UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 08-01-2026

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History, Art and Culture

Ecologist Madhav Gadgil

• Madhav Dhananjaya Gadgil (1942–2026) was a distinguished Indian ecologist, academic, and environmental activist.
• He is widely recognized as the *'father of modern Indian ecology.'*
• **Contribution –**
- He served as chairman of the *Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP)*, constituted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests in 2010, which is popularly known as Madhav Gadgil Committee.
- The panel's 2011 report — widely known as the *"Gadgil Report".*
- He pioneered the concept of *People's Biodiversity Registers.*
- Key architect of India's *Biological Diversity Act, 2002.*
- Founder of the *Centre for Ecological Sciences* at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, established in 1983.
- **Philosophy –** A *"bottom-up" model* of environmental governance.
• **Awards & recognition -**
- Padma Shri in 1981 and the Padma Bhushan in 2006.
- *Tyler Prize* for Environmental Achievement in 2015 and the *Volvo Environment Prize.*
- In 2024, the United Nations's *Annual Champions of the Earth award*, the UN's highest environmental honour, for his seminal work in the Western Ghats.
• **Literary works –** This Fissured Land (co-authored with Ramachandra Guha), Ecology and Equity, and his autobiography A Walk Up the Hill, etc.

Book and Audio Formats -Awazon ke Jugnu

• The publication traces the *journeys of 31 individuals* associated with *All India Radio, FM channels, the voice-over industry, broadcasting, and the tradition of stage poetry.*
• **Launched by –** *Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)*, an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Culture.
• **Objective –** To document and preserve some of India's most celebrated voices through recorded interviews and authentic publications.

Book Launch "Sing, Dance and Lead: Leadership Lessons from the Life of Srila Prabhupada"

• **Held at –** Vice-President's Enclave, New Delhi.
• **Authored by –** Hindol Sengupta.

Keonthal Royal Palace

A massive fire engulfed the historic Junga Palace.

• This 200-year-old palace served as the residence of the former Keonthal princely state.
• **Located in –** Junga, Himachal Pradesh, approximately 26 kilometers from Shimla.
• **Constructed in –** The 1800s by the rulers of Keonthal.
  - It forms an integral part of India's princely state heritage.
• **Historical Context**
  - The princely states were integrated into the Indian Union in 1950.
  - The palace's architecture exemplifies a blend of *Himalayan and colonial styles.*
  - It stands as a symbol of pre-independence feudal power structures.

Polity & Governance

India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management (IICDEM)-2026

• **Hosted by –** Election Commission of India (ECI).
• **Organised by –** India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) under the aegis of ECI.
• **Participants –** It will be attended by nearly 100 international delegates representing Election Management Bodies (EMBs) from across the world.
• **Objectives –**
  - To serve as a global platform for international cooperation among Election Management Bodies.
  - To enable the development of a shared understanding of contemporary challenges, exchange of best practices and innovations, and co-creation of solutions.

Economy

Silver Prices Surge

Silver prices increased to ₹2,46,889 per kilogram in January 2026, compared to ₹85,913 per kilogram in January 2025.

• **Primary Factors Influencing Price Movement -**
  - **Monetary Policy –** Reductions in Federal Reserve interest rates contributed to increased demand for commodities.
  - **Manufacturing Demand –** Growth in sectors such as batteries, solar panels, semiconductors, and industrial metals increased silver consumption.
  - **ETF Flows –** The creation of new exchange-traded fund (ETF) units was followed by mutual funds purchasing physical silver.
  - **Geopolitical Factors –** The imposition of United States tariffs and ongoing supply chain disruptions affected silver markets.
• **India's Role in the Silver Market -**
  - India is a major importer of silver, with domestic prices trading at a 12 to 13 % premium over global prices.
  - Supply shortages in London have contributed to increases in local silver prices.

Agriculture

9th Edition of Indusfood 2026

• It is an India's flagship global food and beverage (F&B) sourcing exhibition.
• **Organised by –** Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI).
• **Aim –** To further consolidate India's position as a trusted and competitive partner in global food supply chains.
• **Key highlight –**
- **Launch of India–UAE Food Corridor by Abu Dhabi Food Hub –** To enhance food security, streamlining supply chains and accelerating bilateral food trade flows.
- **APEDA's 'Bharati Initiative' –** To showcase innovative Indian agri-food start-ups to global buyers through Shark Tank–style pitch sessions.

Environment

CSIR's Technology Transfer Ceremony titled "From Farm Residue to Road: Bio-Bitumen via Pyrolysis,".

• India has become the *1st country globally to commercially produce Bio-Bitumen,* a development that is expected to significantly impact the nation's road infrastructure.
• **Significance –**
- Bio-bitumen is a transformative step towards the vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047.*
- By utilising agro-waste, it reduces pollution caused by crop burning and strengthens the *circular economy.*
- With *15% blending*, India can save nearly *Rs.4,500 crore in foreign exchange* and substantially reduce its dependence on imported crude oil.

Security

Ships of the 1st Training Squadron (1TS)

• **INS Tir, Shardul, Sujata and ICGS Sarathi** — will be proceeding on a *Long-Range Training Deployment (LRTD)* to South East Asia.
• **LRTD Part of –** A training curriculum of the *110th Integrated Officers' Training Course (IOTC).*
• **Scheduled to –** Undertake port calls at *Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand.*
• **Aim –** To provide comprehensive operational and cross-cultural exposure to officer trainees.
• **Significance –** It reinforces India's sustained maritime engagement with South East Asian nations.
• It aligns with India's Act East Policy and vision for a free, open and inclusive Indian Ocean Region.

Science

Public Healthcare

India crosses a historic milestone 50,000 NQAS Certifications.
• **National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) –** A comprehensive quality framework established by the *Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).*
• **Coverage –** It includes 48,663 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (SHC, PHC, UPHC) and 1,710 secondary care facilities (CHC, SDH, DH), underscoring the institutionalisation of quality across all levels of public healthcare.
• **Methods of implementation –** It reflects the adoption of *multi-pronged acceleration strategies*, including continuous capacity building, digital innovations, substantial increase in pool of assessors, and continuous quality improvement mechanisms.
• **Significance –** This achievement embodies the spirit of *Aatmanirbhar Bharat* and the guiding principles of *"Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayaas",* reaffirming that quality healthcare is central to India's development.



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