UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 28-11-2026

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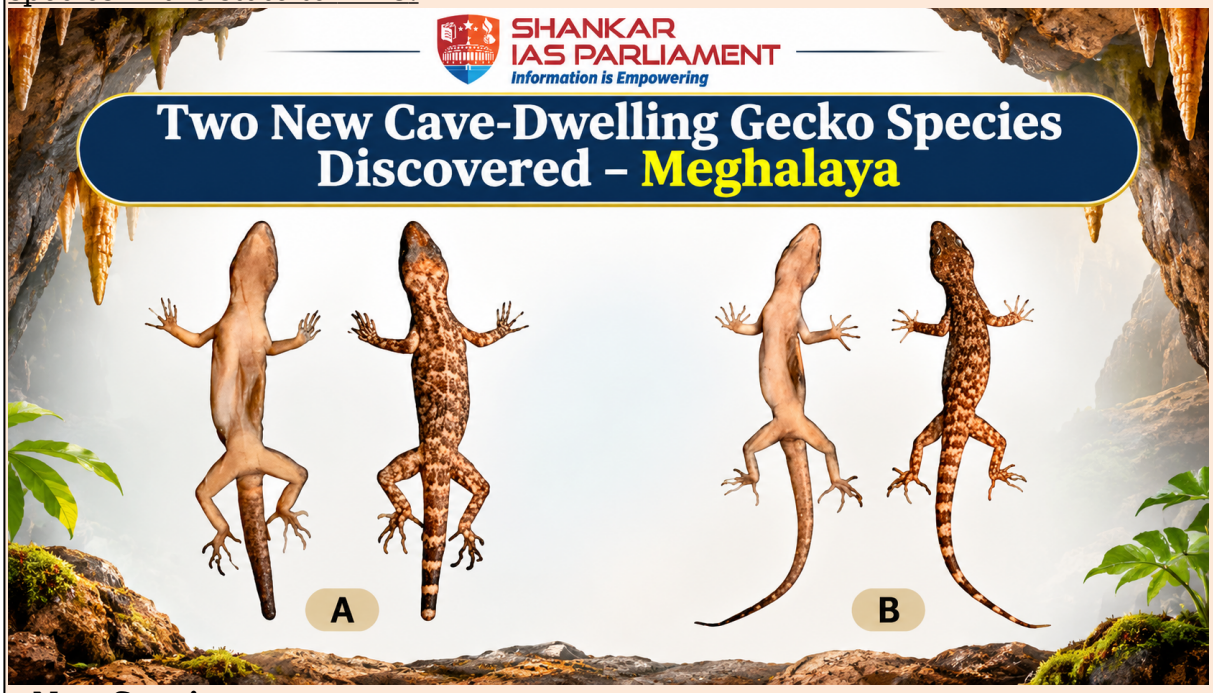
Species

Two New Cave-Dwelling Gecko Species Discovered – Meghalaya

Two new species of bent-toed geckos were discovered in the limestone cave systems of Meghalaya's Khasi and Jaintia Hills, increasing the number of recognised *Cyrtodactylus* species in the state to **nine.**



• **New Species**

1. *Cyrtodactylus bossmit* – Named after Shillong's iconic wooden bus, 'Bossmit'; found in Khasi Hills.
2. *Cyrtodactylus kremicola* – Derived from the Khasi word 'Krem', meaning cave; discovered in Rupasor Cave, West Jaintia Hills.

• **Identification –** Based on morphological examination and mitochondrial DNA analysis.
• **Taxonomic Revision –** Populations previously classified as *Cyrtodactylus khasiensis* were found to represent distinct genetic lineages.
• Arwah Cave population represents the true *C. khasiensis*.
• **Habitat –** Limestone caves, rock crevices, limestone outcrops and surrounding forest vegetation.
• **Significance – It h**ighlights the Khasi-Jaintia Hills as a centre of **micro-endemism** within the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot.

International Relations and Issues

Maitri Setu Yatra – India–Sri Lanka NCC Cycling Expedition 2027

• A joint India–Sri Lanka National Cadet Corps (NCC) cycling expedition promoting bilateral friendship and youth engagement.
• **Participants –** 24 cyclists – 14 Indian and 10 Sri Lankan NCC personnel.
• **Distance –** Approximately **3,500 km** over 75 days.
• **Flag-off –** 15 November 2026, from Galle Face, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
• **Sri Lankan leg –** Approximately 500 km, covering Colombo, Kurunegala, Dambulla, Anuradhapura, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi and Jaffna.
• **Indian leg –** Approximately 3,000 km across 11 Indian States/Union Territories, from Karaikal to New Delhi.
• **Transport across sea –** Participants are supported by the Indian Navy ship **INS Sujata**.
• **Conclusion –** Expected to culminate at the NCC Prime Minister's Rally in New Delhi in January 2027.
• **Significance –** Promotes people-to-people ties, youth cooperation, discipline and endurance, drawing inspiration from shared civilisational, cultural and Buddhist heritage.

Economy

Doloo Greenfield Airport, Silchar – Assam

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the development of a new Greenfield Airport at Doloo, Silchar, Assam, at an estimated cost of Rs.2,014 crore.
• **Location –** Doloo, Cachar District, Assam, in the Barak Valley.
• **Implementing agency –** Airports Authority of India (AAI).
• **Objective –** To overcome operational and spatial constraints of the existing defence landlocked civil enclave at Silchar Airport and accommodate growing air traffic.
• **Key Infrastructure**
  - Terminal area – 12,351 sq. m.
  - Passenger capacity – 800 passengers during peak hour.
  - Runway – 2,705 m × 45 m, **Code 4C** compliant.
  - Aircraft compatibility – Airbus A-320 operations.
  - Apron capacity – 6 A-320 aircraft, with a dedicated isolation bay.
• **Significance –** Boost regional connectivity, trade, tourism, agro-industries and economic development in South Assam and adjoining States.

Environment

World Environment Protection Day

• **Observed annually on –** 26 November.
• **Aim –** To raise global awareness and encourage actions for environmental protection.
• **Organised by** – United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the primary UN body for environmental coordination.
• **Distinct from** – UN's World Environment Day on June 5, this date emphasizes localized education and action.

World Sustainable Transport Day



• **Observed annually on** – 26 November
• **Aim** – To promote awareness of safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport for economic, social and environmental development.
• **Adopted in – May 2023.**
• **Established by –** United Nations General Assembly through **Resolution 77/286**.
• **Significance (2026) –** First observance during the **UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035)**.
• **Regional Focus – Asia & Pacific**
- **5th Ministerial Conference on Transport –** Held in Bangkok, Thailand, from **17–20 November 2026**.
- Focus areas include transport connectivity, low-emission mobility and logistics, and safe and inclusive mobility.
- Considered a new **Ministerial Declaration** and **Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development (2027–2031)**.
• **Key stakeholders –** UN DESA and UN ESCAP promote international and regional cooperation for sustainable transport.

Security

Assam's 1st Defence Manufacturing Facility

• The foundation stone for Northeast India's first integrated defence manufacturing unit was laid at **Tulsibari, Rangia, Assam**.
• **Developer –** Mumbai-based Speed4Defence Systems Pvt. Ltd.
• **Land area –** Around 14 acres; the project will manufacture indigenous:
  - Underground bunkers and missile emplacements.
  - Tactical and habitable shelters.
  - Drones and anti-drone systems.
• **Employment –** Initially around 150 jobs, expected to increase to 500 after expansion, with priority for local youth.
• **R&D and Innovation –** Collaboration with IIT Guwahati, including incubation centres and a research and development centre.
• **Strategic Significance**
  - It reduces equipment delivery time to Northeast border areas from 30–40 days to 3–5 days.
  - It supports rapid deployment and reduces logistics and transportation costs.
  - It strengthens defence preparedness in a region sharing international borders with five countries.
• **Additional Development –** Assam Cabinet approved a larger Defence Park at **Nellie, Morigaon district**; around 2,000 acres have been earmarked for a proposed defence park near Jagiroad.
• **Policy Support –** Assam Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Policy, 2025, provides capital subsidies, SGST reimbursement, transport subsidies and skill-development support.

Science

BharatGen – Patram 1.5 (OCR 3.0)

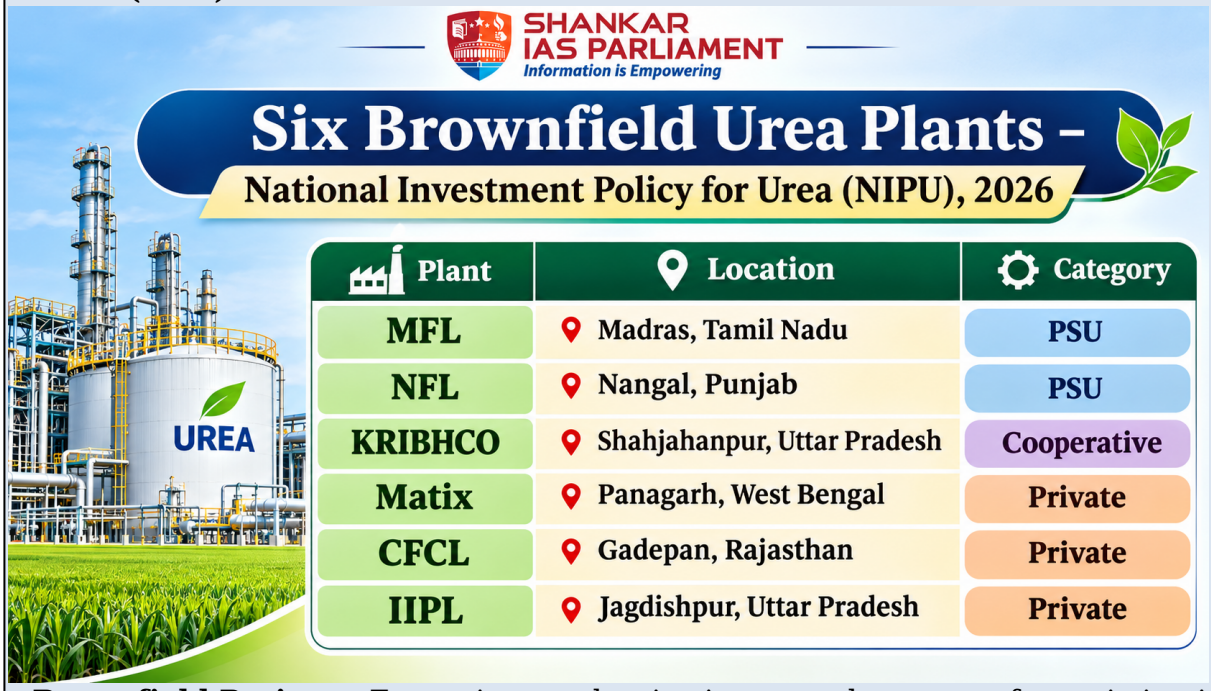
*BharatGen launched **Patram 1.5** on 26 November 2026, a 7-billion-parameter vision-language AI model introducing **OCR 3.0** for advanced document understanding.*
• **Developer –** BharatGen, an India-based AI initiative anchored at IIT Bombay.
• **Model type –** 7-billion-parameter Vision-Language Model (VLM) with open weights.
• **OCR 3.0 –** It reads documents as images, combining visual understanding, text extraction and reasoning in a single step, unlike conventional OCR that converts images into plain text.
• **Capabilities – It r**ecognises tables, charts, photographs, signatures, stamps, handwritten annotations, blurry scans and multilingual documents.
• **Instruction-based extraction – It e**xtracts user-specified information in formats such as Markdown, HTML and JSON.
• **Reliability –** Flags illegible or missing information and seeks clarification rather than hallucinating.
• **Evaluation –** Tested across 49 evaluations; its indigenous benchmark includes 11,828 test items from 8,773 pages.
• **Applications –** Banking, healthcare, governance, legal and financial document processing.
• **Accessibility –** Open weights available on Hugging Face; supports deployment on users' own infrastructure for data privacy.
• **BharatGen –** Backed by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the IndiaAI Mission; builds indigenous AI models.

Six Brownfield Urea Plants – National Investment Policy for Urea (NIPU), 2026

*The Government approved six brownfield urea plants under **NIPU-2026**, involving an estimated investment of Rs.54,000 crore to strengthen fertiliser security and domestic urea production.*

• **Total investment –** Approximately Rs.54,000 crore.

• **Number of plants –** Six, each with an annual installed capacity of **12.7 lakh metric tonnes (LMT)**.



• **Brownfield Project –** Expansion, modernisation or replacement of an existing industrial facility.

• **Objectives**
  - Enhance domestic urea production and reduce import dependence.
  - Strengthen fertiliser security and agricultural resilience.
  - Modernise ageing fertiliser plants.
  - Generate employment and promote industrial development.

• **Capital cost norm –** Approximately Rs.9,000 crore per project.

Chariot-1 Indigenous AI Foundation Models

• **Launched at –** Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
• **Developer –** Chariot Artificial Intelligence Pvt. Ltd., one of the first four teams selected under the **IndiaAI Mission** to develop sovereign foundation models.
• **Model Suite –** Chariot-1 Large Language Model (LLM) and Text-to-Speech (TTS), pre-trained from scratch in India.
• **Key Features and Innovations**
• **Chariot-1 LLM –** 11-billion-parameter Mixture-of-Experts model with 4 billion active parameters per token; available in 10.7B, 1.7B and 745M parameter sizes.
• **Chariot-1 TTS –** Generates speech in English and 10 Indian languages, including Tamil, Hindi, Bengali and Telugu.
• **IndicShift –** Shared alphabet covering 1,012 characters across 12 Indian scripts; reduces Indian-language token usage by up to 2.5 times.
• **Nested Training –** Trains three model sizes simultaneously using one training run and one set of weights; improves training speed by 62%.
• **Mixture of Vocabularies –** Divides vocabulary into 11 groups; reduces vocabulary scoring by 5.7 times and improves training speed by 38%.
• **Performance and Significance**
  - TTS achieved over **97% verbalisation accuracy** on the Async TTS Pronunciation Benchmark.
  - It supports context-aware pronunciation of numbers, dates, currencies, units, URLs and abbreviations.
  - It strengthens India's sovereign AI capabilities, multilingual accessibility, indigenous research and technological self-reliance.

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