



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 17-06-2026

Mapping Perspective

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Prelims Perspective

2. One Station One Product (OSOP) Initiative
3. SOLAR-1

Mains Perspective

4. How drones are the new face of warfare
5. India Slovakia Bilateral Relations

Armenia

Syllabus: GS-1: World Geography – Mapping.

Context:

- Recently, Armenia's ruling **Civil Contract Party** won the Parliamentary election.

About Armenia

Location

- Landlocked country located in the **south of the Caucasus Mountain Range**.

Borders

- **North:** Georgia
- **East:** Azerbaijan
- **Southeast:** Iran
- **West:** Turkey

Capital: Yerevan



Geographical Features of Armenia

Climate

- **Highland continental climate** with hot summers and cold winters.

Terrain

- **Lesser (Little) Caucasus Mountains** dominate much of Armenia's landscape.
- Much of Armenia's soil, formed partly by residues of **volcanic lava**, is rich in **nitrogen, potash, and phosphates**.

Highest Peak

- **Mount Aragats (4,090 m)** – an extinct volcanic peak.

Rivers

- **Aras, Hrazdan, Arpa, and Vorotan** rivers provide **hydropower and irrigation facilities**.

Lakes

- **Lake Sevan** is the largest lake in Armenia.

Natural Resources

- Contains small deposits of **gold, copper, molybdenum, zinc, and bauxite**.

Prelims Pointers

- **Region:** South Caucasus
- **Nature:** Landlocked country
- **Major Physical Feature:** Lesser Caucasus Mountains
- **Highest Peak:** Mount Aragats
- **Largest Lake:** Lake Sevan
- **Important River:** Aras River
- **Capital:** Yerevan
- **Neighbouring Countries:** Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkey

One Station One Product (OSOP) Initiative

Syllabus: GS-3; Economy – MSME & Inclusive Development

Context

The Ministry of MSME is promoting products made by Divyangjan artisans through the One Station One Product (OSOP) initiative.

About OSOP

- Launched on **25 March 2022**.
- An initiative of **Indian Railways**.

- Aims to enhance livelihoods through **skill development and marketing support for local artisans, weavers, and craftsmen.**

Objectives

- **Transform railway stations into marketplaces for regional products.**
- Increase visibility and sales opportunities for local producers.
- Promote sustainable livelihoods.

Implementation

- Sale outlets are provided at railway stations through a tendering process.
- Stalls are allotted on a rotational basis at nominal fees.
- Implemented by railway divisions in coordination with:
 - State agencies
 - Self-Help Groups (SHGs)
 - MSMEs

Significance

- Expands market access for local artisans.
- Generates livelihood opportunities.
- Revives and preserves traditional crafts and indigenous products.

Beneficiaries

- Artisans
- Weavers
- Potters
- Tribal communities
- Self-Help Groups

SOLAR-1

Syllabus: GS-3; Science & Technology – Space Technology

Context

The United States recently activated SOLAR-1, its first dedicated space weather monitoring satellite, designed to provide faster warnings of solar storms that can affect GPS, communications, satellites, and power grids.



About SOLAR-1

- It is the first United States satellite designed exclusively for continuous operational space weather observation.
- It is operated by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
- Originally named **Space Weather Follow On – Lagrange 1 (SWFO-L1)**, the satellite was renamed **Space Weather Observations at L1 to Advance Readiness – 1 (SOLAR-1)**.
- **Primary Mission:** Continuous monitoring of solar activity and space weather.
- **Launch Date:** 24 September 2025
- **Launch Vehicle:** SpaceX Falcon 9

Orbit

- Positioned at the **Sun-Earth Lagrange Point 1 (L1)**, about 1.6 million kilometres from Earth towards the Sun.
- The location provides a constant and unobstructed view of solar activity.
- It continuously measures solar wind and tracks **Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)** before they reach Earth.
- The gravitational stability of the location allows the spacecraft to maintain its position with minimal fuel use.

Key Features

- Uses a compact coronagraph telescope to **monitor solar activity**.
- Equipped with a suite of instruments to make real-time measurements of the solar wind.
- Can transmit CME images to **NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center** within 30 minutes, compared to up to eight hours for older systems.
- Expected to improve aurora forecasts and strengthen the protection of power grids, navigation systems, communications networks, satellites, and space missions from severe space weather.

How drones are the new face of warfare

Syllabus: GS-3: Science and Technology – Defence Technology.

Context:

- Ongoing wars in Ukraine, Lebanon, and West Asia (US-Israel-Iran conflict) have demonstrated a fundamental shift in how modern wars are fought.
- Drones—cheap, mass-produced, and rapidly adaptable—have moved from support tools to central instruments of warfare, challenging decades-old assumptions about military power.

End of Conventional Superiority

- Traditionally, battlefield dominance belonged to nations with advanced tanks, aircraft, warships, precision missiles, and large defence budgets.
- Smaller militaries and non-state actors were largely confined to guerrilla and asymmetric tactics.
- This paradigm has been disrupted by commercially derived drones produced at scale and deployed extensively.
- Drones now perform multiple military functions:

- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR)
 - Target acquisition and artillery spotting
 - Precision strikes and deep-strike missions
 - Electronic warfare and logistics support
- Result: A continuous and interconnected battlespace where no position is fully safe, movements are quickly detected, and detection is rapidly followed by destruction.

DRONE WARFARE: RESHAPING MILITARY POWER
Drones are no longer just weapons—they are the infrastructure of modern war.

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IRAN'S STRATEGIC DRONE MODEL

- Iran follows a distinct model of drone warfare through the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
- Drones are integrated into a broader strategy of deterrence, coercion and power projection across West Asia.
- Through Shahed variants and drones supplied to proxy forces in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, Iran can threaten US military bases, Israeli military installations, naval assets, and critical infrastructure.
- Achieves strategic impact at relatively low cost.

UKRAINE: THE WORLD'S FIRST INDUSTRIAL-SCALE DRONE WAR

- Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Feb 2022) began as a conventional war but evolved into the world's first industrial-scale, drone-intensive conflict.
- Ukraine initially adapted commercial drones used for photography, mapping, and surveying into reconnaissance and strike systems.
- By 2024, drones became integrated into every layer of combat:

- Battlefield surveillance
- Frontline targeting
- Deep-strike missions against Russian logistics and infrastructure

FPV (FIRST-PERSON VIEW) DRONE REVOLUTION

FPV drones were originally designed for recreational racing and are controlled through live video feeds using VR-style goggles. They offer high precision and manoeuvrability.

KAMIKAZE/STRIKE DRONES

Disposable quadcopters carrying explosive payloads; a low-cost drone can destroy high-value armoured vehicles.

BOMBER DRONES

Modified DJI Mavic and Matrice platforms capable of dropping grenades and anti-tank mines while surviving missions for repeated sorties.

INTERCEPTOR & LONG-RANGE ATTACK VARIANTS

Used for strikes on airbases, logistics hubs, and critical infrastructure deep inside Russian territory.

LOITERING MUNITIONS

Drone-missile hybrids capable of loitering over target areas before striking.

- RAM II: Short-range precision munition operating alongside reconnaissance drones such as Shark and PD-2.
- UJ-31 Zozulya: Aerially deployed "parasite drone" carried by the larger UJ-22 UAV, enabling operations in heavily contested airspace.

FIBRE-OPTIC FPV DRONES: UKRAINE'S KEY INNOVATION

Conventional drones depend on radio-frequency links and are vulnerable to jamming.

Fibre-optic FPV drones transmit commands and video through ultra-thin fibre-optic cables that unspool during flight.

- ✓ Immunity to electronic jamming
- ✓ Effective in contested electromagnetic environments
- ✓ Significant tactical advantage over adversaries

ECONOMICS OF DRONE WARFARE

- Cheap, mass-produced drones are replacing expensive conventional platforms.
- Industrial production capacity has emerged as a critical military capability.
- Modern warfare increasingly tests:
 - Manufacturing capacity
 - Rapid deployment capability
 - Ability to continuously innovate and counter evolving drone systems
- Warfare is becoming a contest of industrial endurance as much as battlefield effectiveness.

INDIA: RELEVANCE AND KEY TAKEAWAYS

EMERGING SECURITY CHALLENGES

- India faces active drone threats along:
 - Western border (Pakistan)
 - Northern border (China)
- Pakistan has employed Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones.
- China possesses an advanced indigenous drone ecosystem.

STRATEGIC LESSONS FOR INDIA

- Strengthen domestic drone manufacturing under Make in India and IDEX frameworks.
- Integrate counter-drone systems (kinetic and electronic) into India's air defence architecture.
- Develop asymmetric warfare capabilities using drones alongside conventional platforms.
- Urgently address the technological gap in fibre-optic drone systems.

CONCLUSION

Drones shape how conflicts are surveilled, fought, sustained, and decided. In 21st-century conflicts, the decisive military advantage will belong to nations that can:

- OUT-PRODUCE
- OUT-INNOVATE
- OUT-COUNTER

In the drone domain.

Ukraine: The World's First Industrial-Scale Drone War

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FPV (First-Person View) Drone Revolution

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- They offer high precision and manoeuvrability.

Types of FPV Drones

- **Kamikaze/Strike Drones:** Disposable quadcopters carrying explosive payloads; a low-cost drone can destroy high-value armoured vehicles.
- **Bomber Drones:** Modified DJI Mavic and Matrice platforms capable of dropping grenades and anti-tank mines while surviving missions for repeated sorties.
- **Interceptor and Long-Range Attack Variants:** Used for strikes on airbases, logistics hubs, and critical infrastructure deep inside Russian territory.

Loitering Munitions

- Drone-missile hybrids capable of loitering over target areas before striking.
- Major systems include:
 - **RAM II:** Short-range precision munition operating alongside reconnaissance drones such as Shark and PD-2.
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Fibre-Optic FPV Drones: Ukraine’s Key Innovation

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- Fibre-optic FPV drones transmit commands and video through ultra-thin fibre-optic cables that unspool during flight.
- Advantages:
 - Immunity to electronic jamming
 - Effective operation in contested electromagnetic environments
 - Significant tactical advantage over adversaries

Iran’s Strategic Drone Model

- Iran follows a distinct model of drone warfare through the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
- Drones are integrated into a broader strategy of:
 - Deterrence
 - Coercion

- Power projection across West Asia
- Through Shahed variants and drones supplied to proxy forces in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, Iran can threaten:
 - US military bases
 - Israeli military installations
 - Naval assets
 - Critical infrastructure
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Economics of Drone Warfare

Key Transformations

- Cheap, mass-produced drones are replacing expensive conventional platforms.
- Industrial production capacity has emerged as a critical military capability.
- Modern warfare increasingly tests:
 - Manufacturing capacity
 - Rapid deployment capability
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- Warfare is becoming a contest of industrial endurance as much as battlefield effectiveness.

India: Relevance and Key Takeaways

Emerging Security Challenges

- India faces active drone threats along:
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Strategic Lessons for India

- Strengthen domestic drone manufacturing under **Make in India** and **iDEX** frameworks.
- Integrate counter-drone systems (kinetic and electronic) into India's air defence architecture.

- Develop asymmetric warfare capabilities using drones alongside conventional military platforms.
- Urgently address the technological gap in fibre-optic drone systems.

Conclusion

- Drones are no longer merely weapons; they have become the infrastructure of modern warfare.
- They shape how conflicts are surveilled, fought, sustained, and decided.
- In 21st-century conflicts, the decisive military advantage will belong to nations that can:
 - Out-produce drones
 - Out-innovate drone technologies
 - Out-counter adversary drone systems

India Slovakia Bilateral Relations

Syllabus: GS-2: International Relations

Context:

- India and Slovakia elevated their bilateral relationship to a **Comprehensive Partnership** during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's historic visit to Bratislava, the first by an Indian Prime Minister since Slovakia's founding in 1993.

India-Slovakia Bilateral Relationship

- India and Slovakia share a warm and steadily growing partnership, rooted in **shared democratic values** and mutual interest in **technology, manufacturing, and trade**.
- Slovakia, a **Central European nation** and member of the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, has emerged as a significant partner for India in the region.

Historical Ties

- Diplomatic relations established in **1993** following the peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia into the Czech Republic and Slovakia.
- Prior to this, India had strong relations with Czechoslovakia, one of the earliest countries to recognise India after independence.

Key Features

- Shared democratic values and pluralistic societies.
- Active engagement in multilateral forums.
- Cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts.
- Steady growth in trade and economic cooperation.



Strategic and Diplomatic Engagement

- High-level political dialogue, including ministerial visits.
- Slovakia's support for India's bid for permanent membership in the **UN Security Council (UNSC)**.
- Cooperation within EU frameworks, especially trade negotiations.
- Collaboration on terrorism, climate change, and UN reform.
- Shared commitment to multilateralism and a rules-based international order.
- Slovakia has been a constructive voice within the EU for stronger India–EU engagement, including the India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Trade and Economic Cooperation

Bilateral Trade

- Total bilateral trade in **2024** crossed **€1 billion**, reaching **€1.28 billion**.
- **2023**: €858.1 million.
- **2022**: €711.9 million.

India's Major Exports to Slovakia

- Mobile phones; Footwear and footwear parts; Garments; Motor vehicle parts; Tyres; Medicaments; Seats; Electrical apparatus.

Major Imports from Slovakia

- Motor vehicles; Machinery and mechanical appliances; Pumps; Transmission shafts; Measuring instruments; Wires and cables; Bearings.

Indian Diaspora in Slovakia

- Approximately **5,000–7,000 Indians** reside in Slovakia.
- Mainly engaged in **IT, engineering, academia, and business**.
- Contribute to cultural exchanges through festivals and academic engagements.

Key Outcomes of PM Modi's Visit to Slovakia

1. Elevation to Comprehensive Partnership

- Bilateral ties elevated to a **Comprehensive Partnership**.
- Symbolises:
 - Shared trust, shared priorities, and shared future.
 - Structured framework for deeper engagement across sectors.
 - Recognition of growing strategic importance of the relationship.
- Slovak PM Robert Fico reaffirmed commitment to strengthening ties with India.

2. Defence Cooperation

- Letter of Intent signed in the defence sector.
- Focus on:
 - Joint development of defence equipment.
 - Joint production of defence equipment.
 - Defence industrial cooperation.
- Reflects deep mutual trust and strategic convergence.

3. Trade and Economic Ties

Priority Sectors

- Automobiles; Railways; Advanced manufacturing; Green technology; Electronics.

Significance

- Slovakia supports early implementation of the India–EU FTA.
- Expected benefits for industries, startups, and traders of both countries.

4. Technology and Digital Cooperation

- MoU on **Digital Technology** signed.
- Opportunities in **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**.
- Establishment of an **India Chair on Artificial Intelligence** at a Slovak university.
- Cooperation in:
 - Space sector.
 - Civil nuclear energy.
- Slovak companies invited to participate in India's expanding space industry.

5. Labour Mobility and Migration

- MoU on Labour Migration signed to:
 - Facilitate worker mobility.
 - Enable exchange of information between authorities.
 - Address Slovakia's labour shortages.
 - Create structured opportunities for Indian workers.
- Agreement to conclude a **Social Security Agreement** for protection of workers' rights and benefits.

6. Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

- Both leaders condemned the **Pahalgam terror attacks (April 2025)**.
- Agreed to:
 - Form a Joint Working Group on Terrorism.
 - Support adoption of the **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)** at the UN.
 - Act against terrorists listed under the **UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee**.
 - Address state sponsors of terrorism.
 - Reject double standards in counter-terrorism.

7. Multilateralism and UN Reform

- Reaffirmed support for:
 - Multilateralism and rules-based international order.
 - Reform of the United Nations.
 - Reform and expansion of the UNSC.

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- Increase in permanent and non-permanent seats.
- India's bid for permanent UNSC membership.

Significance

- Strengthens India's engagement with **Central Europe** and the **European Union**.
- Enhances cooperation in **defence, technology, AI, digital infrastructure, labour mobility, and advanced manufacturing**.
- Supports India's objectives of **UN reforms, counter-terrorism cooperation, and diversification of strategic partnerships in Europe**.