CURRENT AFFAIRS — 16 November 2026

Monday, 16 November 2026 • Asia/Kolkata (IST) • Prelims + Mains GS-wise digest

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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR UPSC CSE

TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

- PM Modi in **Manila (16-18 Nov)** — **23rd ASEAN-India** & **21st EAS** on **17 Nov**
- 49th ASEAN Summit theme: **'Navigating the Future'**; host **Philippines**
- **WPI inflation 12.29%** (Oct) vs **11.39%** (Sep); base year **2022-23**
- Fuel & power WPI **32.84%**; crude petroleum & natural gas **70.80%**
- **Cyclone Akvan** (name by **Iran**) — landfall likely **Nellore-Tuni**, **~20 Nov**
- **Semicon 2.0** outlay **₹1.27 lakh crore**; phase-1: **12 projects, ₹1.64 lakh crore**
- **Mitra Shakti** (India-Sri Lanka, 12th) at **Maduru Oya**, **13-26 Nov**
- **Harimau Shakti 2026** (India-Malaysia) **18-30 Nov**
- India-Egypt **7th JTC** in Cairo: ToR for **PTA or FTA**
- **National Press Day (16 Nov)** — PCI began work on **16 Nov 1966**

SECTION A | GS-III: ECONOMY • SCI-TECH • ENVIRONMENT • SECURITY

1. WPI inflation accelerates to 12.29% in October on fuel and power surge

[ECONOMY] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3 (Economy)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS3**: Inflation, monetary policy, growth. Prelims: **WPI vs CPI**, base year, compiling body.
Context	Official data released on **16 November** show **WPI inflation** at **12.29%** in October, up from **11.39%** in September — the **third straight monthly rise**, driven mainly by fuel and power.
Key Facts	■ **Fuel & power**: **32.84%** (Sep **25.85%**); **crude petroleum & natural gas**: **70.80%** (Sep **57.32%**). ■ **WPI Food Index** eased to **8.58%** from **8.66%**; manufactured food **9.24%**. ■ All-commodities index **113.3** (Sep **112.5**); base year **2022-23**; cumulative **Apr-Oct: 10.14%**. ■ Retail **CPI inflation** for October was **6.09%** — above the **6%** upper tolerance limit. ■ Next WPI release: **14 December 2026**; October data compiled at **81.1%** weighted response rate.
Way Fwd	Calibrated **monetary tightening**, targeted **fuel tax relief** and supply-side steps to stop wholesale costs passing into retail prices.
Concept	**WPI** is compiled by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT** (Commerce Ministry); it has **no services**. **CPI (MoSPI)** is the RBI's target index: **4% ± 2%** under **flexible inflation targeting**.

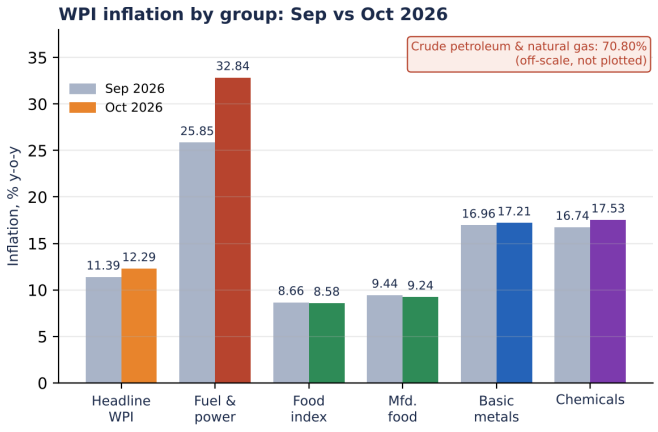


Fig: WPI inflation by major group, Sep vs Oct 2026

2. Make our own chip-making machines: push for semiconductor equipment ecosystem

[SCI-TECH] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3 (Sci-Tech, Industry)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS3**: Indigenisation of technology, industrial policy. Prelims: **India Semiconductor Mission**, Semicon India programme.
Context	Electronics & IT Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw**, visiting a precision-machinery unit in **Bengaluru** on **14 November**, called for India to make its **own semiconductor machines and high-precision components**.
Key Facts	■ **Semicon 2.0** web portal launched on **6 November** under the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**. ■ Next phase outlay: **₹1.27 lakh crore**; **machinery and materials** are one of **six focus areas**. ■ Phase 1: **12 projects** worth **₹1.64 lakh crore** approved across **six states**. ■ **Five** of these projects had begun **commercial production** by **October 2026**.
Way Fwd	Link **PLI-style incentives** to equipment makers, build **precision-engineering clusters** and joint R&D with global toolmakers.
Concept	The **Semicon India programme** (approved **December 2021**, **₹76,000 crore**) supports **fabs, display fabs, ATMP/OSAT** units and chip design; **ISM** runs under **MeitY**. Equipment such as **lithography** tools is dominated by a few global firms.

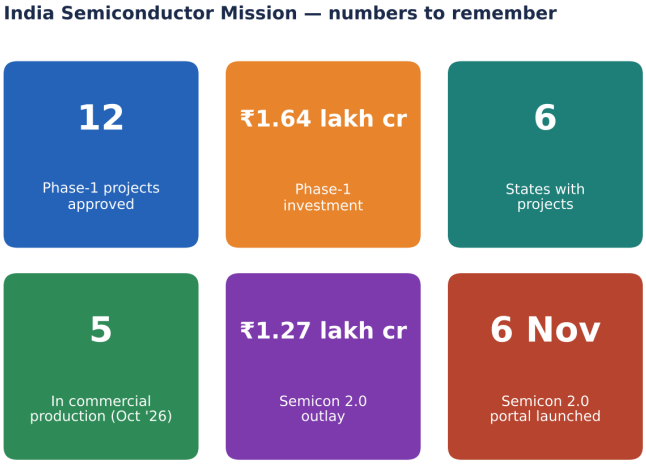
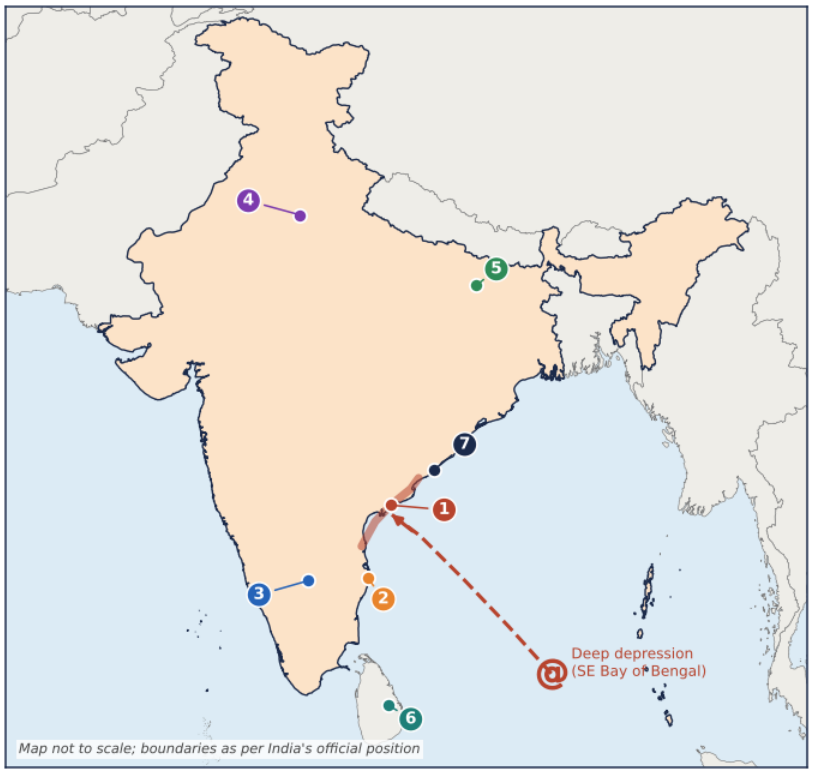


Fig: Semiconductor mission at a glance



INDIA IN NEWS — 16 NOV 2026

1. **Akvan landfall** — Nellore-Tuni coast, ~20 Nov
2. **Chennai & TN ports** — Signal No. 1
3. **Bengaluru** — semiconductor equipment push
4. **New Delhi** — Press Day; SC on NDPS courts
5. **Patna** — Chhath Puja concludes
6. **Maduru Oya (Sri Lanka)** — Mitra Shakti
7. **Visakhapatnam** — Tiger Triumph 2026

Expected track of Cyclone Akvan

Map: India in News today — numbered pins match the stories in this digest (linked to item 3, Cyclone Akvan)

3. Cyclone Akvan forms over Bay of Bengal; Andhra coast on alert

[ENVIRONMENT] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS1/GS3 (Geography, Disaster Mgmt)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS1**: Cyclones; **GS3**: Disaster management. Prelims: **cyclone naming**, IMD warning signals.
Context	A **deep depression** over the south-east Bay of Bengal is expected to become **Cyclone Akvan** by the evening of **16 November** — reportedly the **third cyclone in a month** in the Bay.
Key Facts	■ Forecast: **severe cyclonic storm** by **17 November**, later **very severe**. ■ Likely to cross the **Andhra Pradesh-Yanam** coast between **Nellore and Tuni** around **20 November**. ■ Landfall winds **120-130 km/h**, gusting to **145 km/h**. ■ **Chennai, Ennore, Cuddalore, Thoothukudi** ports hoisted **Signal No. 1**; fishermen told to stay ashore. ■ Name '**Akvan**' was contributed by **Iran**.
Way Fwd	Timely **evacuation**, pre-positioned **NDRF/SDRF** teams, **cyclone shelters** and **impact-based forecasts** to keep the death toll near zero.
Concept	North Indian Ocean cyclones are named from a list of **13 WMO/ESCAP Panel** members; **IMD New Delhi** is the **RSMC**. The **post-monsoon (Oct-Dec)** season is the second cyclone peak in the Bay of Bengal.

4. Army diplomacy: Mitra Shakti underway in Sri Lanka, Harimau Shakti from 18 Nov

[DEFENCE] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3 (Security), GS2 (IR)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS3**: Security challenges; **GS2**: Neighbourhood, Act East. Prelims: **exercise names, partners, venues**.
Context	The **12th India-Sri Lanka exercise Mitra Shakti** began on **13 November**, and the Army announced **Harimau Shakti 2026** with **Malaysia** from **18 to 30 November**.
Key Facts	■ **Mitra Shakti**: **13-26 Nov**, **Army Training School, Maduru Oya**; **170-member** contingent led by **Rajputana Rifles**, with **IAF** personnel. ■ Mitra Shakti began in **2012**; focus on **counter-terrorism** under a **UN mandate**. ■ **Harimau Shakti 2026** (**6th edition**) hosted by **Malaysia**; previous edition at **Mahajan Field Firing Range, Rajasthan** (Dec 2025). ■ Also running: **Tiger Triumph 2026** (India-US, **5th edition**) from **2 Nov** at **Visakhapatnam**, with **NDRF** for the first time.
Way Fwd	Use exercises to build **interoperability** for **HADR** and peacekeeping, and to anchor India as the **first responder** in the Indian Ocean.
Concept	**Defence diplomacy** supports **Neighbourhood First** and **SAGAR/MAHASAGAR**. Trap: **Harimau** is Malay for **tiger**; **Mitra Shakti = Sri Lanka**, **Harimau Shakti = Malaysia**, **Tiger Triumph = USA**.

Army exercises in news — at a glance

MITRA SHAKTI — India - Sri Lanka	■ 12th edition (since 2012) ■ 13-26 Nov 2026 ■ Maduru Oya, Sri Lanka ■ Counter-terrorism, UN mandate
HARIMAU SHAKTI — India - Malaysia	■ 6th edition ■ 18-30 Nov 2026 ■ Host: Malaysia ■ 'Harimau' = tiger (Malay)
TIGER TRIUMPH — India - USA	■ 5th edition ■ From 2 Nov 2026 ■ Visakhapatnam ■ HADR; NDRF joins first time

Fig: Exercises in news — partner, dates, venue

5. Race to host COP33 (2028) opens up after India's exit; Indonesia weighs bid

[ENVIRONMENT] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3 (Environment), GS2 (Global groupings)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS3**: Climate change, international conventions. Prelims: **UNFCCC, COP rotation, Paris Agreement**.
Context	With India having withdrawn its bid and China's plans unconfirmed, **Indonesia** is reported (15 Nov) to be considering hosting **COP33 in 2028** for the **Asia-Pacific Group**.
Key Facts	■ PM Modi had proposed hosting **COP33** at **COP28, Dubai (December 2023)**. ■ India conveyed its withdrawal to the Asia-Pacific Group by letter of **2 April 2026**, citing a review of **2028 commitments**. ■ **South Korea** had shown interest but is preparing to host the **G20 in 2028**. ■ India says it remains committed to its climate goals, including **net zero by 2070**.
Way Fwd	India can still shape outcomes through **climate finance** and **adaptation** coalitions with the Global South, even without hosting.
Concept	**COP** is the supreme body of the **UNFCCC (1992)**; hosting **rotates among five UN regional groups** and the host is nominated by the group. Trap: India is in the **Asia-Pacific Group**.

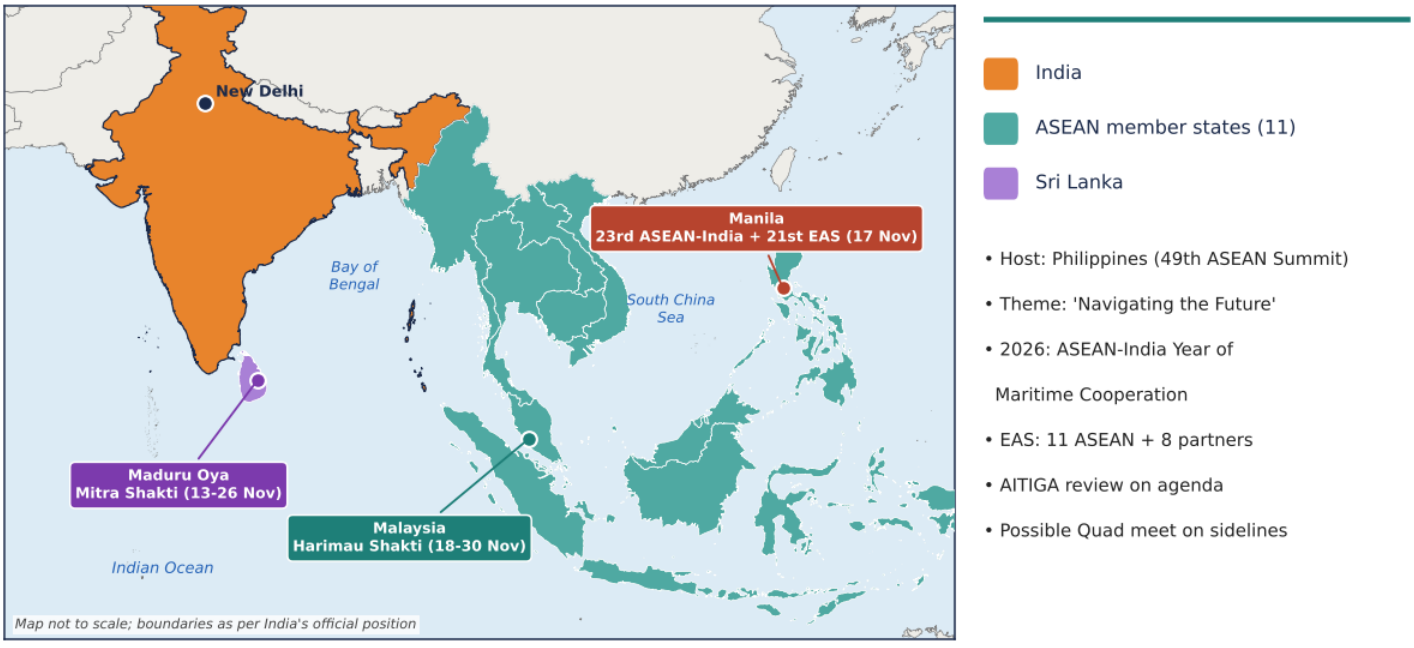
SECTION B | KEY ECONOMY DATA POINT OF THE DAY

12.29%
Data point of the day

WPI inflation, October 2026

Up from **11.39%** in September; **fuel & power** at **32.84%** and **crude petroleum & natural gas** at **70.80%**, while the **WPI Food Index** eased to **8.58%**. Retail **CPI** was **6.09%** in October.

SECTION C | GS-II: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS • POLITY • GOVERNANCE • SOCIETY



Map: India's Act East week — partners and venues in news (linked to item 6, ASEAN-India Summit)

6. PM Modi in Manila for 23rd ASEAN-India Summit and 21st East Asia Summit

[IR] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2 (International Relations)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS2**: India and its neighbourhood, regional groupings. Prelims: **ASEAN members, EAS, AITIGA, Act East**.
Context	PM Modi left for **Manila** on **16 November** for a **16-18 November** visit at the invitation of President **Ferdinand Marcos Jr.**; both summits are on **17 November**.
Key Facts	■ Philippines hosts the **49th ASEAN Summit** and related summits; theme **'Navigating the Future'**. ■ **2026** is the **ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation** (declared at the **22nd Summit**, Kuala Lumpur, **October 2025**). ■ Focus: **maritime security**, **South China Sea**, trade and an early close of the **AITIGA review**. ■ A **Quad leaders' meeting** with the US, Japan and Australia is possible on the sidelines. ■ ASEAN now has **11 members** (**Timor-Leste** the newest).
Way Fwd	Conclude a modernised **AITIGA** to narrow the **trade deficit**, and turn the maritime year into lasting mechanisms on **HADR**, **IUU fishing** and the **blue economy**.

Concept	India-ASEAN: **sectoral partner 1992**, **dialogue partner 1996**, **summit level 2002**, **Strategic 2012**, **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership 2022**. **EAS** (2005) is **ASEAN-led**; India is a **founding member**. **AITIGA** signed **2009**, in force **January 2010**.

7. India and Egypt to explore a trade pact; ports and logistics in focus

[IR] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2 (IR), GS3 (Trade)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS2**: Bilateral relations, West Asia-Africa. **GS3**: Trade agreements. Prelims: **PTA vs FTA**, **Suez Canal Economic Zone**.
Context	Commerce Minister **Piyush Goyal** co-chaired the **7th India-Egypt Joint Trade Committee** in **Cairo** on **15 November** with Egypt's Investment and Foreign Trade Minister **Mohamed Farid Saleh**.
Key Facts	■ Officials to draft **Terms of Reference** and study either a **Preferential Trade Agreement** or an **FTA**. ■ **Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZONE) — 4 industrial areas, 6 ports** (incl. **Ain Sokhna, East Port Said**) — flagged for cooperation. ■ Talks with Egypt's transport minister on **railways, highways, ports, multimodal connectivity**. ■ **300+ companies** met at the **India-Egypt Business Forum**; customs cooperation and **testing recognition** also on the table.
Way Fwd	Fast-track the ToR, secure an **Indian industrial zone in SCZONE** and use Egypt as a **gateway to Africa, Europe and the Arab world**.
Concept	A **PTA** cuts tariffs on a **limited list** of goods; an **FTA** removes tariffs on **substantially all trade**. India-Egypt ties were raised to a **Strategic Partnership** in **January 2023**, when President **El-Sisi** was Republic Day chief guest.

India-Egypt: from talks to a trade pact

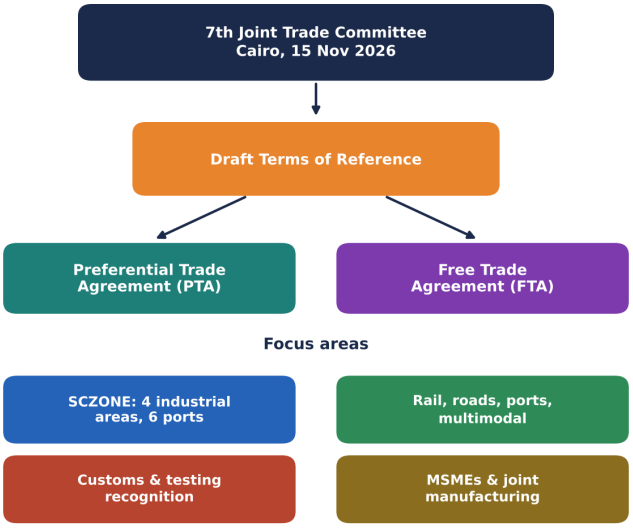


Fig: India-Egypt trade pact roadmap

8. Supreme Court seeks fresh status reports on 449 special NDPS courts

[POLITY] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2 (Judiciary), GS3 (Internal Security)**

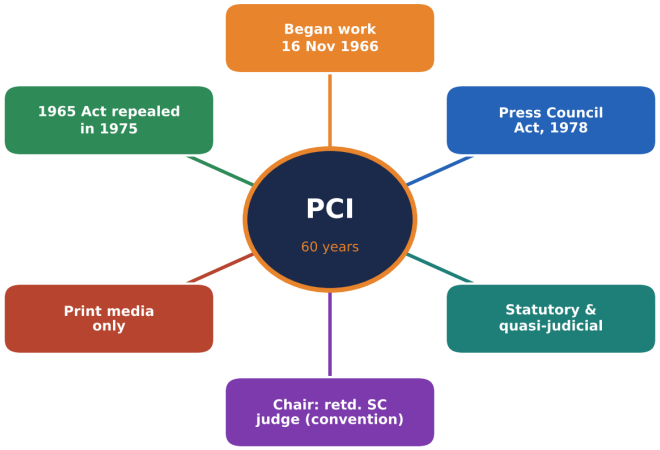
Syllabus Linkage	**GS2**: Judiciary, speedy justice; **GS3**: Drug trafficking. Prelims: **NDPS Act 1985, NIA Act 2008**.
Context	In a **suo motu** case, a bench of Justices **Joymalya Bagchi** and **V. Mohana** on **16 November** asked the Centre, states and UTs to report progress on **449 special courts** for heinous **NDPS** offences.
Key Facts	■ Centre (through the **Additional Solicitor General**) admitted **little progress** since the court's recent orders. ■ The bench also reviewed **exclusive special courts** under **Section 11 of the NIA Act, 2008**. ■ Court flagged the **rise in narcotics offences** and growing **NDPS pendency**. ■ Matter to be listed again **before the December winter vacation**.
Way Fwd	Fund courts jointly, fill **judge and prosecutor vacancies**, and strengthen **forensic labs** so trials end within time limits.
Concept	**Article 21** includes the right to a **speedy trial** (Hussainara Khatoon, 1979). **NDPS Act, 1985** provides for **special courts (Sec. 36)**; **NCB** is the nodal drug-law agency. 'Administration of justice' is in the **Concurrent List** (Entry 11A).

9. National Press Day: Press Council of India marks 60 years

[POLITY] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2 (Statutory bodies)**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS2**: Statutory and quasi-judicial bodies, **Article 19(1)(a)**. Prelims: **PCI history and powers**.
Context	**16 November** is observed as **National Press Day**, marking the day the **Press Council of India (PCI)** began functioning in **1966** — this year is its **60th anniversary**.
Key Facts	■ PCI was set up on the recommendation of the **First Press Commission (1954)** under the **Press Council Act, 1965**. ■ The 1965 Act was **repealed in 1975** (Emergency); PCI was re-established under the **Press Council Act, 1978**. ■ It is a **statutory, quasi-judicial** body; its chairperson is by convention a **retired Supreme Court judge**. ■ Registered publications rose from **60,143 (2004-05)** to **1.54 lakh (2024-25)**.
Way Fwd	Update the regulatory framework for **digital news**, tackle **misinformation** and **paid news**, and give PCI stronger enforcement tools.
Concept	Press freedom is part of **Article 19(1)(a)** (Romesh Thappar, 1950), subject to **Article 19(2)**. Trap: PCI covers **print media only**; it can **warn, admonish or censure** but cannot impose penalties.

Press Council of India — mind map



Powers: can warn, admonish or censure — no penal powers

Fig: Press Council of India — key facts

10. Chhath Puja concludes with Usha Arghya; Delhi declares public holiday

[SOCIETY] COMMON: Prelims GS1 (Art & Culture)

Syllabus Linkage	**GS1**: Indian culture, festivals. Prelims: **regional festivals and deities**.
Context	The four-day **Chhath Puja (13-16 November)** ended on **16 November** with offerings to the **rising Sun (Usha Arghya)**; the **Lieutenant Governor** declared a holiday in Delhi for **Surya Shashthi**.
Key Facts	■ Dedicated to **Surya** and **Chhathi Maiya**; observed on **Kartika Shukla Shashthi**. ■ Four rituals: **Nahay-Khay**, **Kharna**, **Sandhya Arghya** (setting Sun) and **Usha Arghya** (rising Sun). ■ Main regions: **Bihar, Jharkhand, eastern Uttar Pradesh** and the **Nepal Terai**. ■ Railways ran Chhath **special trains** with over **47,000** extra berths for the return rush (16-30 Nov).
Way Fwd	Keep ghats and rivers clean with **eco-friendly** rituals and plan **migrant travel** capacity well ahead of the festival.
Concept	Chhath is one of the few Vedic-era **Sun-worship** festivals with **no idol worship** and no priest. Trap: Sun temples in news — **Konark (Odisha)**, **Modhera (Gujarat)**, **Martand (J&K)**, **Deo (Bihar)**.

SECTION D | PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

Topic	Quick fact for Prelims
Cyclone naming	**Cyclone naming**: 'Akvan' contributed by **Iran**; panel of **13** countries; RSMC = **IMD New Delhi**.
WPI	**WPI base year**: **2022-23**; next release **14 December 2026**.
Defence	**Tiger Triumph 2026** (India-US, 5th): began **2 Nov**, **Visakhapatnam**; **NDRF** joined for the first time.
Trade fair	**45th India International Trade Fair** opened **14 Nov** at **Bharat Mandapam**, New Delhi.
Cyber security	**NIELIT** holds its **3rd National Conference on Cyber Security** on **16-17 Nov**.
East Asia Summit	**East Asia Summit**: started **2005**; India a **founding member**; **ASEAN-led**.

SECTION E | PRACTICE CORNER

PRELIMS MCQs

Q1. With reference to the Press Council of India, consider the following statements:
1. It began functioning on 16 November 1966.
2. It currently functions under the Press Council Act, 1978.
3. Its jurisdiction extends to television news channels.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) — PCI began work on **16 Nov 1966** and now functions under the **Press Council Act, 1978**. It covers **print media only**, so statement 3 is wrong.

Q2. With reference to the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) in India, consider the following statements:
1. It is released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
2. The RBI's inflation target under flexible inflation targeting is defined in terms of WPI.
3. The WPI basket includes services.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — WPI is released by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT (Commerce Ministry)**. RBI targets **CPI (4% ± 2%)**, and WPI has **no services**.

MAINS PRACTICE (GS-II)

"ASEAN centrality remains the anchor of India's Act East Policy." In the light of the 23rd ASEAN-India Summit, discuss the significance of the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for India's maritime and economic interests. (15 marks, 250 words)

Hint: Intro: **1992 to CSP 2022**, Manila summit. Body: maritime (**Year of Maritime Cooperation 2026**, South China Sea, **SAGAR/MAHASAGAR**), economy (**AITIGA review**, trade deficit, supply chains), connectivity (**Trilateral Highway**, Kaladan), challenges (China, RCEP exit). Conclude with **Indo-Pacific** vision.

ONE-LINE REVISION: Manila: **23rd ASEAN-India + 21st EAS (17 Nov)**; WPI **12.29%** (fuel **32.84%**); **Akvan** (Iran) to Nellore-Tuni ~**20 Nov**; **Mitra Shakti = Sri Lanka**, **Harimau Shakti = Malaysia**; PCI **16 Nov 1966**.

Compiled & simplified by the StudyForGS.com Research Team
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