UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 21-04-2025

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Geography

Vizhinjam Seaport Inauguration

PM Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Vizhinjam International Seaport in Kerala on May 2, 2025.

• **India's First Deep-Water Transshipment Hub** – This marks a significant advancement as India's first semi-automated, truly deep-water international container transshipment port.

• **Public-Private Partnership** – The project is a collaborative effort involving the Kerala government, the Centre, and Adani Ports through a Public–Private Partnership (PPP).

• **Strategic Trade Location** – Its proximity to major international shipping lanes is expected to significantly boost India's trade and establish Kerala as a key maritime center.

• **Key Project Benefits** – The port will reduce transit times, accommodate large vessels, enhance regional trade with Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, and generate economic growth and jobs for Kerala.

• **Adani Group's Extensive Port Operations** – Adani Ports operates extensively on both the east and west coasts of India and manages international ports in Israel, Tanzania, and Sri Lanka, handling a substantial portion of India's port traffic.

Dal Lake

Recently, tourists shikara overturned in Srinagar's Dal Lake due to strong winds, causing four people (a tourist family and a boatman) to fall into the water.

• **Location and Setting** – Dal Lake is a mid–altitude urban lake situated in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, surrounded by the Pir Panjal mountains.

• **Tourism Significance** – Integral to Kashmir's tourism and recreation, it's known as the "Jewel in the crown of Kashmir" or "Srinagar's Jewel" and also as the "Lake of Flowers."

• **Shoreline Features** – Its 15.5 km shoreline is lined with Mughal gardens, parks, houseboats, and hotels.

• **Size and Depth** – The lake covers 18 sq. km and is part of a larger 21.1 sq. km wetland with floating gardens ("Raad") that bloom with lotuses in July–August; its average depth is about 5 ft, with a maximum of 20 ft.

• **Basins and Islands** – The wetland is divided into four basins: Gagribal, Lokut Dal, Bod Dal, and Nagin (sometimes considered separate); Lokut–dal and Bod–dal have central islands called Rup Lank (Char Chinari) and Sona Lank.

• **Floating Market Attraction** – Dal Lake is also famous for its floating market where vendors sell goods from their shikaras to tourists.

Polity & Governance

National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO)

Recently, NOTTO is urging states and UTs to implement swap organ transplantation.

• **NOTTO's Role** – NOTTO is the national apex body for organ procurement and distribution in India.

• **Removal of Age Cap** –The previous upper age limit of 65 for organ transplant registration has been eliminated due to increased life expectancy.

• **No Domicile Restriction** – The requirement for organ recipients to register in their state of domicile has been removed under a 'One Nation, One Policy' initiative, allowing registration in any state.

• **No Registration Fees** – The central government has directed states to cease charging registration fees for organ transplantation.

Kerala Pioneers Online Permanent Lok Adalat Services

Kerala has become the first state in India to launch online Permanent Lok Adalat (PLA) services.

• **Established Under Law** – PLAs are organized under Section 22–B of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

• **Civil Court Powers** – Permanent Lok Adalats possess the same powers as a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.

• **Mandatory Pre–Litigation** – They serve as a compulsory mechanism for conciliation and settlement of disputes related to Public Utility Services (e.g., transport, postal, telegraph) before litigation.

• **Binding Judgments** – The judgments issued by Permanent Lok Adalats are final and legally binding on all involved parties.

• **Jurisdictional Limit** – The jurisdiction of Permanent Lok Adalats extends to cases with a value of up to Rs. 1 Crore.

Justice Joseph Committee

Tamil Nadu recently formed a high–level committee, to study the constitutional and legal provisions that impact Centre–state relations

• **Committee** – The *three–member committee* headed by former Supreme Court *judge Kurian Joseph*.

• **Objectives –** To recommend ways for "*maximum state autonomy*" without harming national unity and to address governance challenges and restore State List subjects.

• To suggest ways to restore subjects transferred from State list to the Concurrent one and look at measures needed to address the challenges states face in delivering good governance.

• **Significance** – The recent Supreme Court judgement that laid down timelines for governors and the president on granting assent to bills has reinforced the primacy of the role of elected state governments in framing laws and curtailed the discretion of nominal heads.

• **Historical Precedents –** It mirrors the Rajamannar Committee formed in 1969 to make recommendation on Centre – State Relations.

Environment

Telangana Declares Heatwaves as Disasters

Recently, Telangana government has officially recognized heatwaves and sunstroke as state–specific disasters.

• **Enhanced Climate Resilience** – This declaration aims to bolster the state's resilience to climate change impacts and safeguard vulnerable populations.
• **Financial Relief Measures** – The new classification enables the Telangana government to provide financial assistance to families affected by heat–related incidents.
• **Pioneering State Initiative** – Telangana is among the first states in India to independently classify heatwaves as disasters.
• **National Classification Difference** – This move contrasts with the Union government's current stance of not including heatwaves in the national disaster list.
• **IMD's Heatwave Definition** – According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), heatwaves occur when maximum temperatures reach at least 40°C or are 5–6°C above normal, with severe heatwaves exceeding 7°C above normal or temperatures surpassing 45°C.

New Beetle Species Discovered

Recently, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) scientists have identified a new beetle species, Clinidium lalitae, discovered in the Talle Valley Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh.

• **Honoring Dr. Lalita Ray Chaudhury** – The beetle is named in tribute to the late Dr. Lalita Ray Chaudhury, a respected coleopterologist and former ZSI scientist.
• **Characteristics of Clinidium lalitae** – This newly found ground beetle possesses a unique morphology and inhabits forest floors, playing a vital role in nutrient cycling and maintaining soil health.
• **Location –** Talle Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.
• Situated in Arunachal Pradesh's Lower Subansiri district, the sanctuary spans 337 sq.km at elevations between 1,200 and 3,000 meters.
• **Biodiversity Hotspot** – Talle Valley Wildlife Sanctuary harbors 20% of India's floral and faunal species and is traversed by rivers like Pange and Subansiri. It is also home to the Apatani tribe.
• **Rich Flora and Fauna** – The sanctuary boasts subtropical and alpine forests with diverse flora, including unique bamboo (Pleioblastus simone) and medicinal plants. Fauna includes elephants, leopards, giant squirrels, and clouded leopards.

Security

Operation ATALANTA

Recently, European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) under Operation ATALANTA has suggested a joint maritime exercise with the Indian Navy.

• **Timing and Location** –The proposed naval drill is expected to take place around the end of May 2025 in the Western Indian Ocean and Red Sea region.
• **Goal of Enhanced Cooperation** –The primary aim is to improve coordination and maritime cooperation between European and Indian naval forces, especially concerning piracy and regional instability.
• **Advanced Drill Scope** –The exercise, if approved, will go beyond standard PASSEX and include advanced tactical maneuvers, counter–piracy operations, and inter–naval communications training.
• **Context of Piracy Resurgence** – Renewed piracy threats near the Horn of Africa, coupled with Houthi activity in the Red Sea, necessitate stronger maritime coordination.
• **About Operation ATALANTA** – Launched in 2008, it is the EU's counter–piracy mission in the Western Indian Ocean and Red Sea with an expanded mandate including protecting WFP vessels, enforcing the Somalia arms embargo, and combating various illegal maritime activities.

Science

Flue Gas Desulphurisation

A study commissioned by the Principal Scientific Adviser suggests the Union Environment Ministry should reverse its 2015 policy mandating FGD installation in all coal–fired plants.

• **Flue Gas Desulphurisation (FGD)** – FGD is a process used in fossil–fuel power plants to remove sulfur compounds, particularly sulfur dioxide (SO2), from exhaust emissions using absorbents.

• **Wet Process Dominance** –The wet process, often using lime or limestone slurry in a scrubber tower, is the primary FGD method for large power plants, achieving up to 95% SO2 removal.

• **Why FGD is Necessary** –Burning fossil fuels releases sulfur into the atmosphere as sulfur dioxide (SO2), a major air pollutant.

• **Environmental Impacts of SO2** – SO2 contributes to acid rain, harming forests, water bodies, soils, and aquatic life, and also causes corrosion and weathering.

• **Importance of SO2 Removal** – Removing sulfur dioxide is crucial for creating a safe and clean environment by limiting toxic emissions.

Miscellaneous

Create in India Challenge

Recently, the Create in India Challenge (CIC) Season 1, is gearing up for a spectacular finale at the Jio World Centre, Mumbai, from 1st to 4th May 2025.

• It is a specially curated platform featuring innovation across animation, comics, AI, XR, gaming, music, and more.

• **Umbrella initiative** – World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES).

• **Features** – It has received a nearly 1 lakh registrations, including over 1,100 international participants.

• The winners of these challenges will be conferred the prestigious 'WAVES Creator Awards'.

• **Significance** – It has emerged as a powerful expression of India's creative ambition, unlocking new opportunities for talent and reaffirming the nation's rising leadership in the global media and entertainment landscape.

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