UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 27-11-2026

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History, Art and Culture

Bali Jatra – Cuttack, Odisha

President Droupadi Murmu attended Bali Jatra Festival 2026 at Cuttack (Kataka), Odisha, on November 24, 2026.

• It is an annual historic fair held from **Kartika Purnima** on the banks of the *Mahanadi River in Cuttack.*

• **Meaning –** Bali Jatra means "Voyage to Bali".

• **Significance**

- It commemorates ancient *Kalinga sailors' maritime voyages to Bali and other parts of Southeast Asia.*
- It highlights Odisha's ancient maritime trade, cultural exchange and overseas commercial relations.
- It evolved into a major trade fair promoting local products, handicrafts, food and business.
- It recorded over 80 lakh visitors in 2025.

• **India–Indonesia cultural ties**

- Indonesian cultural troupes participated in the 2026 festival.
- Odisha Festival was organised in Bali, showcasing Odisha's dance, music, handlooms, handicrafts and cuisine.

• **Related tradition –** *Boita Bandana* – ritual remembrance of Odisha's ancient maritime voyages.

India Wins Visitors' Lion at Venice Art Biennale 2026

India won the Visitors' Lion for Best National Participation at the *61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2026)*, based on public voting.

• **Venice Biennale –** It is a major international contemporary art exhibition held in *Venice, Italy.*
  - India returned to the event after a gap of **seven years**.
  - Around **4.5 lakh visitors** visited the India Pavilion.
• **India Pavilion theme –** *Geographies of Distance: Remembering Home*.
• **Biennale's overall theme –** *In Minor Keys*.
• **Venue –** Historic Isolotto spaces, Arsenale di Venezia.
• **Institutional Support**
  - **India's National Pavilion presented by** – Ministry of Culture.
  - **Commissioner –** National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA).
  - **Implementing partner** – Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).
  - **Collaborators –** Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) and Serendipity Arts.



India Biennale 2026

• **To be held in –** New Delhi from December 4, 2026, for 108 days.
• **Principal venue –** Purana Qila.
• **Theme –** "Vikas Bhi, Virasat Bhi."
• Other heritage venues include *Red Fort, Qutub Minar, Jantar Mantar and Safdarjung Tomb.*
• It includes contemporary art, architecture, design and a dedicated Students Biennale.

Polity & Governance

Constitution Day (Samvidhan Diwas) – 2026

• **Observed annually on –** 26th November.
• **Aim –** It commemorates the adoption of the Constitution of India by the Constituent Assembly on ***26 November 1949.***
• **Constitution came into force –** 26 January 1950 (Republic Day).
• **Declared in 2015 –** The Government of India officially designated November 26 as Constitution Day to promote constitutional values and awareness among citizens.

2026 Observance

• **Preamble reading –** Online initiative through MyGov in 23 languages (22 Scheduled Languages + English).
• **Constitution Quiz –** MyGov and MyBharat portals, November 18–26, 2026.
• **Viksit Bharat Yuva Samvad –** Organised across **786 districts**, covering all 36 States/UTs, from November 24–26, 2026.

Environment

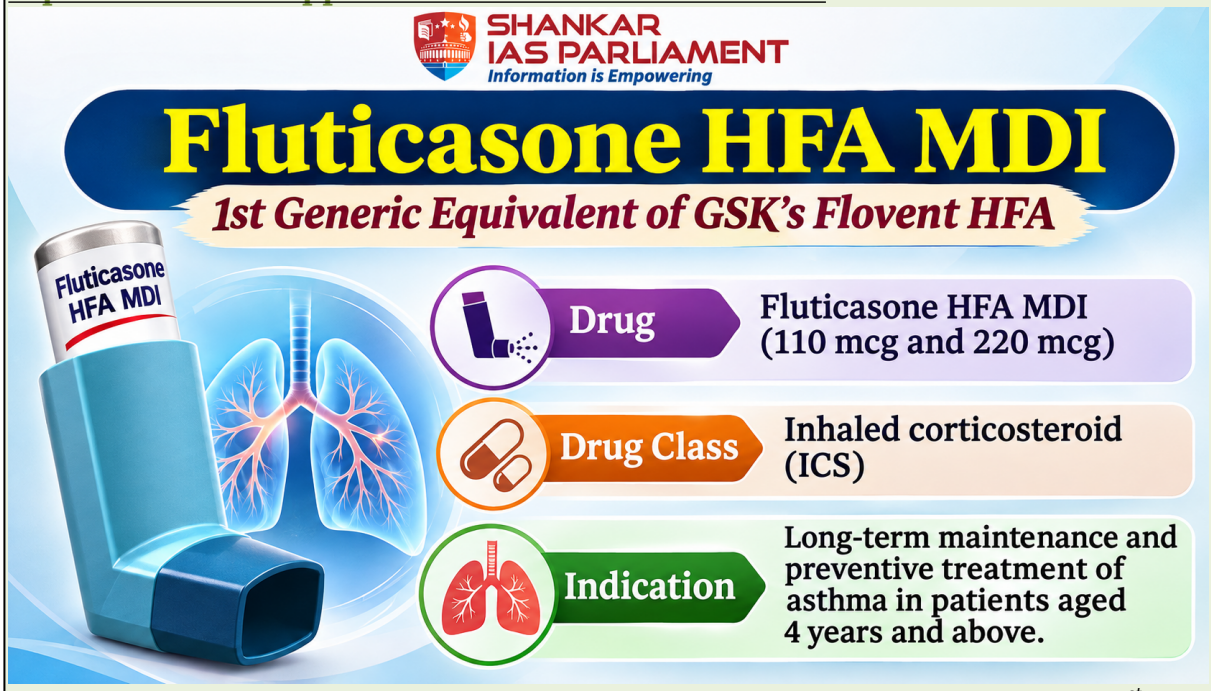
Demwe Lower Hydroelectric Project – Arunachal Pradesh

*The Constitutional Conduct Group (CCG), a group of former civil servants, urged the Centre and Arunachal Pradesh government to scrap the proposed **1,750-MW Demwe Lower Hydroelectric Project** on the Lohit River, citing ecological and social concerns.*

• **Location –** Lohit River, Arunachal Pradesh.
• **Project type –** Concrete gravity dam with peaking-power generation.
• **Impact**
  - Diversion of 1,416 hectares of forest land.
  - Submergence of approximately 1,590 hectares.
  - Around 43,000 trees likely to be felled.
  - The submergence zone is proposed within 50 metres of the **Kamlang Tiger Reserve** boundary and extends into its Eco-Sensitive Zone.
• **Major Environmental Concerns**
• Threat to endangered species:
  - White-bellied Heron
  - Bengal Florican
  - Gangetic Dolphin
  - Mishmi Takin, Red Panda and Eastern Hoolock Gibbon.
• Peaking-power operations may cause sudden fluctuations in river flow, leading to erosion and disruption of aquatic habitats.
• Potential downstream impacts on *Dibru-Saikhowa National Park.*
• Threats to indigenous Mishmi communities, ancestral lands, livelihoods and the Parashuram Kund pilgrimage site.
• **Regulatory Background**
  - **2017 –** National Green Tribunal (NGT) suspended project approvals and directed fresh examination of wildlife clearance and ecological impacts.
  - **July 2026 –** Project reconsidered following its acquisition by Greenko; CCG alleged that earlier environmental concerns remained inadequately addressed.

Health

Cipla-Teva: FDA Approval for Generic Flovent HFA



• US Food and Drug Administration approved **Fluticasone HFA MDI**, the *1st generic equivalent of GSK's Flovent HFA.*
• **Jointly developed by –** Cipla and Teva Pharmaceuticals.
• **Collaboration:**
- **ANDA –** Abbreviated New Drug Application, regulatory pathway for approval of generic drugs in the US.
- **Cipla –** Manufacturing and supply.
- **Teva Pharmaceuticals –** Holds ANDA and commercialises the product in the US.

Government Policies & Interventions

Wayanad – India's 1st E-Waste-Free District

• Wayanad, Kerala, is set to become India's 1st e-waste-free district after collecting 102.85 tonnes of electronic waste in three months.
• I**nitiative** – BHOOMI campaign.
• **Coverage –** All 23-gram panchayats and 3 municipalities.
• **Implementation –** Local self-government institutions, Haritha Karma Sena, sanitation workers and residents.
• Collected e-waste will be handed over to authorised agencies for scientific processing and disposal.
• Part of Kerala's broader *Nirmalam waste-free Kerala campaign*.

Vantara–Madagascar: 10-Year Wildlife Conservation Partnership

*Vantara and Madagascar's Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) signed a **10-year, non-exclusive MoU** on November 24, 2026, for wildlife conservation and animal welfare.*

• **Vantara –** It is a Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre Society, based in Jamnagar, Gujarat.

• **Objectives**
- Repatriation of Malagasy animals seized abroad.
- Rescue, rehabilitation, veterinary care and rewilding.
- Establishment of a National Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre.
- Training, internships, research and capacity-building of local wildlife experts.
- Genetic profiling and scientific assessment to guide wildlife reintroduction.
- The proposed centre will be owned by the Republic of Madagascar and operate under MEDD.

• **Decision-making –** Reintroduction decisions remain with the Government of Madagascar, advised by its CITES Scientific Authority.

• **Madagascar's Biodiversity Threats**
- 90% of lemur species are threatened with extinction; nearly one-third are Critically Endangered.
- Radiated tortoise population declined by over 47% (late 1990s–2013).
- Around 29% of tree cover lost between 2001 and 2023.
- Illegal wildlife trade is a major biodiversity threat, after habitat loss.

Science

China's Shenzhou-24 Mission – 1st Pakistani Astronaut to Tiangong Space Station

• China's **Shenzhou-24 crewed spacecraft** docked with its Tiangong space station on 25 November 2026, carrying **Zeeshan Ali**, the first Pakistani astronaut to enter orbit and the first foreign astronaut to visit Tiangong.

• **Key Facts**

• **Launch site –** Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, northwest China.

• **Launch vehicle –** Long March-2F.

• **Docking –** Tiangong space station, approximately 3.5 hours after launch.

• **Crew**
- Zeeshan Ali (Pakistan) – Payload Specialist.
- Tang Hongbo (China) – Commander.
- Wu Yi (China) – Flight Engineer.

• **Duration of Ali's stay –** 5-10 days.

• **Major experiment –** Testing self-healing carbon-fibre composites that can automatically repair small cracks in spacecraft.

Tiangong Space Station

• **Tiangong –** China's permanently crewed modular space station; fully operational since 2022.

• **Meaning –** "Celestial Palace".

• **Capacity –** Accommodate up to six astronauts during crew handovers.

• **International cooperation –** Shenzhou-24 marks the 1st joint crewed spaceflight involving Chinese and foreign astronauts in China's human spaceflight programme.

GalaxEye–Bellatrix Aerospace Deal (2026)

GalaxEye and Bellatrix Aerospace *signed a multi-year contract on November 24, 2026, for propulsion systems for GalaxEye's next* ***30 satellites****.*

• It is described as the *largest B2B order between two Indian private space companies* since the 2020 space-sector reforms.

• **Key Facts**

• **GalaxEye –** Bengaluru-based company developing *the world's 1st OptoSAR satellite constellation*, combining optical imaging and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) to capture images through clouds, smoke and darkness.

• **Mission Drishti –** World's 1st OptoSAR satellite; launched aboard SpaceX Falcon 9 on May 3, 2026.

• **Bellatrix Aerospace –** Develops electric and green propulsion systems for satellites and orbital transfer vehicles.

• **Government Support –** Technology Development Board committed Rs.63.84 crore from the RDI Fund for GalaxEye's multi-sensor satellite development.

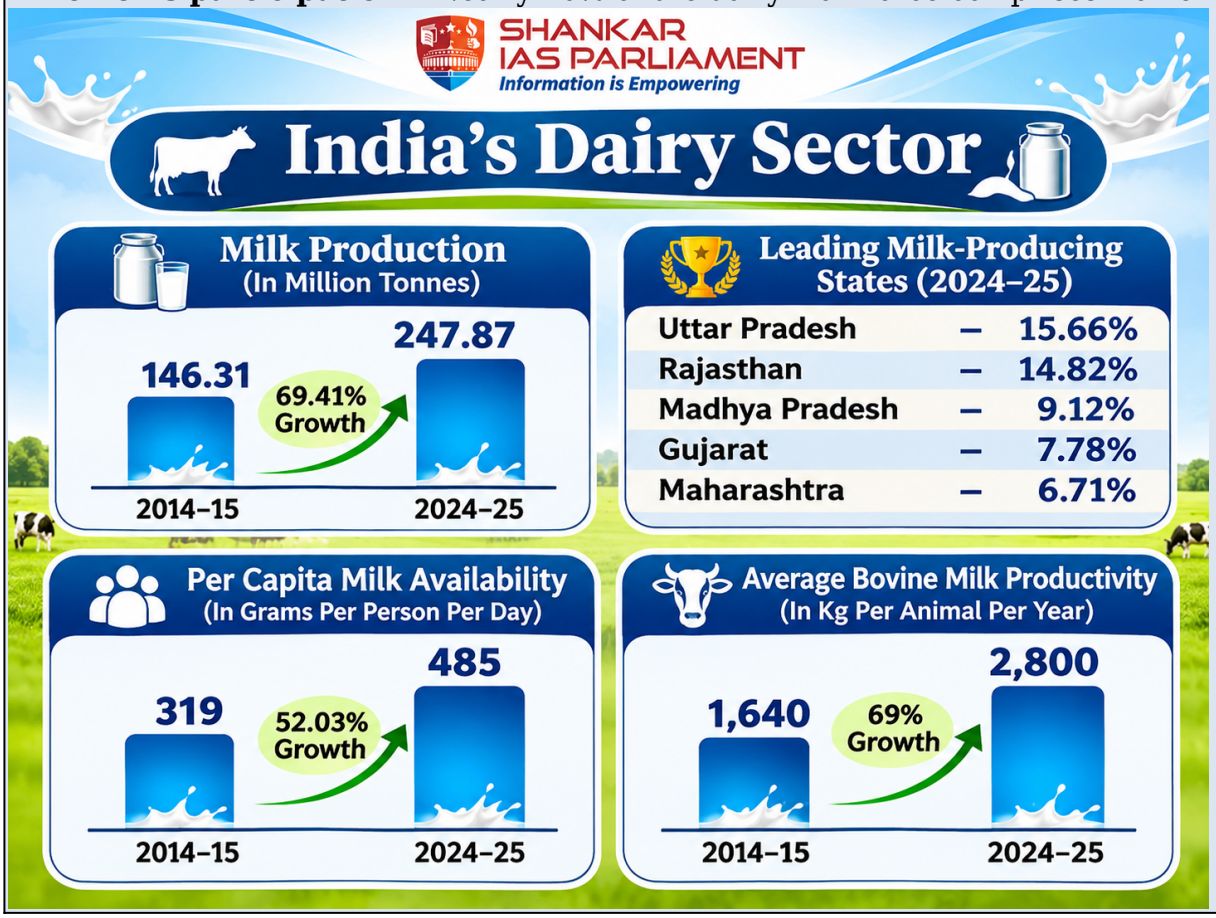
• **Significance**

- It strengthens indigenous satellite manufacturing and propulsion technology.
- It promotes private-sector collaboration and India's commercial space ecosystem.

Miscellaneous

National Milk Day

• **Observed on –** 26th November.
• **Aim –** To commemorate the birth anniversary of *Dr. Verghese Kurien, the Father of India's White Revolution.*
• **Key Facts**
• **Dr. Verghese Kurien –** Born on 26 November 1921; instrumental in transforming India into the world's largest milk producer.
• **India's milk production (2024–25) –** 247.87 million tonnes.
• **Global contribution –** Nearly 25% of global milk production.
• **Growth –** Milk production recorded a CAGR of **5.41%** between 2014–15 and 2024–25.
• **Livelihoods –** It supports approximately **8.5 crore rural households**.
• **Women's participation –** Nearly 70% of the dairy workforce comprises women.



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