UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 25-11-2026

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Polity & Governance

Nayi Chetna 5.0

The Nayi Chetna 5.0 – Pahal Badlav Ki was launched on November 25, coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

• **Nayi Chetna (Nayi Chetna – Pahal Badlav Ki)** – It is an annual nationwide gender campaign to address gender-based violence, challenge discriminatory social norms and promote gender equality.

• **Led by** – Ministry of Rural Development under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).

• **Launched in** – 2022.

• **Aim** – To combat gender-based violence, challenge discriminatory social norms, and advance gender equality through community-led action.

Nayi Chetna 5.0

• The month-long campaign will run across the country from November 25 to December 23, 2026.

• **Theme** – "From Access to Agency: Empowering Women through Livelihoods and Equal Opportunities for a Viksit Bharat".

• It underscores the importance of women's access to resources, mobility and equal opportunities in promoting economic empowerment, livelihood participation and independent decision-making.

• **4 focus areas**

- Recognising women as economic contributors,
- strengthening their access to and control over assets,
- promoting safe mobility, and
- ensuring a fairer distribution of unpaid care work.



Swachh Shauchalay – Garimamay Bhavishya (SSGB) Campaign

The Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched the 'Swachh Shauchalay – Garimamay Bhavishya' (SSGB) campaign on World Toilet Day, 2026.

• **SSGB campaign** – It is a nationwide rural sanitation drive launched under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM(G)] to improve the functionality, accessibility, and sustainability of toilets across India.

• **Nodal Ministry** – Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti.

• It runs from November 19, 2026 (World Toilet Day) to December 10, 2026 (Human Rights Day), aligned with the 2026 World Toilet Day theme, "Safe toilets. Equal futures."

• **Core objectives**

- **Dignity & Inclusion** – Focuses on safe, accessible sanitation for women, girls, and Divyangjan while maintaining ODF communities.
- **Infrastructure & Upkeep** – Repairs and assesses CSCs and institutional toilets, promotes retrofitting (like twin-pit conversions), and manages faecal sludge.
- **Community Engagement** – Encourages local maintenance, hygiene education, and active participation.

• **Focus** – On improving rural sanitation facilities, with particular attention to the needs of women, girl students and Divyangjan.

• Also focuses on school children as future custodians of Swachhata, sensitising them on the importance of sanitation & hygiene and community participation for keeping toilets clean and accessible to all.

Cauvery–South Vellar–Vaigai–Gundar Link Project

The State of Karnataka has moved the Supreme Court seeking a temporary injunction against Tamil Nadu's Cauvery (Kattalai)–South Vellar–Vaigai–Gundar Link Project (CVG Link).

• **Purpose** – It diverts surplus water flows from the Cauvery River basin to the South Vellar, Vaigai and Gundar river basins toward water-scarce southern Tamil Nadu for irrigation, domestic supply, and industrial use.

• It forms part of efforts to improve irrigation and water availability in the drier southern districts of the State.

• **Headworks** – Starts from the Kattalai barrage on the Cauvery River at Mayanur in Karur district.

• **Phases** – Planned across three phases—linking the Cauvery to the South Vellar River (Phase I), South Vellar to the Vaigai River (Phase II), and Vaigai to the Gundar River (Phase III).

• **Key Scale Metrics** – NWDA salient features list a lined gravity main canal of about 256.82 km, total water utilisation of 2,252 Mm^3, and irrigation across districts including Karur, Tiruchirappalli, Pudukkottai, Sivaganga, Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, and Thoothukudi.

Recent Legal & Political Developments

• **Fresh Supreme Court Plea (November 2026)** – Karnataka filed an interim injunction application on November 19, 2026, in its pending 2021 suit to halt work on the CVG Link and block Union government approval or national project status.

• **Core dispute** – Karnataka objects to Tamil Nadu utilising surplus Cauvery water (projected around 8.60 tmcft at Mettur Dam at 50% dependability) without Union clearance, alleging Phase I works have progressed and could create future equitable claims.

• **Prior ruling & Upcoming hearing** – After the Supreme Court disposed of an earlier interim plea in January 2025, noting the Centre had not granted in-principle approval, the new application is slated for hearing in mid-December 2026.

International Relations and Issues

Saryu-Kamala Express

India & Nepal have virtually flagged off the Saryu-Kamala Express, connecting Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh to Janakpur in Nepal, from Delhi.

• **Saryu-Kamala Express** – It is a newly launched weekly cross-border train that establishes a crucial rail link between two pilgrimage sites, namely Janakpur Dham and Ayodhya, believed to be the birthplace of Sita and Ram.

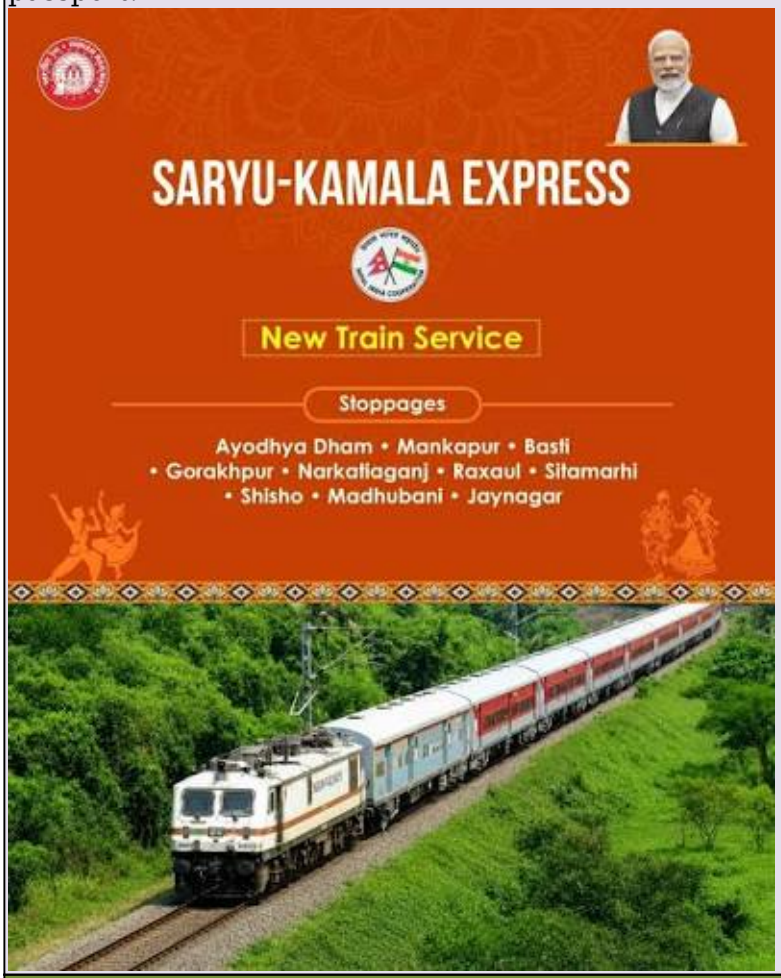
• **Objective** – The service is expected to boost religious tourism, cultural exchanges, and India-Nepal people-to-people ties.

• **Route & Distance** – Connects Ayodhya Cantt (UP) to Janakpur Dham (Nepal) across roughly 601–604 km in about 19 hours.

• **Major Stops** – Includes stops across Uttar Pradesh and Bihar such as Mankapur, Basti, Gorakhpur, Narkatiaganj, Raxaul, Sitamarhi, Madhubani, and Jaynagar before crossing into Nepal.

• **Schedule** – Departs Ayodhya Cantt on Mondays (around 5:50 pm) and returns from Janakpur Dham on Saturdays (around 1:10 pm Nepal time).

• **Visa requirement** – Indian citizens going to Nepal don't need a visa if they have a valid passport.



Security

Exercise Suryakiran 2026

India and Nepal are set to hold the 20th edition of their joint military exercise Suryakiran.

• **Exercise Suryakiran** – It is a key bilateral military engagement between India and Nepal and runs from November 25 to December 8, 2026.

• Held alternately in India and Nepal every year.

• **Location** – At the Nepali Army Battle School in Saljhandi, Rupandehi, Nepal.

• **Objective** – To provide an opportunity for the two armies to enhance interoperability, exchange operational experiences and strengthen coordination through joint training.

• **Aim** – To further strengthen military cooperation and deepen the defence partnership between the two neighbouring countries.

• The Indian Army described the exercise as a reflection of the close bond between the two countries, with the tagline, ***"Two Nations. One Mission. An Enduring Bond."***

• **Focus Areas** – Enhancing military interoperability, exchanging operational experiences, and conducting joint drills in mountainous and jungle terrain, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), and peacekeeping operations under the UN mandate.



JWALA MK-1 Counter-Drone System

The JWALA MK-1 was successfully test-fired recently at the Pokhran firing range in Rajasthan.

• **JWALA MK-1** – It is the *surface-to-air counter-unmanned aircraft system (CUAS),* India's *first private-sector artificial intelligence (AI)-powered autonomous micro-missile system* to address the rapidly evolving threat posed by hostile unmanned aerial systems.

• **Development** – Indigenously developed by Noida-based private defence technology firm IG Defence.

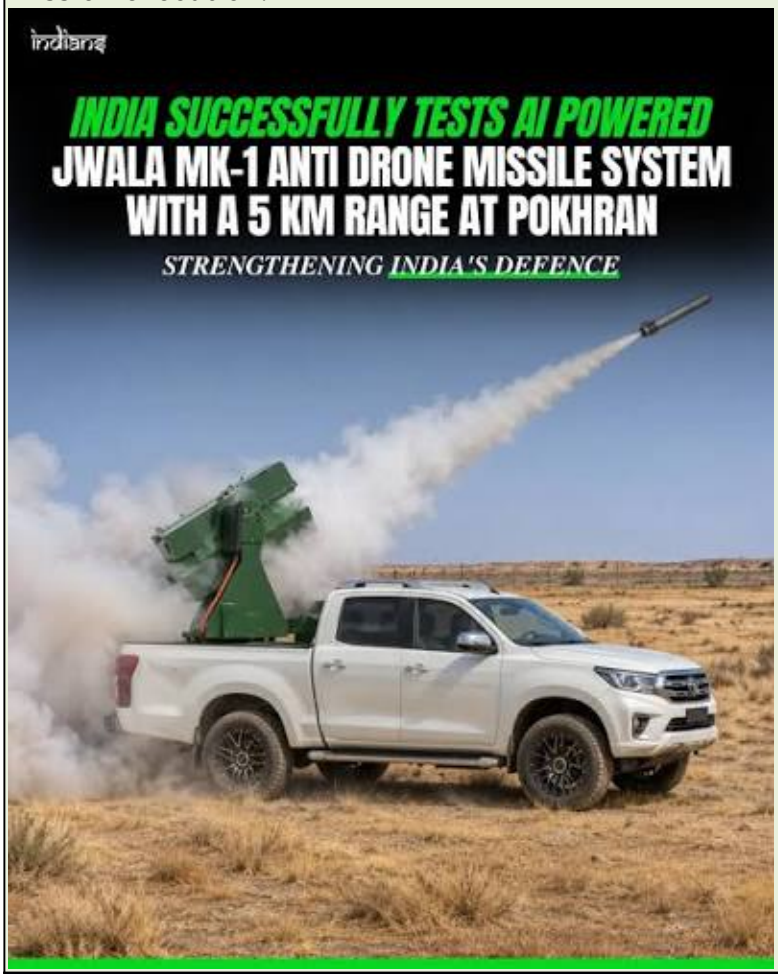
• **Operational range** – up to 5 km.

• **Altitude** – It can engage targets from 50 m to 5 km, including cruise and high-altitude aerial targets.

• **Designed for** – It is designed to detect, identify and classify hostile unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) before intercepting and destroying the targets through a hard-kill mechanism.

• **Comparison with conventional systems** – Unlike conventional air-defence systems that rely on relatively expensive interceptors to neutralise aerial threats, the micro-missile has been developed as a compact and potentially cost-effective weapon.

• **AI-enabled combat system** – GRID, IG Defence's AI-powered mission autonomy and battle management system, serves as JWALA MK-1's intelligence backbone, integrating sensor data, target detection, classification, decision-making and engagement management for coordinated mission execution.



Science

Kesarbai Kerkar's Voice in Voyager 1

Decades after her death, Kesarbai Kerkar's voice continues to travel through interstellar space aboard NASA's Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 spacecraft.

• **Kesarbai Kerkar** – She was one of India's most celebrated Hindustani classical vocalists (1892–1977).

• **Birth** – Born in Keri village, Goa, she belonged to the Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana, renowned for its complex ragas and demanding vocal style.

• **Disciple of** – She was a distinguished disciple of Ustad Alladiya Khan, founder of the Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana.

• **Title** – Known for her powerful voice and mastery of intricate classical compositions, she earned the title "Surashree" (Queen of Melody).

• **Awards & Honours** – Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1953) for contributions to Hindustani classical music & Padma Bhushan (1969), one of India's highest civilian honours.

Connection with NASA's Voyager Mission

• Her rendition of "*Jaat Kahan Ho*" *in Raag Bhairavi* was selected for the Golden Record carried aboard NASA's Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 spacecraft in 1977.

- **Golden Record** – It was designed as a message from Earth containing sounds, images, greetings and music representing humanity's cultural diversity.

• Kerkar's recording appears alongside works of composers such as Bach, Beethoven and Mozart.

• As both Voyager spacecraft continue their journey through interstellar space, her voice remains one of India's enduring cultural ambassadors beyond Earth.



Voyager Missions

• **Voyager 1** – It became the first human-made object to enter interstellar space in 2012.

• In 2026, it crossed the milestone of being one light-day away from Earth (over 26 billion km), making it the most distant human-made object.

• **Voyager 2** – It entered interstellar space in 2018 and continues its journey on a different trajectory.

Index

Lowy Asia Power Index 2026

India retains third spot in Lowy's Asia Power Index 2026; PM Modi ranked the most effective regional leader.

• **About the Index** – It is an annual analytical tool to measure the relative power of 27 states and territories across the Indo-Pacific.

• **Launch** – Launched in 2018 by the Sydney-based Lowy Institute.

• It evaluates how effectively nations shape their external environment by tracking 131 indicators across 8 thematic measures, dividing them into

- Resources (what a country has) and
- Influence (what a country does with what it has).

• **Geographic Scope** – Unlike narrower regional definitions, the index stretches from Pakistan in the west to Russia in the north, and across the Pacific to Australia, New Zealand, and the United States.

Key findings of the 2026 Index

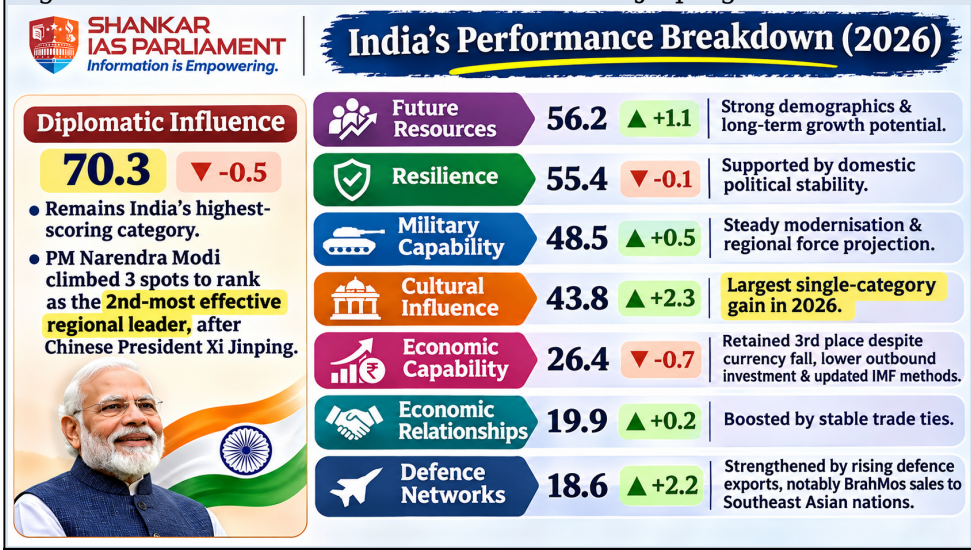
• **Score & Standing** – India's overall score rose by 0.5 points to 40.5, narrowing the gap with China to its smallest level since the index launched in 2018.

• **Top Rankings** – The United States (78.9) and China (73.6) held first and second place, with the US–China power gap narrowing to 5.3 points.

• **Key drivers for India** – Gains came from stronger defence engagement, BrahMos missile exports to Southeast Asia, defence networks (+2.1 points), cultural influence (+2.3 points to 43.8), and future resources (+1.2 points).

• **Category scores** – Diplomatic influence held steady at 70.3, while economic capability edged down to 26.4 even as India remained third in that measure.

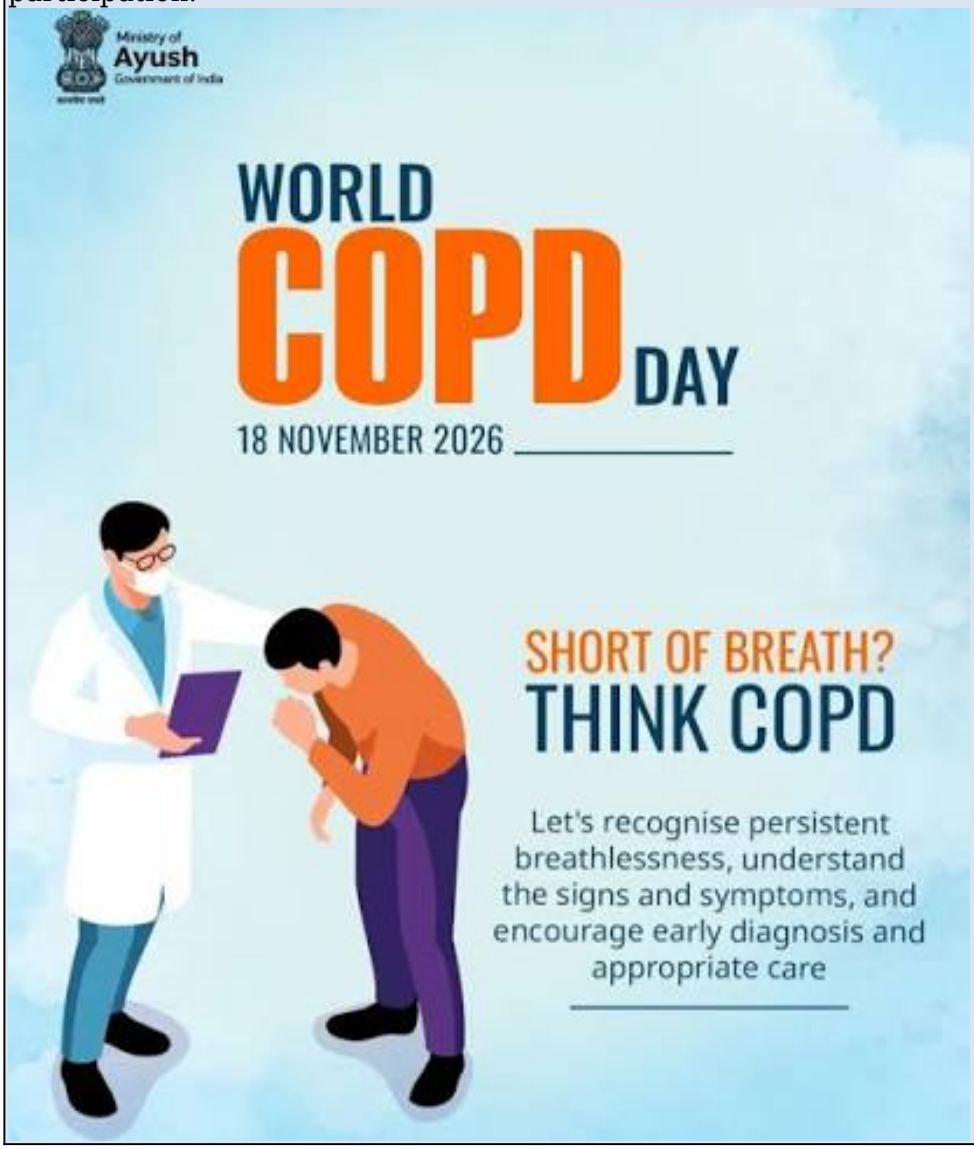
• **Leadership ranking** – Prime Minister Narendra Modi ranked as the second-most effective regional leader behind Chinese President Xi Jinping.



Miscellaneous

World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Day 2026

• **Observed on** – November 18 every year.
• **Aim** – To tackle underdiagnosis and improve care for people living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a progressive, long-term lung disease that narrows the airways and damages lung tissue, making it increasingly difficult to breathe.
• **Theme for 2026** – "Early Diagnosis and Management for a Better Life."
• **Organised by** – Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) in collaboration with respiratory organisations worldwide.
• **2026 Campaign Activity** – GOLD hosted The Big Baton Pass, a 24-hour online relay on November 18 featuring pulmonary rehabilitation programming and global community participation.



National Integration Day 2026

• **Observed on** – November 19 every year, to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
• It is also known as Qaumi Ekta Diwas.
• **Aim** – To promote national unity, integrity, peace, communal harmony, brotherhood and mutual respect among students.
• **National Integration Week** – Starts on November 19 and runs through November 25, 2026 (Qaumi Ekta Week), focusing on secularism, non-violence, and cultural and linguistic harmony.



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