

UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 26-09-2026

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History, Art and Culture

Mizoram's First 'Pluck & Pay' Festival

Mizoram has launched its first '**Pluck & Pay**' festival in **Khawzawl district**.

- **Concept** - Visitors can **harvest farm produce themselves and pay farmers directly**.
- It connects **agriculture, horticulture, tourism, local food and community enterprises**.
- Aims to provide visitors with an authentic **rural and farm experience**.
- **Rural Livelihoods** - The initiative seeks to ensure tourism benefits local communities by creating economic opportunities for:
 - Farmers
 - Homestays
 - Local guides
 - Transport operators
 - Artisans
 - Other community-based enterprises
- **Cultural Attractions** - Along with farm visits, the festival features:
 - Traditional **Mizo music and dance**
 - Local cuisine
 - Handicrafts
 - Cultural performances
 - Traditional recreational games
 - Visits to historical and tourist sites
- **Tourism Growth in Mizoram** - Tourist arrivals increased from **4,27,302 in 2024 to 8,41,322 in 2025**.
- The initiative aims to channel this growing tourist base towards **rural and community-based tourism**.
- Other festivals - **Anthurium Festival, Hnahsin Kût, Travel Fest, Leitlangpui Music Festival, Winter Festival, Tlaizawng Paradise Festival, Sakawrhmutuai Sunset Event.**



International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

The International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons is observed annually on September 26.

- **Objective** - To raise public awareness about the threat of nuclear arms and advocate for global disarmament.
- **Origin** - Established in December 2013 by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 68/32.
- **Current Context** - Approximately 12,187 nuclear weapons remain globally, with a high-level UN General Assembly plenary meeting scheduled for September 29, 2026, in New York.
- **Civil Society Action** - The Nuclear Abolition Day Appeal—endorsed by thousands of organizations worldwide—calls for ending the arms race and achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2045.



Economy

Gulbarga Tur Dal

GI-Tagged Gulbarga Tur Dal Exported to Maldives from Karnataka

- **Export Initiative** - APEDA facilitated the export of 1 MT of GI-tagged Gulbarga Tur Dal from Karnataka to the Maldives.
- The consignment was exported by M/s Silken Global Exports and Imports, Mysuru.
- It will be transported to the Maldives by sea.
- **FPO-Led Export** - The export was carried out through an FPO-led brand.
- It aims to strengthen the participation of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in international agricultural value chains.
- It also connects Indian farmers directly with international markets.
- **Better Price Realisation for Farmers** - Farmers can receive around ₹82/kg, compared with the prevailing market price of ₹60/kg.
- Thus, export-oriented value chains can improve farmers' income and value realisation.
- **GI-Tagged Agricultural Products** - The initiative seeks to expand international markets for India's GI-tagged agricultural products.
- Gulbarga Tur Dal represents the geographical identity and distinctive agricultural heritage of the Gulbarga region of Karnataka.
- **Expected Impact** - The export is expected to facilitate regular shipments of Gulbarga Tur Dal to the Maldives.
- It can create sustained market opportunities for:
 - Karnataka's farmers
 - FPOs
 - Agricultural exporters
 - It promotes greater integration of farmers and FPOs into export-oriented value chains.

Government of India
Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Department of Commerce

**APEDA Facilitates
Export of GI-Tagged
Gulbarga Tur Dal to Maldives**

1 MT consignment exported from Karnataka

₹82/kg farmer realisation through export-linked channel

More than 30% higher than prevailing market price of ₹60/kg

FPOs connect producers with international markets

Cool Leaders' Initiative

The Cool Leaders Award was launched on 17 September 2026.

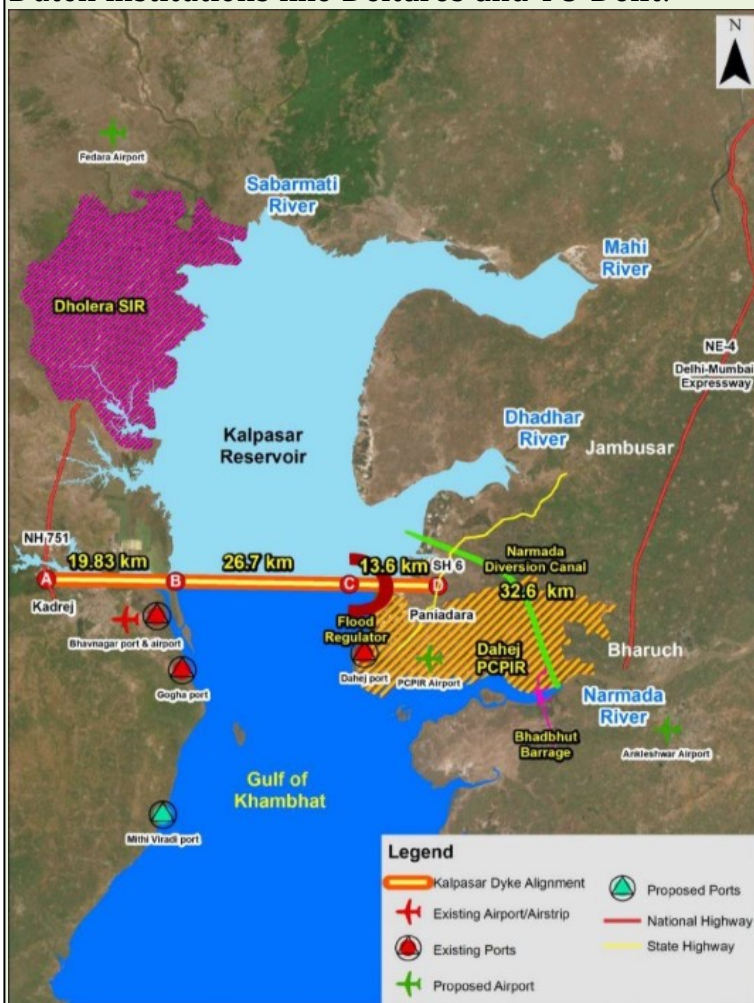
- **Launched by** - The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- The initiative addresses extreme heat, one of the fastest-growing climate risks globally.
- It was announced at the Global Cooling Pledge Assembly 2026 in Singapore.
- **Major Measures Announced**
- **Global Heat Resilience Roadmap** - to accelerate action against extreme heat.
- **Nature for Cooling Challenge** - to promote nature-based solutions for urban cooling.
- **Cool Leaders Awards** - to recognise leadership in sustainable cooling and heat resilience.
- **First Cool Leaders - 2026**
- **Singapore** - Leadership in passive cooling and heat resilience
- **UAE** - Leadership in district cooling and advancing cooling in global climate and development policy
- **Dong Mingzhu** - Chairperson of Gree Electric Appliances; recognised for ultra-efficient, low-carbon cooling technologies, including the Zero Carbon Source air-conditioning system.



The Kalpasar Project

India and Netherlands sign two MoUs to advance Kalpasar water project.

- It is officially known as the **Gulf of Khambhat Development Project**.
- It is a massive planned multipurpose undertaking in Gujarat, India, designed to construct a **~60 km dam-cum-dyke** across the Gulf of Khambhat to create one of the world's largest coastal freshwater reservoirs.
- **Freshwater Storage** - Envisions trapping runoff from the Sabarmati, Mahi, and Dhadhar rivers (supplemented by the Narmada River) to create a reservoir holding roughly 7,800 to 8,000 million cubic metres of freshwater.
- **Irrigation & Drinking Water** - Aims to irrigate over 1 million hectares of agricultural land and alleviate severe water scarcity in the Saurashtra region.
- **Infrastructure & Transport** - Proposes a highway-cum-rail corridor across the top of the barrier to drastically cut travel distance between Saurashtra and South Gujarat (such as between Bhavnagar and Bharuch).
- **Renewable Energy** - Includes plans for around 2,470 MW of hybrid renewable energy capacity on reclaimed land.
- **Indo-Dutch Collaboration** - Building on technical cooperation discussions, India and the Netherlands signed tripartite MoUs in September 2026 at the 9th India International Water Week involving the Central Water Commission, Gujarat's Kalpasar Department, and Dutch institutions like Deltares and TU Delft.



Health

World Lung Day 2026

The World Lung Day 2026 campaign was observed on September 25, 2026.

- **Official theme** – “A Lifetime of Lung Health.”
- **Overview and Significance**
- **Organizer** – Initiated and coordinated by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS).
- **Core Message** – Protecting and promoting healthy lungs at every stage of life, from rapid lung development before birth and in childhood through adulthood and older age.
- **Key Goals** – Encouraging the prevention of respiratory diseases, early diagnosis and treatment, cleaner air, and equitable access to quality lung care.
- **Major Threats Highlighted**
- **Tobacco and Nicotine** – Smoking cigarettes, bidis, and using alternatives like hookah cause long-term damage.
- **Air Pollution** – Outdoor smog and indoor poor ventilation pose chronic risks.
- **Infections and Exposures** – Pneumonia, tuberculosis, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and occupational hazards strain global health.

World **25 Sept**
Lung Day

World Lung Day (WLD) is a dedicated global awareness and action towards better lung health observed on **September 25th**, every year, globally to celebrate the most recent achievements in lung health.



Project Suncatcher

Project Suncatcher is a long-term Google research initiative exploring whether scalable artificial intelligence (AI) computing infrastructure can be operated in space using solar-powered satellite constellations.

- **Core Concept & Objectives**

- **Orbital Data Centers** - Envisions clusters of small, modular satellites in low-Earth orbit (LEO) carrying Google Tensor Processing Units (TPUs).

- **Solar Efficiency** - Accesses near-constant sunlight in orbit, generating up to eight times more solar power than identical panels on Earth without atmospheric interference or night cycles.

- **Resource Relief** - Aims to decouple intense AI compute growth from terrestrial constraints like local power grid limits, land scarcity, and high water consumption used for data center cooling.

- **Inter-Satellite Links** - Connects the satellite clusters using high-bandwidth, free-space optical (laser) communication to handle distributed machine learning workloads.

GOOGLE TAKES AI COMPUTE TO SPACE

First satellite launch aims to test
AI data centers in orbit

Google plans to launch its first satellite next week under Project Suncatcher. The MVP satellite will carry Google TPU chips and use solar power to process simple Gemini queries in orbit. The company says it has tested the chips for radiation and space cooling, with two more satellites planned for 2027.



DRDO-Start-up Agreement on Quantum Cryogenics

DRDO has signed its first high-value deep-tech project agreement with a start-up under the Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme.

- **Partner** – Zero mK India Private Limited, Alwar, Rajasthan.
- Agreement signed in New Delhi on 24 September 2026.
- It is the first high-value agreement under the ₹500 crore corpus approved for deep-tech and cutting-edge projects.
- **Project** – 20 mK Dilution Refrigerator
 - The project aims to indigenously develop a 20 millikelvin (20 mK) Dilution Refrigerator.
 - A dilution refrigerator is a specialised cryogenic system used to achieve extremely low temperatures in the millikelvin range.
 - Such ultra-low temperatures are essential for the operation and testing of several quantum computing platforms and quantum technologies.
- **Link with National Quantum Mission** – The project supports the objectives of the National Quantum Mission (NQM).
 - It will strengthen India's capabilities in:
 - Quantum technology
 - Advanced cryogenics
 - Strategic and deep technologies
- **Strategic Significance** – Reduces dependence on imported cryogenic infrastructure.
- Promotes development of indigenous quantum technology capabilities.
- Strengthens India's self-reliant and quantum-ready ecosystem.
- Creates a model for future DRDO-industry/start-up collaboration in emerging technologies



Index

Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI)

Recently, Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2026 was released.

- **Released by** - World Economic Forum
- **India's rank** - 31st globally out of 110 economies in the with a score of 4.42 out of 7.
- **Key Highlights**
 - **Improvement** - India climbed nine places from its recalculated 2024 rank.
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 - **Top Global Rankings** - Japan took the top spot globally, followed by the United States, Spain, Australia, and France.
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 - **Strengths** - India benefits from a highly cost-competitive travel environment, rich cultural and natural resources, and a high number of UNESCO World Heritage cultural sites.
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 - **Challenges** - The World Economic Forum noted ongoing gaps in environmental sustainability, general infrastructure, tourist services, and workforce skills.



**International tourism
holds steady with 0.4%
growth in first half of 2026
as Middle East conflict and
rising costs weigh**

20th Asian Games (Aichi-Nagoya 2026)

The 20th Asian Games (Aichi-Nagoya 2026) officially began with a grand opening.

- **Dates** - September 19 - October 4, 2026 (early events from September 10)
- **Location** - Aichi Prefecture and Nagoya, Japan, with select events elsewhere
- **Motto & Mascot** - "One Asia, One Heart" features HONOHON, inspired by the Shachi Hoko deity.
- **Participation & Sports** - 45 nations and territories competing across 43 sports and 469 events, introducing disciplines like virtual taekwondo and mixed martial arts.
- **Key Event Facts**
- **Edition & Hosting** - The 20th edition marks Japan's third time hosting the Games.
- **Indian Contingent** - Comprises 503 athletes (269 men, 234 women) alongside support staff and officials, with the largest squad participating in athletics.

