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 CO_2 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 CO_2 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.

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