

## UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 15-03-2025

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#### History, Art and Culture

##### The Kuki Tribe

- **Ethnic Origins & Distribution** - Kukis are a diverse ethnic group residing in Northeast India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, encompassing multiple tribes with shared ancestry.
- **Colonial Nomenclature** - The term "Kuki" was imposed during colonial rule, dividing them into "old" and "new" Kukis, it's not a self-designation.
- **Cultural and Social Structures** - Kuki society features rich cultural institutions like Sawm (boys' community center) and Lawm (youth club), fostering social cohesion and practical skills.
- **Historical Conflicts & Resistance** - Their traditional Jhum cultivation led to land disputes with Nagas and Meiteis. The Kuki Rebellion (1917-19) marked their resistance against British rule, highlighting their historical independence under chieftains

#### Polity & Governance

##### A few findings from the recently released - Standing Committee Report on Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution (2024- 25)

- **Commission Vacancies** - State & District Consumer Commissions face severe staffing shortages, with 50% of State President posts vacant, crippling effectiveness.
- **Fund Utilization** - The Consumer Welfare Fund (CWF) shows low utilization, with only 71.5% of the 2024-25 Revised Estimates disbursed.
- **Price Stabilization** - Uneven distribution of Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) funds to states and agencies like NAFED and Kendriya Bhandar is observed.
- **Technological Advancements** - Computerization of Consumer Commissions has improved case management and access to justice by reducing delays.
- **Time Standardization** - The lack of mandatory Indian Standard Time (IST) adoption by Telecom and Internet Service Providers hinders cybercrime investigations due to time discrepancies.

##### Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967

Ministry of Home Affairs has designated the group located in J & K as an illegal association under the **illegal operations (Prevention) Act of 1967**, consequently placing a 5-year restriction on its operations.

- **UAPA Act 1967:**
  - This legislation was 1<sup>st</sup> introduced as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Ordinance in 1966, in reaction to separatist movements like Naxalbari revolt.
  - The Act's goal is to effectively prohibit particular criminal behaviors committed by people and groups, as well as to confront acts of terrorism.
  - The 2019 amendment introduced key provisions:
    - The Director General of NIA is now permitted to sanction the seizure of terrorism-related properties, which will allow for speedier investigations.
    - Central Government has the ability to classify anyone as terrorists.

## Revitalizing India's Gas-Based Power Plants

*The Indian government is actively working to increase the availability and affordability of natural gas for power generation, aiming to boost its share in the national energy mix*

- **Current Operational Challenges** - Gas-based power plants in India face low Plant Load Factor (PLF), hindering their operational efficiency and overall energy sector contribution.
- **Key Policy Initiatives** - Measures include placing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) under the Open General License (OGL) category, streamlining infrastructure development, and implementing policy reforms to incentivize gas-based power production.
- **Strategic Focus & Impact** - These initiatives are designed to enhance the viability of gas-based power generation, ensuring a more efficient and diversified energy portfolio for India.

## Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

*BLA recently seized control of a passenger train, the Jaffar Express in Baluchistan, taking over 100 hostages.*

- **Group Definition** - BLA is a separatist organization operating in Pakistan's Balochistan province, seeking an independent Baloch state through armed struggle.
- **Key Objectives & Actions** - BLA conducts attacks against Pakistani security forces and government projects, notably opposing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).
- **Historical Roots** - The BLA's origins trace back to the Baloch nationalist movement of the 1940s, fueled by perceived marginalization and demands for autonomy or independence from Pakistan.
- **Opposition** - Pakistan, US, and UK have designated the BLA as a terrorist organization, reflecting the group's violent methods and destabilizing activities in the region.

## Economy

### India's Inflation Eases: February 2025 Consumer price Index Report

- **Overall Inflation Decline:** India's CPI-based inflation fell to 3.61% in February 2025, marking the lowest rate since July 2024.
  - Rural - 3.79%
  - Urban - 3.32%
- **Significant Food Inflation Reduction:** The Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) inflation dropped to 3.75%, the lowest since May 2023.
- **Sector-Specific Inflation:** Fuel & light decreased to -1.33%
  - Education remained at 3.83%
  - Housing inflation slightly increased to 2.91%
  - Health rose to 4.12%
- Transport & communication increased to 2.87%

## Environment

### Indian Railways Joins Mission Amrit Sarovar (MAS) to Tackle Water Scarcity

*Recently Indian Railways has partnered with the Union Government's Mission Amrit Sarovar.*

- **MAS Initiated in** - April 2022.
- **Aims** - To address water shortages and enhance groundwater replenishment nationwide, creating or revitalize 75 ponds per district.
- **Mission Launch & Goals** - Launched in April 2022, Mission Amrit Sarovar aims to create or revitalize 75 ponds per district, tackling water scarcity and boosting groundwater recharge.
- **Progress & Impact** - By October 2024, over 68,000 ponds were successfully rejuvenated.
- **Railway's Role** - The Indian Railways has integrated into Phase 2, contributing by desilting, excavating, and constructing water bodies near railway lines.

## Mycelium Bricks

- **Mycelium Bricks** - These are bioengineered construction materials composed of fungal mycelia, sawdust, and husk, forming a durable, lightweight structure.
- **Development by** - Roha Biotech (IIT Madras Incubated) Material **Composition** - Mycelium, the fungal root structure, creates a fibrous network that solidifies, binding organic waste into usable bricks.
- **Key Structural Features** - Mycelium bricks are lightweight with a high strength-to-weight ratio, offering effective thermal insulation and natural fire resistance (with treatments).
- **Environmental Advantages** - These bricks are biodegradable, reducing waste, and boast a low carbon footprint due to their production process, which avoids high-temperature kilns, significantly reducing CO2 emissions.

## Plastic Ice VII

*Plastic Ice VII, a rare high-pressure ice phase, features freely rotating water molecules within a solid structure, differentiating it from conventional ice.*

- **Plastic" Characteristics** - Refers to its ability to deform under pressure, similar to plastic materials, due to the rotational freedom of its molecules.
- **Conditions for Formation** - This phase exists under extreme conditions, requiring pressures exceeding 3 gigapascals (GPa) & temperatures above 450 Kelvin (177°C).
- **Discovery Methodology** - Advanced neutron-scattering experiments and diamond-anvil cells were crucial in confirming Plastic Ice VII's existence by analyzing atomic-level molecular motions.
- **Implications & Significance** - The discovery expands our understanding of water's behavior in extreme environments, impacting planetary exploration and material development for harsh conditions.

## Miscellaneous

### International Day of Mathematics (IMD)

- **IMD** - Observed on March 14<sup>th</sup>.
- **Objective** - Encouraging global participation through diverse activities in schools, museums, and libraries.
- **Significance of Date** - March 14 was chosen as the date for the IDM because it was already celebrated in many countries as Pi Day, based on the fact that some countries write it as 3/14 and the mathematical constant Pi is approximately 3.14.
- **Spearheaded by** - International Mathematical Union.