UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 05-03-2026

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Social Issues

Delhi Pink Saheli Smart Card 2026

• **Launch by –** Delhi Government.
• **Objective –** To make free and unlimited bus travel for women and transgender residents of Delhi, ensuring safety, convenience, and financial relief.
• **Features –**
- Digital smart card with photo, QR code, and secure details.
- Unlimited free rides on DTC and Cluster buses.
- Can be topped up for Delhi Metro use.
- Promotes independence, safety, and eco-friendly transport.
• **Eligibility –**
- Delhi residents (women or transgender individuals).
- Age 5 years and above.
• **Benefits –**
- Saves Rs.1,200–Rs.2,400 monthly travel costs.
- Encourages equality and inclusion of transgender community.
- Supports green initiatives by reducing traffic and pollution.

Economy

New National Accounts Data

The government updated India's GDP and GVA base year.
• **New base year for GDP & GVA –** 2022-2023
• **Methodological Improvements –**
- **Double-deflator approach** – To account for inflation in intermediate goods and final products separately.
- **Balanced allocation –** Allocate multi-sector company output proportionately to improve sectoral accuracy.
• **New Data Sources -**
- These advancements are supported by *Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE), the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), and GST data.*
- Improved estimation for *agriculture and informal sectors.*

Environment

Nilgiri Tahr Conservation Centre

• It acts as dedicated *hub for research, monitoring, and documentation* of Nilgiri tahr populations across Tamil Nadu.
• **Located at –** Coimbatore (between Semmozhi Poonga and Periyar Arivulagam).
• **Objectives –** To supports Project Nilgiri Tahr (launched in 2023) for conservation of the State animal.
- To promotes evidence-based conservation planning and ecological stewardship.
• **Coordinates with –** 14 Nilgiri tahr-holding forest divisions across Tamil Nadu.
• **Significance –** Tamil Nadu recorded 1,303 Nilgiri Tahrs in its second synchronised survey.

Idukki Hydroelectric Project at 50 years

• **Location –** Across the *Periyar river, between Kuravan and Kurathi hills*, Idukki district.
• **Components –**
  - Idukki Arch Dam (169 m, among Asia's tallest).
  - Cheruthoni Gravity Dam.
  - Kulamavu Dam.
• **Reservoir –** Spans ~60 sq. km.
• **Construction –** Began 1963, with *Canadian assistance (Colombo Plan).*
• **Commissioned in –** 1976, by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
• **Power Generation**
  - **Underground powerhouse –** *Moolamattom*, one of India's largest *underground hydropower stations.*
• **Significance –** Kerala's largest hydropower installation; cornerstone of the state's energy system.

CREA report on Bokaro Steel Plant

• **Health & Environmental Findings**
  - Child health impacts annually linked to emissions:
    ■ 273 low birthweight births.
    ■ 284 preterm births.
    ■ 25 new child asthma cases.
• **Mortality –** 148 deaths from PM2.5 exposure.
• **Regulatory Gap**
  - Steel plants are classified among *17 highly polluting industries by the Central Pollution Control Board.*
  - No national standards for sulphur dioxide (SO_2) emissions from steel plants.
  - Expansion plans raise concerns about public health risks and weak regulatory oversight.

Bokaro Steel Plant

• **Located in –** Bokaro Steel City, Jharkhand, India
• **Operated by –** Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).
• **Production –** 5.25 million tonnes of steel annually.
• **Employment –** 50,000+ people.
• **Expansion –** Plans to expand to 7.55 million tonnes per annum.
• **Significance –** It is part of India's national target, 300 million tonnes steel output by 2030.

Global Pesticide Toxicity (TAT)

• **Top contributors to TAT –** China, Brazil, U.S., and India together ~70%.
• **Study scope –** 2013–2019, 600+ pesticides across 65 countries.
• **Trend –** Applied toxicity increased, especially for 20 widely used agricultural pesticides.
• **Most affected species –** Terrestrial arthropods, soil organisms, fish.
• **UN Target –** To reduce pesticide risk by 50% by 2030.
  - Only *Chile* is on track.

India's Situation

• **Rise in toxicity –** India among worst performers; high use on fruits, vegetables, rice, maize, soybean.
• **Legal framework**
• **Current law –** Insecticides Act, 1968 — outdated, limited to agricultural use.
  - India still uses 66 pesticides banned elsewhere (e.g., paraquat banned in Europe).
• **New Bill –** Pesticides Management Bill, 2025.
  - **Aim –** To reduce risks, promote biological/traditional knowledge-based pesticides.

Science

India's Childhood Obesity

• **Global Rank –** 2nd (after China) for children with high BMI.
• **Children Affected (2025) –**
  - **5–9 years –** 14.92 million overweight/obese.
  - **10–19 years –** 26.4 million overweight/obese.
• **Growth Rate –** ~5% annual increase in overweight/obese children
• **Global Context –** 1 in 5 (20.7%) children aged 5–19 is overweight/obese worldwide — a 14.6% rise since 2010.

World Obesity Federation's Recommendations

• **School & Community Interventions**
  - **Healthier school food environments –** Ensure nutritious meals, reduce processed/sugary options.
  - **Marketing restrictions –** Limit advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages to children.
• **Fiscal & Regulatory Measures**
  - **Sugar-sweetened beverage taxes –** Discourage consumption, generate revenue for health programs.
• **Health System Strengthening**
  - **Early screening in primary health care –** Detect overweight/obesity risks in children early, integrate into routine check-ups.

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