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PMABHIM)**, the facility forms the cornerstone of a new project, called the High Performance Computing Next Generation Sequencing Hub.
- The facility will also act as a **central repository for sequencing data** and extend support to Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDLs). Initially, it will cater to five ICMR institutes across the country.

Significance of NAKSHATRA Facility

- Previously sequence analysis using multiple strains which used to take weeks with the upgrade researchers can do the same work in 24 to 48 hours.
- It has increased the capability of our country for genomic surveillance, which will help us in pandemic preparedness.

ENERGY TRANSITION INDEX



- It is released by the **World Economic Forum**.
- A country's final ETI score is a weighted composite of two sub-indices: system performance (60%) and transition readiness (40%).
 - System performance is evenly distributed **across equity, security and sustainability dimensions**, while **transition readiness** is divided into two categories: **core enablers and enabling factors**.
 - **Core enablers** include regulation and political commitment as well as finance and investment, while **enabling factors** encompass innovation, infrastructure and education and human capital.

Key highlights of Energy Transition Index 2025

- The ETI 2025 offers a comparative framework with which to **assess national energy systems** and track energy transition progress.
- **Sweden topped** the list of 118 countries, followed by Finland, Denmark, Norway and Switzerland in the top five.
- China was ranked 12th the US was 17th and Pakistan at 101st place. Congo was ranked lowest.
- India and China experienced the greatest overall improvement among large economies, especially in increasing access to energy and strengthening transition readiness.
- The WEF said the top five largest economies China, the US, EU, Japan and India will ultimately determine the pace and direction of the global energy transition due to their sheer size.
- **India** also made progress in **lowering energy intensity and CH4 emissions**, creating more favourable energy regulations and increasing clean energy investments.

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IMPLICATIONS OF IRAN'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

- The NPT is a global treaty signed in **1968** and entered into force in **1970**, aimed at:
 - Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and technology
 - Promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy
 - Supporting nuclear disarmament
- **Background: Post-World War II Nuclear Concerns**
 - After the atomic bombings in Japan (1945), nations began a nuclear arms race.
 - Alongside, efforts emerged to limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology.
- **Atoms for Peace Initiative (1953)**
 - Launched by U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower
 - Advocated for the peaceful use of nuclear energy
 - Paved the way for the formation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
 - Introduced a **safeguards system** to monitor and verify civilian nuclear activities
- **Safeguards and Verification**
 - Non-nuclear weapon states must submit detailed reports on nuclear activities
 - Allow **IAEA** inspections to prevent diversion of nuclear materials for weapons
 - Part of the “basic bargain”: peaceful nuclear assistance in exchange for oversight
- **Definition of Nuclear States under the NPT**
 - Nuclear states are those that **tested nuclear weapons before January 1, 1967**.
 - This included:
 - United States
 - United Kingdom
 - France
 - Soviet Union (now Russia)
 - China

- **Membership and Non-Signatories**

- 191 countries are parties to the treaty
- Non-signatories include:
 - **India:** Conducted nuclear tests in 1974; opposes the discriminatory nature of the treaty
 - **Pakistan:** Not a signatory
 - **Israel:** Neither confirms nor denies nuclear weapons possession; hasn't signed
 - **North Korea:** Signed in 1985, **withdrew in 2003**, expelled IAEA inspectors

- **Criticism**

- Viewed as discriminatory for legitimizing nuclear weapons only for the P5 (UNSC permanent members).
- The 1967 cut-off date is seen as arbitrary, reinforcing a nuclear hierarchy.

How Can a Country Leave the NPT?

- Under Article 10 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT):
 - A country may withdraw if extraordinary events jeopardize its supreme national interests.
 - It must notify all treaty parties and the UN Security Council three months in advance, citing those events.

Iran's NPT Membership and Recent Developments

- Iran joined the NPT in 1970, prior to its Islamic Revolution (1979).
- For the first time in nearly 20 years, the **IAEA Board of Governors** recently censured Iran, citing:
 - Repeated failure since 2019 to cooperate fully with the agency.
 - Discovery of undeclared nuclear material and activities at multiple sites.

PERIYAR TIGER RESERVE (PTR)



- The PTR, named after the **Periyar River**, is located in the **Idukki district of central Kerala**.
- It is set high at **Cardamom Hills and Pandalam Hills of the Western Ghats**, adjacent to the **border with Tamil Nadu**.
- Established in 1982, it spans approximately 777 sq.km.
- It **surrounds the Periyar Lake**, which was **created in 1895 by building a dam** across the Periyar River (to divert the water to Tamil Nadu for irrigation).
- The terrain is hilly and undulating with a maximum altitude of 2016 m. The **highest peak is Kottamala (2016 m)**.
- **Rivers:** It sets the watershed of two important rivers of Kerala, the **Pamba and the Periyar**.
- **Mullaperiyar Dam** is located within the PTR.
- It is home to many **tribal communities**, including the **Mannans and the Palians**.
- **Vegetation:** It comprises **tropical evergreen forests, semi- evergreen forests, moist deciduous forests, transitional fringe evergreen forests, grasslands, and eucalyptus plantations**.
- **Flora:** Important flora includes **teak, mangoes, rosewood, jamun, jacarandas, terminalias, tamarind, royal ponciana, bamboo, etc.**
- **Fauna:**
 - It includes **Elephants, Wild Pigs, Sambar, Gaur, Mouse Deer, Dole or Barking Deer, Indian Wild Dog, and Tiger**.
 - The **major four species of primates** are also found at Periyar – the **rare lion-tailed macaque, the Nilgiri Langur, Gee's Golden Langur, Common Langur, and Bonnet Macaque**.
 - Over **260 species of birds**, such as the **great hornbill and Malabar grey hornbill**, also inhabit the area.