UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 23-07-2026

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History, Art and Culture

Kharchi Puja

• **Kharchi Puja** is a major festival of ***Tripura***.
• It is observed after the Ama Pechi (Ambu Bachi) period, believed to represent the menstruation of Mother Earth.
• The *festival marks the ritual purification of Mother Earth*, during which ploughing, digging, and certain auspicious activities are avoided.
• The 7-day festival includes the worship of 14 Tripuri dynasty deities by the hereditary Chantai royal priest.
• Though rooted in tribal traditions, both tribal and non-tribal communities participate in the celebrations.

Social Issues

Hunger in India

• India has *reduced its undernourished population by 42% over the last two decades,* outpacing global trends in its battle against hunger.
• According to the United Nations State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2026 (SOFI) report, the share of undernourished Indians plummeted from 21.1% in 2004–06 to 9.8% in 2023–25.
• **India faces a dual challenge** –
  - Massive absolute number of people still facing hunger
  - Skyrocketing costs for nutritious food.

Core challenges –
• Over 142 million people remain undernourished.
• More than a third of the population—520.1 million people (35.5%)—cannot regularly afford a nutritionally adequate diet.
• The cost of a healthy diet in India increased by more than a 3 times over six years.
• Within South Asia, the cost of a healthy diet in India was the lowest among all countries except Pakistan.
• This *SOFI report is published jointly by 5 specialized United Nations agencies* –
  - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
  - International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
  - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
  - World Food Programme (WFP).
  - World Health Organization (WHO).

Polity & Governance

Tamil Nadu tops in Female-LFPR (Labour Force Participation Rate)

• *Tamil Nadu accounts for 40% of all women directly employed in Indian factories*, establishing an unmatched lead in replicating China's industrial model.
• The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) reported that Coimbatore (41.3%) and Madurai (37%) rank among the top 3 Indian cities in female-LFPR.
  - Both cities significantly *exceed the urban India average of 27.7%.*
• Maharashtra and Karnataka saw declines in the share of women they employ in the manufacture of computers, electronics and optical products.
• Tamil Nadu's strategy mirrors China's large-scale manufacturing success through several key elements
  - Massive Industrial Hubs
  - Safe worker housing, hostels
  - The state's share of women in computer, electronic, and optical manufacturing jumped from 20% to 43% within a decade.

The Labour Force Participation Rate refers to the percentage of people either already employed or looking for work.
• **Structural challenges for f-LFPR** –
  - Heavy reliance on short-term contracts making hiring and firing easier.
  - Wage inequalities and persistent gender pay gaps.
  - High concentration in shop-floor roles with limited upward mobility to managerial positions.

Anurag Jain – NITI Aayog CEO

• The Union Government appointed senior IAS officer Anurag Jain as the CEO of NITI Aayog.
• The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), according to an official order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).
• NITI Aayog serves as the Government of India's premier public policy think tank, driving national development priorities.

International Relations and Issues

BRICS Health Ministers meeting

• **Venue** – Chandigarh
• **Chaired by –** Union Health and Family Welfare Minister**.**
• **Objective** – To deepen cooperation on health security, digital health, pandemic preparedness and equitable access to quality healthcare.
• **Theme** – "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability.
• **Focus on** –
  - Commitment to preventive healthcare.
  - Establishing a BRICS Training Hub Network and Centres of Excellence, with NIMHANS (Bengaluru) serving as a key institutional contributor.

BRICS Network University Meet

• Union Ministry of Education recently held virtually the International Governing Board (IGB) meeting of the BRICS Network University (BRICS NU).
• **Focused on** –
  - Integrating Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems into higher education.
  - To bring together member nations to discuss academic collaboration.
• **Theme –** "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
• **Highlights** –
  - Discussions focused on the ethical documentation and AI-driven sharing of indigenous knowledge.
  - The alliance reviewed the 2025–2028 Action Plan and approved a new official BRICS NU website.
  - The meeting concluded with the *formal adoption of the IGB Declaration*.

Economy

Vanadium Redox Flow Battery (VRFB) project

• India's first utility-scale flow battery project.
• It is being developed by Delectrik Systems and Bondada Engineering for NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd.
• This non-lithium system will be 100% designed and manufactured in India.
• **Location** – Khavda Solar Park, Gujarat.
• **Capacity** – *100 MWh*
• **Deployment year** – 2027.
• Unlike traditional lithium-ion batteries, *flow batteries store energy in liquid electrolytes contained in external tanks*.
  - This technology is ideal for long-duration energy storage (LDES) and stabilizing the power grid.

India's Installed Wind Power Capacity in 2026

• India's installed wind power capacity reached *57,443 MW as of June 30, 2026.*
• Wind energy production also rose to 106.7 billion units in FY 2025-26.
• *India ranks 4th globally in installed wind power capacity (after China, the US, and Germany).*
• The government has established targets of 100 GW of wind energy by 2030 and 156 GW by 2036.

India's Renewable Energy Capacity

• India's installed renewable energy capacity has surged nearly fourfold from 76.38 GW in 2014 to 288.58 GW as of June 30, 2026.
• Total *non-fossil fuel capacity*, including nuclear, stands at 297.36 GW.
  - **Renewable energy** – 288.58 GW (comprising solar, wind, biomass, and hydro power).
  - **Nuclear power** – 8.78 GW.
• Breakdown of renewable energy –
  - Solar power – Leads the mix at 162.15 GW.
  - Wind power – Reached 57.44 GW.
  - Hydropower – Stands at 57.24 GW.

Environment

India's First AI-Powered Bird Sanctuary

Mumbai is set to host an artificial intelligence-assisted bird park.

• India's first AI-powered bird sanctuary is being developed at the Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary (TCFS) in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

• It spans a 20-hectare eco-nature park and *will use AI-enabled cameras and sensors* across a 1.5 km radius for –

- Real-time automated tracking.
- Species identification.
- Migration monitoring.

• TCFS is a *recognized Ramsar Site* and a crucial stop on the Central Asian Flyway.

- It supports nearly 250 native and migratory bird species, including thousands of pink flamingos.

• *Tourism infrastructure* (including multi-story observation towers, and nature trails) *is strictly limited to 0.35 hectares* of the 20-hectare park to ensure minimal ecological disturbance.

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