UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 02-01-2025

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History, Art and Culture

Blood money

• It is also *known as diya*, a part of the legal systems of several Islamic countries.
• **In Sharia law** – The victim's family is entitled to decide how the murderer should be punished.
• The murderer might be forgiven if he/she is repaid with '*diyya*' *(monetary compensation)*.

Glass Bridge in Kanyakumari, Tamilnadu

Tamil Nadu has recently opened an innovative glass bridge spanning the sea, improving access between 2 iconic sites.

• **Connection** – It connects the *Tiruvalluvar Statue with the Vivekananda Rock Memorial* in Kanniyakumari.
• The occasion commemorated the Tiruvalluvar statue's 25th anniversary, underlining its importance in Tamil culture.

Statue of Wisdom

• It is the Tiruvalluvar Statue in Kanyakumari in Tamilnadu
• **Opened in** – *2000*, erected on a rocky island in the sea
• **Height** – It towers at *133 feet*, symbolizing the 133 chapters of the Tirukkural.
• **Importance** – It illustrates the principle of social equality conveyed in the Thirukkural: "Pirapokkum ella uyirkkum" (Everyone is equal at birth).

International Relations and Issues

Optional Practical Training (OPT) programme of U.S.

• It authorises *international students*, who are in the US on an F-1 visa, *to work for up to 12 months in an area* "directly related" to their major area of study.
• Indian students make up the largest international cohort in U.S.
• **Eligibility** - International students who are enrolled full-time for at least 1 academic year in the US can apply for OPT.
• **Pre-completion OPT** - Work before completing their studies, up to 20 hours a week while the academic session is underway, and full-time when the session is not.
• **Post-completion OPT** - Work after completing their studies, at least 20 hours a week or full-time.
• Students who have obtained a degree in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) can extend their post-completion OPT by another 24 months (Total 3 years).

Economy

Non-performing assets (NPAs)

30% jump in gold loan NPAs in April-June on slowing economy, debts.

• NPAs - They are loans or advances that have not been paid back on time, or that have stopped generating income for the lender

• An asset is considered an NPA if the *interest or principal* payment is *overdue for 90 days or more*.

• **Substandard asset** - An asset that has been classified as an NPA for 12 months or less

• **Doubtful asset** - An asset that has remained in the substandard category for 12 months

• **NPA ratio** - It is calculated by dividing the non-performing assets by total loans and multiplying by 100.

Security

Z Plus security

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's wife Gursharan Kaur will continue to be guarded by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) under Z-plus category.

• It is the *highest level of protection* provided to some of the most powerful yet most vulnerable citizens.

• **Protection force** – It includes a *55-person entourage*, of which, usually, 10 personnel are NSG commandos, while the rest may be the civil police.

• **SPG coverage** – These people sometimes also get an additional Special Protection Group covering which usually, the Prime Minister and their family members are provided.

Cyber Volunteer Framework

• **Initiative by** - Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).

• **Objective** – To enable *citizens to enrol as cyber volunteers* for reporting unlawful content, dissemination of cyber hygiene, and as cyber expert to aid law enforcement.

Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

• It is also known as the *Pakistan Taliban*.

• **Alliance of** – Formerly disparate militant groups that came together in 2007 following Pakistan military operations against Al-Qaida-related militants in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

• **Formation** – Under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud.

• **Regions** – It is rooted along the *Afghanistan/Pakistan border*.

Science

Willow

• It is a *quantum processor.*

• **Launched by** – *Google*.

• **Features** – The coherence time of data qubits on Willow is about 100 microseconds, which is more than the coherence time of the physical qubits.

• **Advantages** – It has significantly better error correction and is significantly faster than other quantum computers.

Chemicals in Flame Retarding Plastics

• **Decabromodiphenyl ether (decaBDE)** - It is used in many products, including electronics, furniture, and textiles.

• It is known to be hazardous and persistent in the environment.

• **2,4,6-Tribromophenol** - It is in black plastic and it is associated with *thyroid disruption in humans* and mice and has been detected in serum, breast milk, and placenta.



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