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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

Daily Quiz — January 7, 2026

7 January 2026

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7 January 2026 · 10 Questions · Answers & Explanations Included

Q 1

What is Calamaria mizoramensis, recently discovered by Mizoram University researchers and published in Zootaxa?

A A new species of freshwater fish

B A new species of reed snake ✓

C An invasive weed species

D A new species of tree frog

EXPLANATION

Calamaria mizoramensis is a newly discovered non-venomous reed snake species from Mizoram. It is nocturnal and semi-fossorial, inhabiting humid forested hills at 670-1,295 metres elevation. The discovery brings the global Calamaria genus count to 70 species.

CONCEPT

Calamaria belongs to the family Colubridae — the world's largest snake family. Reed snakes are small burrowing snakes common across South and Southeast Asia. Mizoram has approximately 86% forest cover and its herpetofauna count stands at 169 species. Northeast India sits at the junction of three global biodiversity hotspots: Eastern Himalayas, Indo-Burma, and Western Ghats.

Q 2

Dnyanganga Wildlife Sanctuary, which was in news, is located in which state and forms part of which Tiger Reserve?

A Gujarat; Gir Tiger Reserve

B Rajasthan; Ranthambore Tiger Reserve

C Maharashtra; Melghat Tiger Reserve ✓

D Uttar Pradesh; Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

EXPLANATION

Dnyanganga Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Buldhana district of Maharashtra and forms part of the Melghat Tiger Reserve. It covers approximately 205 square kilometres near the Dnyanganga River.

CONCEPT

Melghat Tiger Reserve in Amravati district was Maharashtra's first Tiger Reserve (1974) and one of India's first 9 Tiger Reserves under Project Tiger (1973). It is located in the Satpura hills. Melghat means "meeting of ghats" in Marathi.

Q 3

The Industrial Research and Development Promotion Program (IRDPP), which removed the 3-year existence condition for deep-tech startups, operates under which organisation?

- A NITI Aayog
- B Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) ✓**
- C Department of Biotechnology (DBT)
- D Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

EXPLANATION

IRDPP is a Research and Development programme of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Government of India. DSIR celebrated its 42nd Foundation Day on January 4, 2026, when it announced the removal of the 3-year mandatory existence condition for deep-tech startups, providing up to Rs 1 crore in financial assistance.

CONCEPT

DSIR (Department of Scientific and Industrial Research) functions under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Its programmes include PRISM (Promoting Innovations in Individuals, Startups and MSMEs), SIRO (Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) recognition, and technology development partnerships. CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) is separate from DSIR but also under MoST.

Q 4

DRDO developed a portable desalination device named SWaDeS (Sea Water Desalination System). Which DRDO laboratory developed it?

- A DRDO-INMAS, Delhi
- B DRDO-CAIR, Bengaluru
- C Defence Laboratory, Jodhpur ✓**
- D DRDO-NPOL, Kochi

EXPLANATION

SWaDeS was developed by Defence Laboratory Jodhpur, DRDO. The manual variant supports 10-12 personnel; the engine-operated variant supports 20-25 personnel. It converts seawater with TDS up to 35,000 mg/L to below 500 mg/L within 2-3 minutes setup time.

CONCEPT

SWaDeS features a CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear) water purification module — enabling soldiers to purify water even in contaminated environments. CEP (Circular Error Probable) in weapons and TDS (Total Dissolved Solids) in water quality are both important Prelims data points.

Q 5 National Siddha Day is observed annually on January 6, marking the birth anniversary of which sage?

A Sage Agathiyar (Agastya) ✓

B Sage Thiruvalluvar

C Sage Patanjali

D Sage Charaka

EXPLANATION

National Siddha Day is observed on January 6 to mark the birth anniversary of Sage Agathiyar (Agastya), regarded as the father of the Siddha system of medicine. The 9th National Siddha Day (2026) had the theme "Siddha for Global Health."

CONCEPT

Siddha medicine is one of the oldest medical systems — originating in Tamil Nadu; uses herbal, mineral, and animal products; emphasises balance of five elements. AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy) systems are governed by the Ministry of AYUSH. Siddha is practiced primarily in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Sri Lanka.

Q 6 The Indian Army unveiled the Bhairav drone warfare force with over 1 lakh operatives. How many battalions have been raised as of January 2026?

A 5 battalions

B 10 battalions

C 15 battalions ✓

D 25 battalions

EXPLANATION

15 battalions of the Bhairav drone force have been raised, with 25 more planned. The force appeared publicly for the first time at the Army Day Parade in Jaipur on January 15, 2026. It is named after Bhairav, a fierce form of Lord Shiva.

CONCEPT

Bhairav is part of the Indian Army's 2026 Year of Networking and Data Centricity initiative. Drone warfare has been decisive in the Nagorno-Karabakh war (2020) and Ukraine (2022-present). India faces drone infiltration along the LoC from Pakistan (400+ per year) and PLA drone surveillance in Ladakh.

Q 7

ONGC and which foreign company established joint ventures named Bharat Ethane One IFSC and Bharat Ethane Two IFSC at GIFT City for ethane shipping?

- A Saudi Aramco (Saudi Arabia)
- B Sinopec (China)
- C MOL Group (Hungary) ✓**
- D BP (United Kingdom)

EXPLANATION

ONGC and Hungary's MOL Group established two 50:50 joint ventures at GIFT City, Gandhinagar to operate Very Large Ethane Carriers (VLECs) transporting ethane from the USA to India for use at OPaL (ONGC Petro Additions Limited, Dahej, Gujarat).

CONCEPT

GIFT City (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City) is India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), regulated by IFSCA (International Financial Services Centres Authority, established 2020). OPaL uses ethane as a cracker feedstock for petrochemical production. Ethane is a cheaper feedstock than naphtha for producing ethylene.

Q 8

CSIR-NPL, New Delhi inaugurated the National Environmental Standard Laboratory (NESL). What is its global ranking in terms of such facilities?

- A World's first
- B Asia's first and the world's second ✓**
- C World's third
- D World's fifth

EXPLANATION

NESL at CSIR-NPL is Asia's first and the world's second National Environmental Standard Laboratory. It was developed in collaboration with Germany's PTB (Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt). It calibrates India's air quality monitoring network. Alongside it, the National Primary Standard Facility for Solar Cell Calibration (world's fifth) was also inaugurated.

CONCEPT

CSIR-NPL (National Physical Laboratory) in New Delhi is India's apex measurement standards laboratory. It maintains national standards for Mass, Length, Time, Temperature, and Electrical units. Accurate environmental standards are critical for India's AQI (Air Quality Index) monitoring system across 500+ cities. The collaboration with Germany's PTB reflects the Metrology partnership under India-Germany bilateral framework.

Q 9 India's Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme covers which category of fertilizers?

- A Only urea (nitrogen fertilizers)
- B Only phosphate (P) fertilizers
- C **Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers; NOT urea ✓**
- D All fertilizers including urea

EXPLANATION

The NBS scheme covers Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers — DAP, MOP, SSP, NPK complexes. Urea is governed separately under a fixed Maximum Retail Price (MRP) mechanism; its pricing is not under NBS. For Rabi 2025-26, the NBS allocation was Rs 37,952.29 crore; DAP subsidy was raised to Rs 29,805 per metric tonne.

CONCEPT

NBS was introduced in 2010 to rationalise fertiliser subsidies and promote soil health by incentivising balanced use of nutrients. Under NBS, a fixed subsidy per kg of nutrient (N, P, K, S) is announced seasonally; companies set MRP but subsidy is on the nutrient content. PM PRANAM scheme (2023) aims to reduce chemical fertiliser use by promoting alternatives.

Q 10 Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin signed an MoU with UN Women for gender-responsive governance. Tamil Nadu was also selected as India's first state for which international initiative?

- A UN Women Safe Cities programme
- B **UNICEF Innovation Initiative ✓**
- C WHO Gender and Health programme
- D World Bank Gender Action Plan

EXPLANATION

Tamil Nadu was selected as India's first state for the UNICEF Innovation Initiative. The MoU with UN Women focuses on gender-responsive governance and gender-based budgeting. Tamil Nadu has a strong track record in women-centric governance including SHGs, noon meal scheme, and Kalaigarnar Magalir Urimai Thittam.

CONCEPT

UN Women is a United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and empowerment of women, established 2010. SDG 5 covers gender equality. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) involves gender-based analysis of budgets to assess impact on women and girls. India introduced Gender Budget Statement in Union Budget from 2005-06. Tamil Nadu has the highest share of working women in India.

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