

UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 29-12-2025

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Polity & Governance

Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS)

- **PM VIKAS** - It is a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- **Converged 5 erstwhile schemes** - Such as 'Seekho Aur Kamao', 'Nai Manzil', 'Nai Roshni' and 'USTTAD' & 'Hamari Dharohar' schemes.
- **Aim** - To focus on upliftment of 6 notified minority communities through the following:
 - Skilling and Training (Non-traditional and traditional).
 - Women Leadership and Entrepreneurship.
 - Education (through National Institute of Open Schooling).
 - Infrastructure Development (through Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram).
- To provide comprehensive support to artisans, promoting sustainable livelihoods and cultural identity.

Project Implementing Agency (PIA) of PM VIKAS Scheme

- NIFTEM Kundli is one of the few *Institutes of National Importance (INI)* selected as PIA for the scheme.
- **MoU signed between** - National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) Kundli and Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- **Aim** - To develop the capacity of youth from minority communities through targeted interventions by providing skill training support in need-based courses and ensuring employment /livelihood opportunities for them.

NIFTEM Kundli Project

- **Training categories** - A total of 2110 beneficiaries from the minority community under 3 categories -

- Multi Skill Technician (Food Processing),

- Millet Products Processor and

- Assistant Baking Technician across 7 locations in four states of Jharkhand, Bihar, Punjab and Haryana.

- **Training programme and courses** -

- NSQF (National Skills Qualification Framework) compliant skill training to the beneficiaries through NCVET (National Council of Vocational Education and Training) approved courses.

- It will facilitate placement of eligible skilled beneficiaries in some form of employment (wage employment, self-employment, or apprenticeship), including opportunities in the organized sector.

- **Certification** - All beneficiaries will receive certification from institutions approved by MSDE (Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship) /NCVET.

- The program is likely to be rolled out in January 2026.

5th National Conference of Chief Secretaries

- It serves as the forum where Centre and States collaborate, designing a unified roadmap to maximise India's Human Capital potential and accelerate inclusive, future-ready growth.

- **Headed by** - Prime Minister.

- **Held in** - New Delhi.

- **Theme** - Human Capital for Viksit Bharat.

- **Objective** - To strengthen Centre-State partnership through structured and sustained dialogue on national development priorities.

- **Key areas for discussion** - It include early childhood education, schooling, skilling, higher education, sports & extracurricular activities.

- **Special sessions on** - Deregulation in States; Technology in Governance; AgriStack; One State, One World Class Tourist Destination; Atmanirbhar Bharat & Swadeshi and Plans for a Post-LWE Future

Economy

New BIS Standard for Incense Sticks

- **IS 19412:2025 - Incense Sticks (Agarbatti)** - Released by Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, on the occasion of National Consumer Day 2025 at New Delhi.

- **Developed by** - Fragrance and Flavour Sectional Committee (PCD 18) of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

- **3 Standard classification** -

- Machine-made,

- Hand-made, and

- Traditional masala agarbattis, and prescribes requirements for raw materials, burning quality, fragrance performance, and chemical parameters, ensuring safer products and consistent quality for consumers.

- **Newly notified standard** -

- It specifies prohibited use of certain insecticidal chemicals and synthetic fragrance substances in agarbattis that may pose risks to human health, indoor air quality and the environment.

- To address these issues, IS 19412:2025 specifies a list of substances prohibited for use in agarbattis.

- This includes certain insecticidal chemicals such as alethrin, permethrin, cypermethrin, deltamethrin, and fipronil, as well as synthetic fragrance intermediates like benzyl cyanide, ethyl acrylate, and diphenylamine.

- Many of these substances are restricted or banned internationally due to their potential impact on human health, indoor air quality, and ecological safety.

- **Objective** - To improve consumer safety, indoor air quality, environmental sustainability and regulatory compliance along with global restrictions on certain fragrance compounds and chemicals globally.

Incense sticks

- It is popularly known as agarbattis.

- **Integral part of** - India's cultural and religious practices and are widely used in households, places of worship, meditation centres and wellness spaces.

- **Demand** - With rising global interest in yoga, meditation, aromatherapy and holistic well-being, demand for incense products has increased significantly in both domestic and international markets.

- India is the world's largest producer and exporter of agarbattis, with the industry estimated at around Rs.8,000 crore annually and exports of about Rs.1,200 crore to more than 150 countries.

- **Significance** - The sector supports a large ecosystem of artisans, MSMEs and micro-entrepreneurs, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, and provides significant employment opportunities, especially for women.

Works for Doubling Train Capacity

- The works for doubling the originating capacity by the year 2030 would include the following actions:

- Augmenting the current terminals with additional platforms, stabling lines, pit lines, and adequate shunting facilities.

- Identifying and creating new terminals in and around the urban area.

- Maintenance facilities, including mega coaching complexes.

- Increasing the sectional capacity with traffic facility works, signalling upgradation, and multitracking required for handling increased trains at various points.

- **Planned for** - Both suburban as well as non-suburban traffic, keeping in view the distinct requirements of both segments.

- **Comprehensive implementation plan for** - The 48 major cities is currently under consideration.

- **Objective** - To meet rising passenger demand, reduce congestion, and improve nationwide connectivity.

Environment

Gujarat Regains "Tiger State" Status

Tiger presence in Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary, reinstating Gujarat's Tiger State status after 33 years.

- **Confirmed by** - National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

- **Current Status** -

Gujarat is the only state in India that simultaneously supports populations of 3 major big cat species: lion, tiger, and leopard.

- Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary has been designated as a Tiger Reserve.

- Camera trap evidence has confirmed the presence of a tiger through photographic documentation.

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Report on "Carbon Uptake by Concrete"

- It highlighted the assessment of CO₂ uptake through carbonation in concrete in the Indian context.

- **Collaborative effort between** - National Council for Cement and Building Materials (NCB) and Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA), India.

- **Based on** - Tier-I methodology of IVL Swedish Environment Research Institute.

- **Cement industry contribution** - About 7% of total anthropogenic emissions and is considered a hard-to-abate sector due to process-related CO₂ emissions arising from the calcination of limestone.

- **Report outlines** - Future actions aimed at improving data robustness, refining estimation methodologies, and supporting the integration of carbon uptake in national sustainability and climate reporting frameworks.

- It will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, for consideration of inclusion as a carbon sink in the National Communications (NATCOM) to the UNFCCC.

National Council for Cement and Building Materials (NCB)

- It is an apex Research and Development organisation under

- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

- **Nodal ministry** - Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

- **Objective** - To make research, technology development and transfer, education and industrial services for cement, allied building materials, and the construction sector.