# UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 16-02-2026

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| **History, Art and Culture** |
| **Vande Mataram** |
| *The Union government directed that Vande Mataram be played or sung before Jana Gana Mana at events.* |

## Setting the tone

Key guidelines for singing and playing the National Song

■ *Vande Mataram* should be sung or played before the National Anthem when both are performed at an event

■ The audience must stand at attention when the official version, around 3 minutes 10 seconds long, is sung or played

■ Standing is not required if it is played as part of a newsreel or documentary



**Proud moment:** A tableau celebrating 150 years of *Vande Mataram* during the Republic Day Parade. PTI

■ The official version shall be accompanied by mass singing during unfurling of the National Flag, cultural occasions, or ceremonial functions other than parades

**Geography**

## Pennaiyar River System

*The Supreme Court directed the union government to constitute within 1 month a tribunal to resolve the disputes.*

• It is also known as *South Pennar River, Dakshina Pinakini (Kannada), Thenpennai / Ponnaiyar / Pennaiyar (Tamil).*
• **Originated in –** Nandi Hills, Chikkaballapura district, Karnataka.
• **Course –** Flows ~80 km south through Karnataka, enters Tamil Nadu, then southeast to the Bay of Bengal at Cuddalore.
• **Length –** 497 km and second longest river in Tamil Nadu.
• **Basin –** 2$^{nd}$ largest interstate east-flowing basin, between Pennar and Cauvery basins.
• **Tributaries –** Chinnar, Markanda, Vaniar, Pamban.
• **Floods –** Heavy rains at source cause sudden, short-lived floods.
• **Usage –** Heavily dammed for irrigation in Tamil Nadu; major reservoirs at *Krishnagiri and Sathanur.*
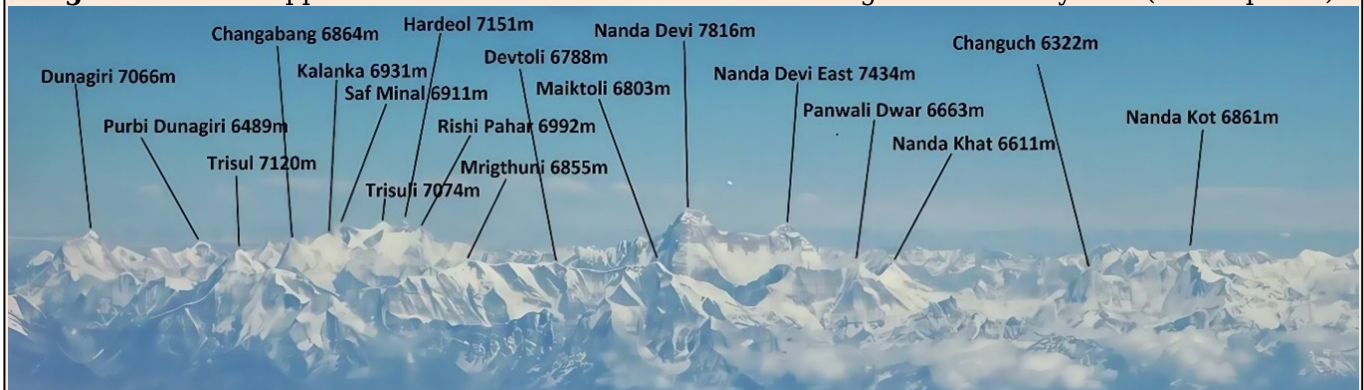
## Legal Framework

• **Governing law –** Inter-State River Waters Disputes Act (ISRWD), 1956.
• **Constitutional basis –** Article 262 of the Indian Constitution.
• It addresses disputes over the waters of inter-state rivers and river valleys.
• Parliament holds the authority to enact laws for adjudication of such disputes.
• The President has the power to refer matters either to the courts or to a tribunal.

## Uttarakhand - Himalayan Peaks Tourism

*Uttarakhand opened 83 Himalayan peaks, for mountaineering expeditions.*

• **Altitude range –** 5,700 m – 7,756 m.
• **Prominent peaks –** Mount Kamet (7,756 m), Nanda Devi East, Chaukhamba, Trishul, Shivling, Satopanth, Changabang, Panchachuli, Neelkanth.
• **Objective –** To promote adventure tourism, create local jobs, encourage youth mountaineering, balance development with conservation.
• **Fee waiver (Indians) –** No charges for peak, camping, or environmental fees.
• **Foreign mountaineers –** State-level fees removed; only IMF fees apply.
• **Digital access –** Applications via Uttarakhand Mountaineering Permission System (online portal).



**Social Issues**

## NAMASTE Scheme Data

- **Released by –** Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- **Scheme –** NAMASTE (National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem).
- **Profiling –** 1.52 lakh waste-pickers validated across 35 States/UTs.
- **Social Category Distribution –**
  - SC – 60.3% (92,089)
  - OBC – 13.7% (20,954)
  - ST – 10.5% (16,047)
  - General – 10.7% (16,329)
  - Note – Delhi & Goa show majority in General category.
- **Gender Profile –**
  - Women – 48.7%
  - Men – 51.3%
  - Transgender – 0.007%
- **Objectives –**
  - Formal recognition of waste-pickers & sanitation workers.
  - Provision of protective equipment.
  - Elimination of deaths from hazardous cleaning.
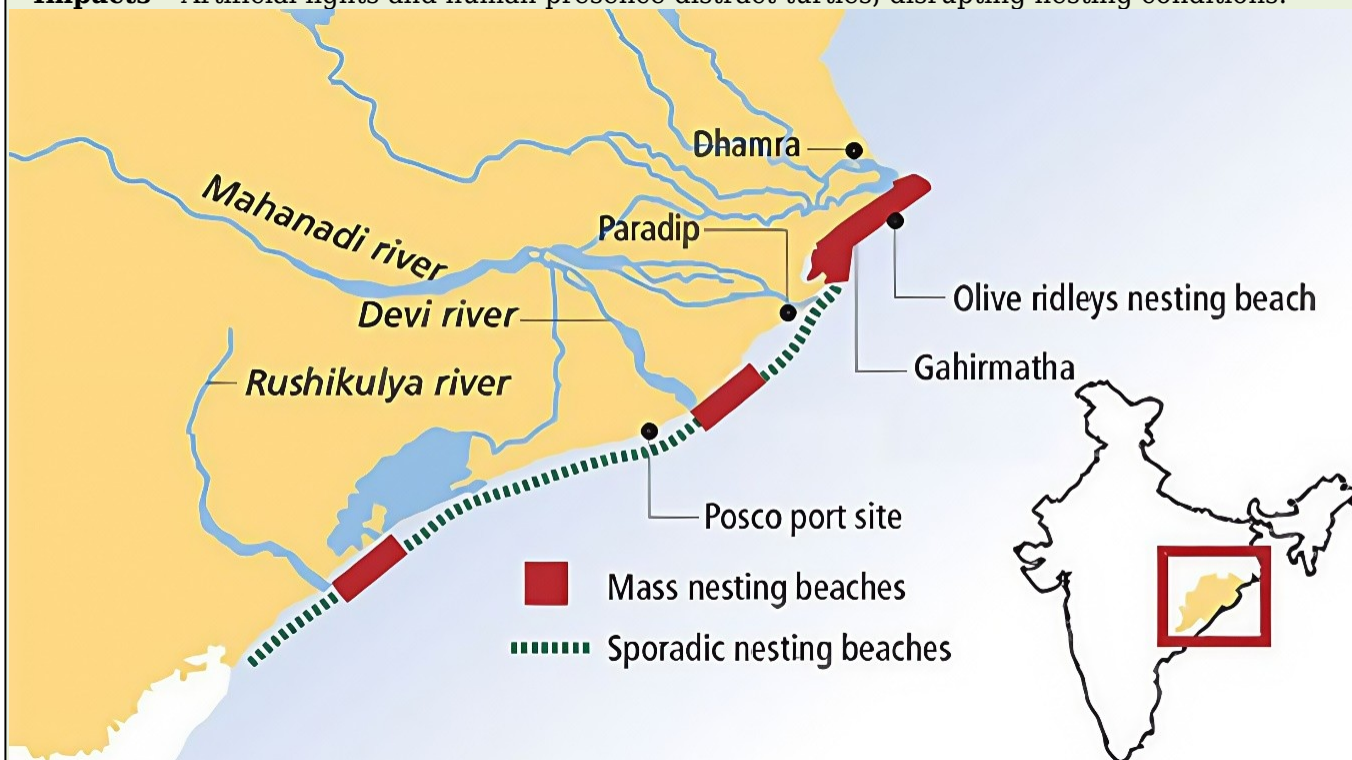
## International Relations and Issues

### Arctic Sentry

- **Launched by –** NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization).
- **Objective –** To strengthen security in the Arctic region.
- **Context –** Announced after the Greenland claims issue involving the U.S.
- **Nature –** Builds on existing alliance members' activities in the Arctic.
- **Significance –**
  - Underscores the Arctic's rising strategic importance.
  - Responds to concerns over territorial claims and military activity.
  - Reinforces NATO's operational presence in high-latitude environments.

## Environment

## Turtle Trails

- **Proposal –** "Turtle Trails" announced in Union Budget for coastal areas of _Odisha, Karnataka, and Kerala._
- **Species Focus –** Endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles.
- **Phenomenon –** Rare mass nesting ("arribada"), seen in India, Costa Rica, and a few other regions.
- **Key Odisha sites –** Gahirmatha (Kendrapara district) and Rushikulya mouth (Ganjam district).
- **Conservationist concerns –**
  - Mass nesting zones should remain undisturbed, free from human activity and artificial light.
  - Ecotourism risks harming ecosystems (e.g., Chilika Lake dolphins).
  - Announcement lacked expert consultation.
  - Priority should be conservation, not tourism.
- **Impacts –** Artificial lights and human presence distract turtles, disrupting nesting conditions.



**Security**

## Decline in LWE-Affected Districts

- **Key metrics (Significant reduction in 7 Years) -**
- **LWE-affected districts –** 126 (2018) → 8 (December 2025) = _93.6% reduction._
- **Civilian deaths –** 1,005 (2010) → 100 (2025) = _90% drop._
- _88% reduction_ in LWE violence from peak of 1,936 (2010).

**Science**

## India's 1ˢᵗ "Musical Path"

_India's first "musical path" introduced on Mumbai's Coastal Road; rumble strips play "Jai Ho" when vehicles drive at a set speed._

- **Location –** Dharamveer Swarajya Rakshak Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj Coastal Road, Mumbai.
- **Innovation –** 1ˢᵗ in India, 5ᵗʰ globally.
- **Mechanism –** Specially designed rumble strips embedded in the northbound carriageway.
- **Experience –** At 60–80 kmph, friction produces sound waves forming the tune.
- **Technology origin –** Adapted from Hungarian innovation.
- **Global precedent –** Similar paths exist in Hungary, Japan, South Korea, and UAE.
- **Safety alerts –** Signboards placed 500m, 100m, and 60m before the stretch.
- **Future plans –** Maharashtra government suggested "Sangeet Marg" expansion; and proposed a pilot on Samruddhi Expressway.

**Bodhan AI for Education**

- **Launch at –** Bharat Bodhan AI Conclave.
- **Vision –** Embed AI in education to empower students and support teachers.
- **Structure –** Non-profit organization under the Education Ministry.
- **Core Project –** To develop an open-source Bharat EduAI Stack.
- **Goal –** To integrate AI across all levels of education.
- **Objectives of EduAI Stack:**
  - To ensure equity in education.
  - To deliver high-quality learning.
  - To make education affordable.
  - To improve accessibility.
  - To serve as digital public infrastructure.