CURRENT AFFAIRS — 18 NOV 2026

Wednesday, 18 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

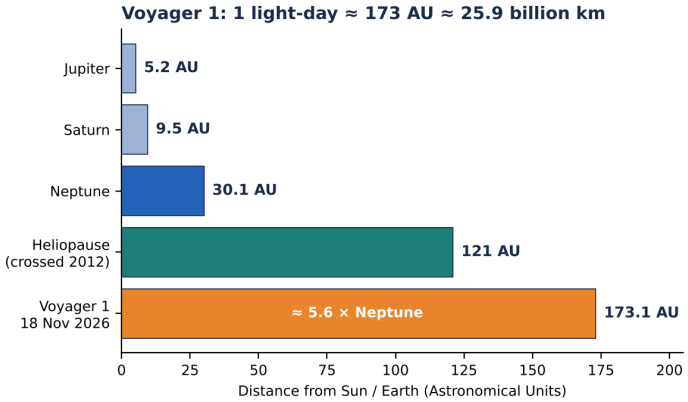
- **Voyager 1** = first human-made object **1 light-day** (~**25.9 bn km**, **173 AU**) from Earth — **18 Nov 2026**.
- **WPI inflation** (Oct 2026) = **12.29%**, highest in new **2022-23** series; **fuel & power 32.84%**.
- Cyclone **Akvan** (name given by **Iran**) to cross AP coast between **Nellore and Tuni** on **20 Nov**.
- **Siang Upper Multipurpose Project** = **11,200 MW**, India's largest hydro proposal; bandh at **Ruksin**.
- LPG tanker **Tara Gas** hit near **Hormuz** (16 Nov); all **24 Indian seafarers** safe.
- **World AMR Awareness Week** (**18–24 Nov**) theme: '**One Health, One Action: Prevent AMR Now**'.
- **23rd ASEAN-India Summit**, Manila: PM proposes **ASEAN-India Maritime Cooperation Plan**.
- **Quad Summit**, Manila: first Quad **P-8/P-3C** patrol-aircraft exercise in **2027**.
- **4th India-Japan 2+2** in **Tokyo** with **Koizumi** (Defence) and **Motegi** (Foreign).
- **'Samaveshi Niti Sankalp'** summit by **MoSJE** on **18–19 Nov**, New Delhi.

SECTION A • GS-III: SCIENCE-TECH / ECONOMY / ENVIRONMENT / SECURITY

Voyager 1 becomes the first human-made object one light-day from Earth

[SCI-TECH] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

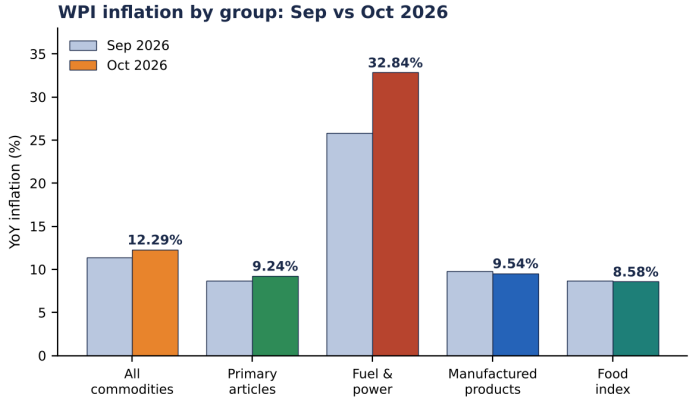
Syllabus Linkage	**GS-III**: Science & Technology — space missions. **Prelims**: heliosphere, heliopause, light-day vs light-year, deep-space communication.
Context	On **18 November 2026**, NASA's **Voyager 1** crossed a distance of **one light-day** (about **25.9 billion km**) from Earth — the first spacecraft ever to do so. A radio signal now needs **24 hours** one way, so a command-and-reply cycle takes about **48 hours**.
Key Facts	■ Launched on **5 September 1977**; flew past **Jupiter (1979)** and **Saturn (1980)**. ■ Crossed the **heliopause** into **interstellar space** in **2012** — the first spacecraft to do so. ■ One light-day ≈ **173 AU**, about **5.6 times** farther than **Neptune**; the trip took **~49 years**. ■ Twin **Voyager 2** (launched two weeks earlier) will reach one light-day only around **November 2035**. ■ Powered by **radioisotope thermoelectric generators (RTGs)**; most instruments are already switched off to save power.
Way Fwd	Deep-space reach depends on long-life nuclear power and large antenna networks — useful lessons for India's future interplanetary and deep-space missions.
Concept	**Light-day** is a unit of **distance**, not time (distance light travels in 24 h). **Heliosphere** = bubble of solar wind around the Sun; its outer edge is the **heliopause**. **1 AU ≈ 150 million km** (mean Earth–Sun distance).



WPI inflation hits 12.29% in October — highest in the new 2022-23 series

[ECONOMY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-III**: Indian Economy — inflation, price indices. **Prelims**: WPI vs CPI, base year, compiling agencies.
Context	Provisional data released by the **Ministry of Commerce & Industry** show **WPI** inflation rose to **12.29%** in **October 2026** from **11.39%** in September, driven by **fuel & power** and **primary articles**. It is the highest since the new series with **base year 2022-23** began.
Key Facts	■ **Fuel & power** inflation jumped to **32.84%** (from 25.85%); crude petroleum & natural gas prices up nearly **71%** year-on-year. ■ **Primary articles** at **9.24%**; **manufactured products** eased to **9.54%**; **WPI Food Index** at **8.58%**. ■ All-commodities index rose to **113.3** (from 112.5); cumulative **April–October 2026-27** inflation is **10.14%**. ■ Low base: WPI was **(-)1.18%** in October 2025, so part of the spike is a **base effect**. ■ November WPI is due on **14 December 2026**.
Way Fwd	Watch pass-through from wholesale to retail prices; targeted fuel-tax relief and supply-side steps can ease cost-push pressure without hurting growth.
Concept	**WPI** is compiled by the **Office of the Economic Adviser (DPIIT)**; it covers **no services** and tracks prices at the wholesale/producer stage. **CPI** (by **NSO, MoSPI**) is used by **RBI** for its inflation target of **4% ±2%**. Rising input prices = **cost-push inflation**.

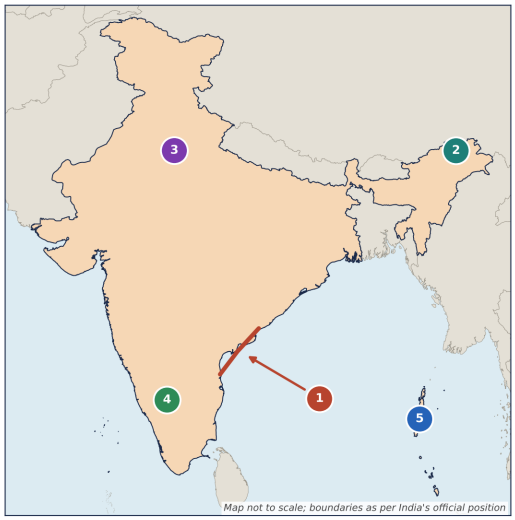


Cyclone Akvan to cross the Andhra coast as a very severe cyclonic storm on 20 November

[ENVIRONMENT] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS1 & GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-I**: Geography — tropical cyclones. **GS-III**: Disaster management. **Prelims**: cyclone naming, IMD intensity scale.
Context	The **IMD** forecasts that cyclonic storm **Akvan** over the **Bay of Bengal** will intensify into a **very severe cyclonic storm (VSCS)** and cross the **Andhra Pradesh–Yanam** coast between **Nellore and Tuni** around noon on **20 November 2026**. Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and south Bengal are on rain alert.
Key Facts	■ Expected landfall winds **120–130 km/h**, gusting to **145 km/h**. ■ The name **'Akvan'** was contributed by **Iran** under the regional naming list. ■ Third cyclone of the **post-monsoon** season after **Arnab** (landfall near **Narasapur**, 28 Oct) and **Murasu**. ■ Fishermen warned off the Bay of Bengal and **Andaman Sea**; Navy, Air Force and Army on alert in the **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**.
Way Fwd	Pre-emptive evacuation, impact-based warnings and resilient coastal infrastructure (shelters, mangrove belts) remain the key to a 'zero casualty' approach.
Concept	Names for the **North Indian Ocean** are assigned by **RSMC New Delhi (IMD)** from a list by **13 member countries** of the **WMO/ESCAP Panel**. IMD scale: **Cyclonic Storm 62–88 km/h**, **Severe 89–117**, **Very Severe 118–166**, **Extremely Severe 167–221**, **Super Cyclone ≥222 km/h**.

INDIA IN NEWS — 18 Nov 2026



1 Cyclone Akvan: landfall between Nellore and Tuni (AP), 20 Nov
2 Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (11,200 MW), Arunachal Pradesh
3 New Delhi: 'Samaveshi Niti Sankalp' summit; 45th IITF
4 Nagamangala (Karnataka): 9th National Naturopathy Day
5 Andaman & Nicobar Islands: cyclone alert, forces on standby

World AMR Awareness Week begins: 'One Health, One Action: Prevent AMR Now'

[HEALTH] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2 & GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-II**: Health. **GS-III**: Biotechnology & public health. **Prelims**: AMR, One Health, superbugs, Quadripartite.
Context	**World AMR Awareness Week (WAAW)** is observed from **18 to 24 November**. The **2026 theme** is **'One Health, One Action: Prevent AMR Now'**, backed by the updated **Global Action Plan on AMR 2026–2036**.
Key Facts	■ **AMR** occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites stop responding to medicines meant to kill them. ■ Without urgent action, AMR could cause up to **39 million deaths by 2050** and cost over **US$3.4 trillion a year**. ■ The **Global Action Plan (2026–2036)** targets fewer AMR deaths, lower antimicrobial use (especially in **agrifood systems**) and less environmental pollution from residues. ■ India's response: **National Action Plan on AMR (NAP-AMR)**, the **Red Line** campaign on antibiotic packs, and a ban on **colistin** as an animal growth promoter.
Way Fwd	Strengthen surveillance, curb over-the-counter antibiotic sales, regulate pharma effluents and promote vaccination and hygiene to cut infections.
Concept	**One Health** links human, animal, plant and environmental health. The **Quadripartite** (**WHO, FAO, WOAH, UNEP**) leads the global AMR response. Antibiotics act only on **bacteria**, not viruses.

Bandh against the 11,200 MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project halts Assam–Arunachal traffic

[ENVIRONMENT] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-III**: Infrastructure (energy), Environment & EIA. **GS-II**: Tribal rights. **Prelims**: Siang/Brahmaputra, Medog dam, Tehri.
Context	A **24-hour bandh** on **17 November 2026** shut the **Ruksin** entry gate on **NH-515** in **East Siang** district, halting traffic between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Protesters oppose the proposed **Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP)** and its **pre-feasibility report (PFR)** surveys.
Key Facts	■ At **11,200 MW**, SUMP would be **India's largest** hydropower project (current largest: **Tehri, 2,400 MW**). ■ Seen as a **strategic counter** to China's planned **60,000 MW Medog** project on the **Yarlung Tsangpo** upstream; also pitched for flood moderation and water storage. ■ About **27 villages** face submergence (**20** in Upper Siang, **7** in Siang); the indigenous **Adi** community fears loss of land and culture. ■ Project is still at the **pre-feasibility** stage, with **NHPC** carrying out surveys.
Way Fwd	Free, prior and informed consent, a transparent cumulative impact assessment and fair resettlement are needed to balance strategic water security with tribal rights.
Concept	**Siang** = the **Brahmaputra** in Arunachal; it is the **Yarlung Tsangpo** in Tibet and the **Jamuna** in Bangladesh. **EIA** is done under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**; the **Forest Rights Act, 2006** requires **Gram Sabha** consent for diverting forest land.

Missile hits LPG tanker carrying 24 Indian seafarers near the Strait of Hormuz; all safe

[DEFENCE] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2 & GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-III**: Security challenges, maritime & energy security. **GS-II**: Indians abroad. **Prelims**: Strait of Hormuz, Musandam, UNCLOS.
Context	The Panama-flagged LPG tanker **Tara Gas**, carrying **24 Indian seafarers**, was hit by a missile near the **Strait of Hormuz** on **16 November 2026**, causing an engine-room fire about **7 nautical miles north of Khasab, Oman**. The Shipping Minister confirmed the full **25-member crew** is safe.
Key Facts	■ Part of a run of attacks on merchant ships in the Hormuz region amid the **West Asia conflict**; over **20 ships** were attacked in **October 2026** alone. ■ At the **21st East Asia Summit** on 17 Nov, India proposed a **Seafarers' Safety Initiative** for joint training and emergency response. ■ India is one of the world's largest suppliers of **seafarers**, making crew safety a key **diaspora welfare** issue. ■ Hormuz links the **Persian Gulf** with the **Gulf of Oman** and carries a large share of India's crude and **LPG** imports.

Way Fwd	Continue naval escort operations, diversify energy sources and strategic reserves, and push for multilateral guarantees on freedom of navigation.
Concept	**Strait of Hormuz** lies between **Iran** (north) and Oman's **Musandam** peninsula (south). **UNCLOS (1982)** guarantees **transit passage** through straits used for international navigation. India's **Strategic Petroleum Reserves**: **Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, Padur**.

SECTION B • ECONOMY DATA POINT OF THE DAY

$39.88 bn
Merchandise trade deficit, October 2026

A one-year high as imports hit a record **$89.35 bn** (+16.5%), even though exports touched an all-time monthly high of **$49.47 bn** (+45.1%). The overall goods-plus-services deficit narrowed to **$20.09 bn** (from $25.15 bn a year ago); April–October goods deficit: **$218.15 bn**.

Exports	Imports	Overall deficit	Apr-Oct goods gap
$49.47 bn	$89.35 bn	$20.09 bn	$218.15 bn

SECTION C • GS-II: GOVERNANCE / POLITY / INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

23rd ASEAN-India Summit & 21st East Asia Summit in Manila: India unveils maritime plan

[IR] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-II**: Regional groupings (ASEAN, EAS), Act East Policy. **Prelims**: ASEAN members & chair, TAC, dialogue milestones.
Context	PM Modi attended the **23rd ASEAN-India Summit** and the **21st East Asia Summit** in **Manila** on **17 November 2026**, hosted by the **Philippines** as **ASEAN Chair 2026**. He placed **nine proposals** and called for 'cooperation, not competition'.
Key Facts	■ Proposed a long-term **ASEAN-India Maritime Cooperation Plan** — connectivity, **maritime domain awareness**, **Coast Guard** cooperation, disaster management and seafarer safety. ■ Other proposals: joint **cyber-forensics** training, **nuclear energy** technical exchanges, an **ASEAN-India Space Hackathon** and **critical minerals** cooperation. ■ Leaders adopted the **ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Cooperation in Disaster Management**. ■ At the EAS, India proposed a **Seafarers' Safety Initiative** and an **EAS Cybercrime Conference**; marked **50 years** of the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)**. ■ **2026** is the **ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation**; **2027** marks **35 years** of dialogue relations and **5 years** of the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**.
Way Fwd	Fast-track the AITIGA review, complete the Trilateral Highway and Kaladan project, and turn the maritime proposals into funded programmes.
Concept	**ASEAN** (est. **1967**, Bangkok Declaration) now has **11 members** with **Timor-Leste**. India: sectoral partner **1992**, dialogue partner **1995**, summit partner **2002**, **CSP 2022**. **EAS** (est. **2005**) has **18 members**; India is a founding member. **Look East (1991) → Act East (2014)**.

▼ *See the full-width Indo-Pacific map at the end of Section C.*

First Quad Leaders' Summit in two years held in Manila

[IR] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-II**: Bilateral, regional & global groupings affecting India's interests. **Prelims**: Quad history and initiatives.
Context	Leaders of **India, the US, Japan and Australia** — **PM Modi**, **President Trump**, **PM Sanae Takaichi** and **PM Anthony Albanese** — met in **Manila** on **17 November 2026**, the first Quad Leaders' Summit since **Wilmington (September 2024)**.
Key Facts	■ Announced the **first-ever Quad exercise of maritime patrol aircraft** (**P-8** and **P-3C**) in **2027**. ■ Inaugural **Quad Business Leaders' Forum** to be held in **early 2027**. ■ Opposed attempts to change the status quo by **force or coercion**, including **economic coercion**; focus on **critical minerals**. ■ Unequivocally condemned terrorism, including **cross-border terrorism**. ■ Manila is symbolic: Quad officials first met there in **2007** and the grouping was revived there in **2017**.
Way Fwd	India should use the Quad for practical deliverables — maritime awareness, supply-chain resilience, technology — while keeping strategic autonomy and ASEAN centrality.
Concept	Quad roots: **Tsunami Core Group (2004)**; proposed by Japan's **Shinzo Abe (2007)**; revived **2017**; first leaders' summit (virtual) **March 2021**. Initiatives: **IPMDA** (Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness), **Quad Cancer Moonshot**. Quad is **not a military alliance** — no treaty, no secretariat.

Quad Leaders' Summit, Manila (17 Nov 2026)

2 yrs	P-8 + P-3C	Early 2027	2007 / 2017
first leaders' summit since Sep 2024	first Quad patrol-aircraft exercise in 2027	inaugural Quad Business Leaders' Forum	Manila: first meet & revival of the Quad

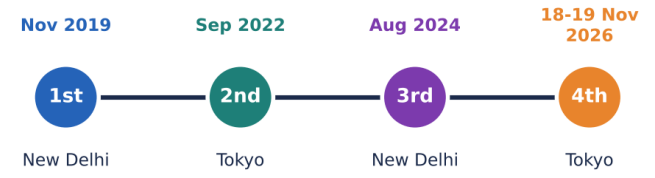
Rajnath Singh and Jaishankar in Tokyo for the 4th India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

[IR] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2 & GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-II**: India-Japan relations. **GS-III**: Defence cooperation & technology. **Prelims**: 2+2 partners, bilateral exercises.
Context	Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** and External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** are in **Japan (18–19 November 2026)** for the **fourth India-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministerial ('2+2') Dialogue** in **Tokyo** with Japan's Defence Minister **Shinjiro Koizumi** and Foreign Minister **Toshimitsu Motegi**.

Key Facts	■ Agenda: **defence cooperation**, **maritime security**, **defence technology**, joint exercises and the **Indo-Pacific** situation. ■ Earlier rounds: **1st – New Delhi, Nov 2019**; **2nd – Tokyo, Sep 2022**; **3rd – New Delhi, Aug 2024**. ■ India's ministerial 2+2 partners: **USA, Japan, Australia and Russia**. ■ India-Japan exercises: **JIMEX** (navy), **Dharma Guardian** (army), **Veer Guardian** (air force), **Shinyuu Maitri**.
Way Fwd	Move from dialogue to co-development and co-production of defence platforms, and link Japanese investment with India's Indo-Pacific and Northeast connectivity goals.
Concept	**2+2** = joint meeting of foreign and defence ministers of two countries. India-Japan ties are a **'Special Strategic and Global Partnership'** (since **2014**). Key pacts: **ACSA (2020)** for reciprocal logistics support; flagship project **Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail**.

India–Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue: timeline

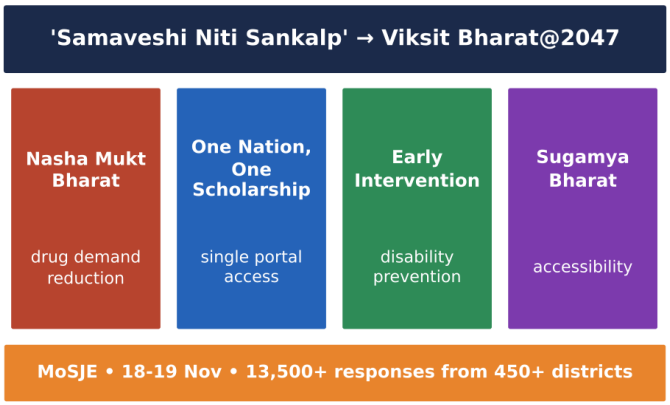


Ministerial 2+2 partners: USA • Japan • Australia • Russia

'Samaveshi Niti Sankalp' summit on social inclusion begins in New Delhi

[SOCIETY] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-II**: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections; Centre-State cooperation. **GS-I**: Social empowerment. **Prelims**: Nasha Mukt Bharat, Sugamya Bharat.
Context	The **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment** is holding a two-day summit, **'Samaveshi Niti Sankalp'**, on **18–19 November 2026** at **Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi**, to align the Centre and States towards **Viksit Bharat@2047**. PM Modi is scheduled to attend the valedictory session.
Key Facts	■ Four focus areas: **drug demand reduction (Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan)**, **One Nation, One Scholarship Portal**, **early intervention for disability**, and **accessibility (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)**. ■ Pre-summit consultation drew **13,500+ responses** from **450+ districts**. ■ Outcomes and action plans will be presented at the valedictory session.
Way Fwd	Convert the consultations into State-level action plans with clear indicators, and use one-portal delivery to cut leakages in scholarships.
Concept	**Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan** (Accessible India Campaign) launched on **3 December 2015**. **RPwD Act, 2016** recognises **21 disabilities** and raised job reservation to **4%**. **Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan** launched on **15 August 2020**. Constitutional basis: **Articles 38 and 46** (DPSP).



Manila Summits & India's Indo-Pacific map — 17-19 Nov 2026

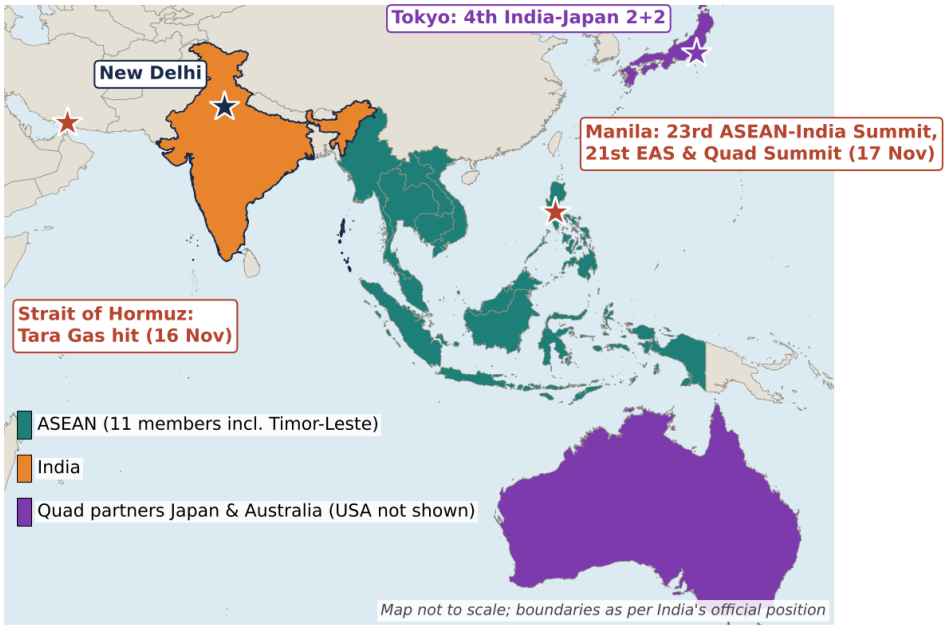


Fig: Manila summits, Tokyo 2+2 and the Hormuz flashpoint — linked to the ASEAN-India / EAS item above.

SECTION D • PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

1. **National Naturopathy Day (18 Nov)**: 9th edition at **CRIYN, Nagamangala (Karnataka)**; theme **'Prakrutik Chikitsa, Swasth Bharat'**; linked to **Mahatma Gandhi**'s nature-cure legacy.

2. **COP31 (9–20 Nov), Antalya**: unusual split — **Türkiye** holds the host presidency, **Australia** is 'President of Negotiations'; India seeks a **Climate Finance Work Programme**.

3. **45th IITF (14–27 Nov)**, **Bharat Mandapam**: theme **'Vikas aur Virasat'**; **3,500+** exhibitors, **32** States/UTs, **11** countries; MSME Pavilion opens today.

4. **SAFF Championship 2026**: India beat Pakistan **2-1** in **Dhaka** for a record **10th** title (**third** in a row).

5. **APEC Leaders' Meeting 2026** begins in **Shenzhen, China** (18 Nov) — India is **not** an APEC member.

6. **Bengaluru Tech Summit**: **29th** edition, **17–19 Nov**, theme **'AI & Beyond'**.

SECTION E • PRACTICE CORNER

Q1. (Prelims)

Consider the following statements regarding 'light-day' and the Voyager missions: 1. A light-day is a unit of time equal to 24 hours. 2. Voyager 1 crossed the heliopause before reaching one light-day from Earth. 3. Voyager 2 has already crossed one light-day from Earth. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b) — A light-day is a unit of **distance** (~**25.9 billion km**), so 1 is wrong. Voyager 1 crossed the **heliopause in 2012** and reached one light-day on **18 Nov 2026**, so 2 is right. **Voyager 2** will reach it only around **2035**, so 3 is wrong.

Q2. (Prelims)

With reference to the naming of tropical cyclones in the North Indian Ocean, consider the following statements: 1. Names are assigned by the RSMC New Delhi operated by the IMD. 2. The names list is contributed by member countries of the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones. 3. The name of Cyclone 'Akvan' was contributed by India. Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (a) — **RSMC New Delhi (IMD)** assigns names from a list given by the **13 member countries** of the **WMO/ESCAP Panel**, so 1 and 2 are right. **'Akvan'** was contributed by **Iran**, not India, so 3 is wrong.

Mains Practice (GS-II)

The Manila summits of November 2026 — ASEAN-India, East Asia Summit and Quad — show maritime cooperation becoming the core of India's Act East Policy. Discuss the opportunities and challenges for India. (15 marks, 250 words)

Hint: Intro: **Act East** + **2026 ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation**. Opportunities: **Maritime Cooperation Plan**, MDA/IPMDA, Coast Guard ties, **Seafarers' Safety Initiative**, Quad patrol-aircraft exercise. Challenges: South China Sea tensions, ASEAN centrality vs Quad, slow connectivity (**Kaladan**, **Trilateral Highway**), AITIGA trade imbalance, Hormuz-type threats. Conclude with **MAHASAGAR** vision and a rules-based Indo-Pacific.

ONE-LINE REVISION: Voyager 1 = 1 light-day (a DISTANCE, ~25.9 bn km) • WPI 12.29% (fuel 32.84%) • Akvan → named by Iran, AP landfall 20 Nov • Siang 11,200 MW vs Medog 60,000 MW • Manila: 23rd ASEAN-India, 21st EAS, first Quad summit in 2 yrs • 4th India-Japan 2+2, Tokyo

Compiled & simplified by the StudyForGS.com Research Team
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