UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 19-09-2026

One-liners 19-09-2026

Polity & Governance

Passport Rules for Children Below 15 Years

Passports for children below 15 years valid for 5 years or till they turn 18: MEA amends rules.

• **Passports (Amendment) Rules, 2026** – Passports issued to children below 15 years will now be valid for five years from the date of issue or until they turn 18, whichever comes earlier.

• The rules also revise the fee structure for fresh and reissued passports.

• **Validity –** Ordinary passports (36 pages) issued to children under 15 years are valid for 5 years or until the minor reaches 18 years of age.

• Removing the older rule where validity expired strictly when the child turned 15.

• **Form Instructions** – Minors under 15 must leave the "Validity Required" section blank on their application.

• **Age Discount** – Children below 8 years of age are eligible for a 10% discount on fresh passport application fees.

Tulu – Karnataka's 2nd administrative language

Karnataka announced that Tulu would be made the state's second additional administrative language in Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts.

• **Tulu** – It belongs to the Dravidian family of languages.
• **Primarily spoken** – Concentrated in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Kasaragod in north Kerala, bordering Karnataka.
• Those speaking Tulu call their region as Tulu Nadu.
• The language sounds somewhat similar to Kannada and Malayalam, yet it holds a distinct identity.
• **Historical background** – It has a history of more than 2,000 years; some scholars have concluded that Tulu evolved as a distinct language around the 8th century BCE.
• **Ancient text Mentions** – In Tamil Sangam literature (2nd century CE) & in the Greek papyrus "Charition" (2nd century BCE), where characters from Karnataka's western coast speak Tulu.
• **Script** – Tulu had its own script, used in works from the 15th–18th centuries, whereas, the contemporary Tulu literature continues to be written in Kannada script.
• **Independent language** – The Registrar General and Census Commissioner has always treated Tulu as an independent language & Tulu speakers as a separate linguistic community in census reports.

Tulu, a non-scheduled language of India, not yet included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

International Relations

Sohar Port

Oman's Sohar Port is actively positioning itself as a gateway for Indian businesses in the Gulf.

• **SOHAR Port & Freezone** – It is a major deep-sea port and industrial hub.
• **Location** – On the northern coast of the Sultanate of Oman, situated outside the Strait of Hormuz between Dubai and Muscat.
• It is one of the fastest-growing ports globally, offering a variety of value-added services.
• Operational since 2004, the port is a 21 million sqm deep-sea hub comprising three established major clusters of logistics, petrochemicals and metals.
• More recently, the port added a food cluster, which includes Oman's first-ever terminal dedicated to the handling of agricultural products.
• Sohar Port's proximity to the UAE and a plan to create a green corridor with the UAE's Jebel Ali Port will enable quicker customs clearance for Indian goods to reach Jebel Ali from Sohar.
• **Other key ports in Oman** – Salalah & Duqm.
• **GCC** – A regional alliance in West Asia comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
• **Alternate ports** – Since the crisis in West Asia started, shipping lines had started calling at ports east of the Strait of Hormuz, such as Salalah, Khorfakkan, Sohar, and Jeddah.

75 Years of Diplomatic Relations - India Japan

2027 is the 75th anniversary year of diplomatic relations between India and Japan.

• **2027** – Designated as the 'India-Japan Year of Shared Horizons', commemorates the formal establishment of their diplomatic ties back in 1952.

• **Week of April 28, 2027** – Designated as the "India–Japan Week".

• **Partnership evolution** – India-Japan relations were elevated to Global Partnership in 2000, Strategic and Global Partnership in 2006, and Special Strategic and Global Partnership in 2014.

• A curtain-raiser friendship cricket match is scheduled in Sano City alongside the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games 2026.

Key Thematic Initiatives

• **IMAGE-75** – A dedicated partnership focusing on manga, anime, and gaming to foster digital and creative co-creation among the youth.

• **SPORT-75 & Cricket Kizuna-75** – Sports exchange initiatives where Indian cricket coaches will visit Japan to host boot camps for young Japanese players.

• Additionally, an India-Japan Sports Week featuring an Ekiden (relay running) race will take place in Delhi-NCR in February 2027.

• **RASA-75 (Rang, Sur, and Sakura)** – A year-long arts and culture journey highlighting the combined traditions, music, and performing arts of both nations.

• **Business Connect-75** – Designed to link Indian industrial clusters directly with Japanese regional banks and enterprise clients via roadshows and business roundtables.

• **MIRAI-VIGYAN-75** – Celebrating long-standing science and technology collaboration, including academic forums and joint space efforts like the LUPEX (Lunar Polar Exploration) Mission.

• **Buddhist Pilgrimage Initiative** – Japan-led spiritual tours targeting important Buddhist tourist networks across India.

US's major drug transit list – FY2027

FY2027 list of major drug transit: US names India, China, Pakistan among major drug transit, illicit drug-producing countries.

• **Total countries listed (23)** – Includes India, China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, among others.
• **Special mention** – Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, and Colombia were separately identified as having "failed demonstrably" to meet international counternarcotics obligations.
• India, China, and Pakistan were not placed in this category.
• **India's Position** – The US welcomed the Indian government's efforts to tackle illicit opium poppy cultivation & strengthen supply-chain integrity & looks forward to continued cooperation with India through the US-India Drug Policy Framework.
• India's inclusion on the list is therefore accompanied by a specific acknowledgement of ongoing cooperation on counternarcotics issues.
• **China's Position** – Identified as the world's largest producer of precursor chemicals used in illicit synthetic drugs like fentanyl and methamphetamine.
• **Pakistan's Position** – Identified as a major drug transit or illicit drug-producing country.
• Unlike Afghanistan or Colombia, Pakistan was not designated as having "failed demonstrably."

Environment

1st Soil Carbon Credit Payments for Farmers

Recently, India makes first soil carbon payments to farmers in Punjab and Haryana.

• **Soil carbon credits** – These are tradable certificates earned by farmers and landowners who use regenerative practices to pull and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere into the soil.

• One credit equals one metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent removed or reduced.

• **Linked with** – The payments are linked to the 'Aadi' farmer carbon programme, launched by Grow Indigo in 2019 with technical guidance from ICAR.

• **Coverage** – Over 2 million acres and 100,000 farmers across 7 states.

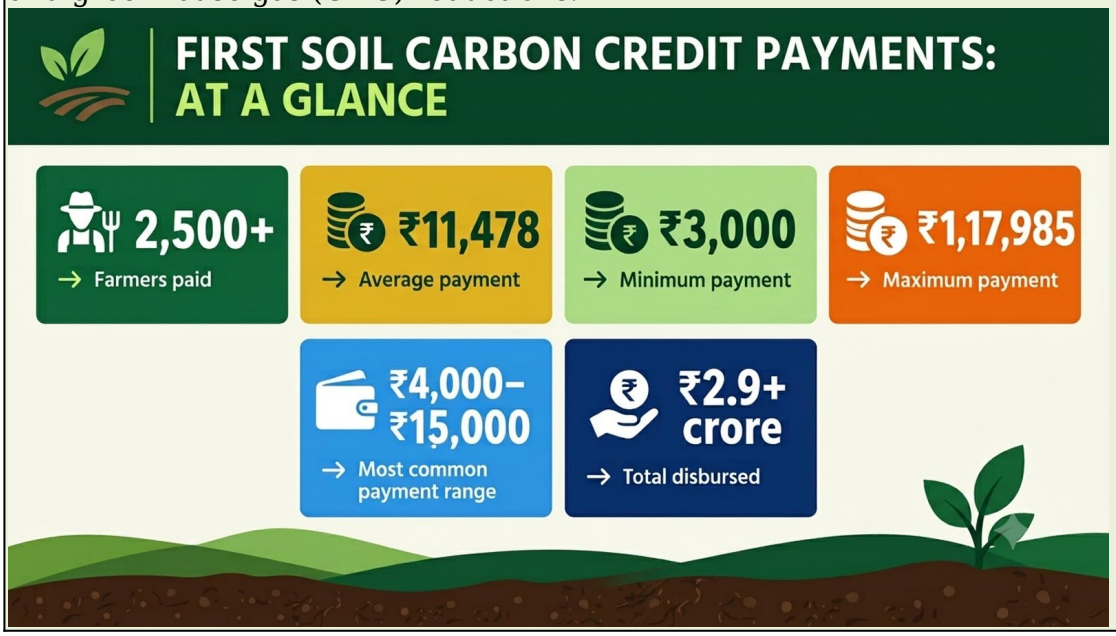
• **Payments** – More than 2,500 smallholder farmers in Punjab and Haryana receive over Rs. 2.9 crore released via DBT.

• **Carbon Credits** – The agricultural carbon credits are issued under the Verra VM0042 methodology.

• **Focused regenerative practices** – No-till or reduced tillage, cover cropping, direct seeded rice (DSR), crop residue management, water conservation and farming practices.

• **Farmers' earnings** – Received between Rs.3,000 and Rs.15,000 each.

• **Significance** – This is the first time that Indian smallholders have been financially rewarded via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for verified soil organic carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions.



Sal trees & Sal borer outbreak

Permission granted to cut more than 156,000 sal trees affected by the sal borer insect in Madhya Pradesh.

• **Sal Trees** – The Sal tree (Shorea robusta), also locally known as Sakhua or Saal.
• It is one of the most ecologically, culturally, and economically significant native trees of the Indian subcontinent.
• **Distribution** – Revered as the "Sentinel of the Forest," it dominates the tropical moist and dry deciduous forest landscapes across northern, central, and eastern India, Nepal, and Bangladesh.
• **Sal borer insect** – Sal borer (Hoplocerambyx spinicornis) is a dark brown, longhorned beetle about the size of a human finger.
• It is considered the single biggest threat to forestry (sal trees) in India.
• **Sal borer outbreak** – Affected regions include the Dindori and Anuppur (Amarkantak) districts of Madhya Pradesh.
• An infestation is classified as an epidemic when affected trees exceed 1% of the total forest stand. The larvae hollow out trunks, causing massive tree die-offs.

World Bamboo Day 2026

• It is observed globally on September 18.
• **Objective** – To raise awareness about the sustainable, economic, and ecological value of bamboo.
• **Official Theme** – "Bamboo Beyond Borders" (with variations emphasising regenerative futures and landscape restoration)
• **Promoted by** – World Bamboo Organisation (WBO).
• It was formally declared at the 8th World Bamboo Congress in Bangkok in 2009.

India's initiatives

• **Nagaland** – The Nagaland Bamboo Development Agency observed the day by introducing "The Green Gold Barn"—a facility designed to blend traditional bamboo usage with modern innovation.
• **Maharashtra** – The Bamboo Research and Training Centre (BRTC) in Chichpalli hosted a comprehensive World Bamboo Week 2026 featuring student competitions and modern technology showcases.

Technology

‘One Tag’ FASTag

Road Transport and Highways Minister launched the ‘One Tag’ facility for FASTag portability.

• **‘OneTag’** – A new NETC (National Electronic Toll Collection) FASTag portability solution.
• **It** will allow users to switch their FASTag issuer bank while retaining the same physical tag affixed to their vehicle, eliminating the need for a replacement.
• **Development** – Joint initiative of Indian Highways Management Company Ltd (IHMCL) and NPCI.
• **Availability –** Through the NHAI’s Rajmarg Yatra app.
• **Function** – It works like mobile number portability — lets users change their FASTag issuer bank while keeping the same tag, ID, and vehicle registration.
• A fresh KYC is required for OneTag while switching the issuer bank.
• The existing FASTag ID remains unchanged, ensuring seamless continued use.
• FASTag penetration - With over 98% penetration and around 13 crore users, FASTag has transformed toll payments on national highways.

Species

Ariosoma cmfriense

New eel species described from the Arabian Sea, named after the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

• **Ariosoma cmfriense** – A new species of conger eel, named after the institute to mark its 80th anniversary year.

• **Location** – From the deep waters off Kollam in Kerala at a depth of about 300 m in the Arabian Sea.

• **Distinct species** – Identified based on a combination of morphological characteristics and molecular evidence.

• It was distinguished from the 12 currently recognised Ariosoma species reported from Indian and neighbouring waters through detailed taxonomic examination.

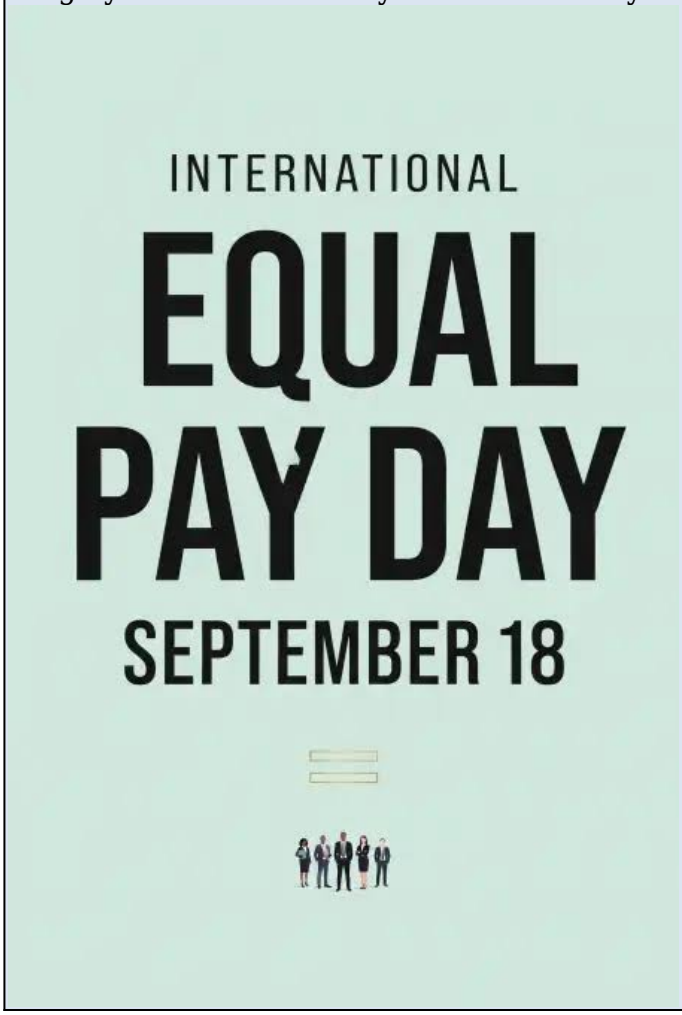
• **Features** – Comparatively low total vertebral count of 135, 127–130 lateral-line pores, a preanal length of nearly half the total length, two supraorbital pores and a dorsal fin origin just ahead of the pectoral fin base.

• The fish also has a plain pectoral fin, a dark patch over the operculum and fine black speckling below the lateral line, a feature not observed in the other related species.

Miscellaneous

International Equal Pay Day 2026

• It was observed on September 18.
• **Coordinated by** – United Nations, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and UN Women.
• **Focus** – Dismantling gender-based wage discrimination and achieving equal remuneration for work of equal value.
• **Theme for 2026** – "Equal Pay for work of equal value — For everyone, everywhere".
• Equal pay for work of equal value – It is a fundamental principle and right at work, enshrined in ILO Equal Remuneration Convention No. 100.
• **Global Deficit** – Globally, women still earn roughly 18% to 20% less than men.
• According to data highlighted by UN Women, this figure translates to women earning roughly 77 cents for every dollar earned by men.



SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering