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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Current Affairs Today – January 11, 2026

11 January 2026

SUBJECTS COVERED

ENVIRONMENT

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ECONOMY

POLITY

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HISTORY & CULTURE

GEOGRAPHY

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WHY IN NEWS

India's renewable energy capacity crossed 210 GW. PM Modi inaugurated Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar Metro Phase 2. DRDO completed a 12+ minute scramjet engine ground test in Hyderabad, advancing India's hypersonic cruise missile programme. India's rice exports surged 19.4% to 21.55 MT in 2025. Two new frog species were discovered in Arunachal Pradesh.

INDIA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY MILESTONE — 210 GW CROSSED

India's **total installed renewable energy capacity** (including large hydroelectric projects above 25 MW) crossed approximately **210 GW** as of early January 2026.

Capacity breakup (approximate, January 2026):

Source	Installed Capacity
Solar	~100 GW
Wind	~48 GW
Large Hydro	~47 GW
Small Hydro	~5 GW
Bioenergy + Others	~11 GW
Total RE	~210 GW

India's **target: 500 GW** of non-fossil energy capacity by 2030 (announced at COP26, Glasgow, 2021). India also committed to reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 percent from 2005 levels by 2030, under its updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

India's global ranking in renewable energy:

4th largest in total installed renewable energy capacity globally

3rd largest in solar energy capacity

4th largest in wind energy capacity

India became the 4th country in the world to cross 100 GW solar capacity (November 2024)

INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS — AKD GOVERNMENT

Sri Lanka's **Anura Kumar Dissanayake (AKD)** was elected President on September 21, 2024, in Sri Lanka's first-ever presidential election decided in a second round of preference votes. AKD, from the **JVP (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna)** party leading the **NPP (National People's Power)** coalition, secured 42.31% in the second round, defeating the incumbent Ranil Wickremesinghe and opposition leader Sajith Premadasa.

PM Modi made an early outreach — calling AKD within days of his election and extending an invitation for an official visit. AKD visited India in December 2024, marking his first foreign visit as President — a signal that Sri Lanka prioritises India in its diplomatic calendar.

Key bilateral issues:

India's Lines of Credit to Sri Lanka: India extended \$4 billion in Lines of Credit (LoC) during the 2022 Sri Lanka economic crisis — for fuel, medicines, food, and fertiliser. Repayment discussions are ongoing.

India-Sri Lanka Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA): FTA negotiations stalled; new momentum expected under AKD.

Trincomalee energy hub: India's IOC (Indian Oil Corporation) operates Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm (99 tanks); joint development of upper tanks with Sri Lanka.

Katchatheevu island: Tamil Nadu fishing community disputes over fishing rights near Katchatheevu (ceded to Sri Lanka in 1974 by PM Indira Gandhi) remain a live issue.

UPI DIGITAL PAYMENTS — DECEMBER 2025 DATA

India's **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** processed approximately **16.7 billion transactions** worth approximately **Rs 23.3 lakh crore** in December 2025, according to NPCI data.

UPI key data:

Operated by: **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** under RBI

Launched: April 2016

Participating banks: over 570 (as of 2025)

Daily transactions: approximately 540 million (December 2025 average)

International expansion: UPI live in UAE, Singapore, France, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and others

RuPay card — India's domestic card network (NPCI); accepted in 200+ countries via Discover/JCB network

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL — AIR QUALITY ORDERS

The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** issued directions in January 2026 regarding enforcement of **GRAP (Graded Response Action Plan)** stages in Delhi-NCR, where air quality remains in the “very poor” to “severe” range during the winter months. NGT ordered strict compliance with GRAP Stage III and IV restrictions (construction ban, school closures, diesel generator prohibition) and called for monthly compliance reports.

Key facts:

NGT: established under National Green Tribunal Act, 2010; headquarters New Delhi; principal benches in Kolkata, Chennai, Pune, Bhopal

GRAP: implemented by **Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM)** — a statutory body established October 2020

NCAP (National Clean Air Programme): launched January 2019; target: 40% reduction in PM 2.5 and PM 10 concentrations in 131 non-attainment cities by 2026 (base year 2017)

AHMEDABAD-GANDHINAGAR METRO PHASE 2 INAUGURATED

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar Metro Phase 2** expansion:

New stretch: 7.8 km with 7 new stations; inaugurated from **Mahatma Mandir Metro Station**, Gandhinagar

Phase 1 recap: Connects Ahmedabad’s APMC (Vasna) to Motera Stadium + Gandhinagar; operational since 2022

Metro Rail: Ahmedabad Metro operates under Gujarat Metro Rail Corporation (GMRC)

Significance: Strengthens connectivity between Gujarat’s commercial capital (Ahmedabad) and state capital (Gandhinagar); reduces traffic on SG Highway

National Metro growth: India now has operational metro networks in 20+ cities; total metro route ~1,000 km

UPSC Angle: GS-3 Infrastructure — Urban public transport; metro rail policy; Smart Cities Mission; GMRC; transit-oriented development (TOD); GS-2 Governance — State-centre relations in infrastructure funding.

DRDO TESTS SCRAMJET ENGINE — HYPERSONIC CRUISE MISSILE PROGRESS

DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) successfully conducted a **12+ minute ground test** of a **full-scale actively cooled scramjet engine** at Hyderabad:

Duration: Over 12 minutes — significantly longer than previous tests

Engine type: Scramjet (Supersonic Combustion Ramjet) — combustion occurs at supersonic airflow speeds

Cooling: Actively cooled design (fuel cools the engine before combustion — enables sustained high-speed operation)

Target application: Hypersonic cruise missile capable of speeds exceeding **Mach 5**

Facility: DRDO's propulsion test facility, Hyderabad

Context: Hypersonic weapons are the frontier of strategic military competition; India, USA, China, Russia all developing hypersonic systems

UPSC Angle: GS-3 Security — Hypersonic weapons race; India's HSTDV (Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle) programme; Mach numbers and hypersonic flight; scramjet vs ramjet vs turbofan distinction; DRDO's role in indigenisation; BrahMos (supersonic, ~Mach 3) vs hypersonic next-gen.

NATIONAL IED DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIDMS) — NSG

The **National Security Guard (NSG)** developed the **National IED Data Management System (NIDMS)** — a digital counter-terrorism intelligence platform:

What it does: Collects, stores, and analyses data on Improvised Explosive Device (IED) incidents, bomb disposal operations, forensics, and suspect networks

Developer: NSG (National Security Guard); under Ministry of Home Affairs

Purpose: Enable data-driven counter-IED strategy; identify patterns, networks, materials; share intelligence between agencies

NSG: India's elite special operations force; established under NSG Act, 1986; known as "Black Cats"; specialises in counter-terrorism, hostage rescue, VIP protection

UPSC Angle: GS-3 Security — IED threats and counter-terrorism; NSG's mandate and establishment; data analytics in internal security; Left Wing Extremism (LWE) IED use in Maoist conflict areas; information sharing between security agencies.

DEFENCE PROCUREMENT — PINAKA MLRS, DIME PLATFORM, SOLAR UAVS

Three significant defence procurement/modernisation milestones:

1. Pinaka MLRS Upgrade — L&T Contract:

L&T (Larsen & Toubro) signed a contract with MoD for **Pinaka Multi-Launch Rocket System (MLRS)** overhaul and upgrade

Pinaka: Indigenous MLRS developed by DRDO; range 40–90 km (Mk-I) to 120–300 km (Enhanced); 80% indigenous content (TASL upgrade)

Inducted: 1999 (Kargil War); now exported to Armenia, France

2. DIME – Digital Logistics Platform:

Indian Army launched **DIME (Digital Integrated Military Ecosystem)** in collaboration with **BISAG-N (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics)**

Reduces manual paperwork by ~70%; real-time logistics tracking for Army supply chain

3. Solar-powered MAPSS UAVs:

Rs **168 crore** order for **MAPSS (Multi-Application Platform for Surveillance Systems)** solar-powered UAVs from **NewSpace Research & Technologies**

Significance: India's first **solar-powered surveillance drones** for the Indian Army; extended endurance beyond conventional battery/fuel UAVs

UPSC Angle: GS-3 Security – Defence indigenisation (Atmanirbhar Bharat); Pinaka MLRS history and export success; digital logistics in Armed Forces; solar energy applications in defence; UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) procurement policy.

NEW FROG SPECIES DISCOVERED IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Scientists from the **University of Delhi** discovered **two new frog species** in **Arunachal Pradesh**, published in the journal **PeerJ**:

Soman's Slender Arm Frog – Named after Dr. P.V. Soman (eminent herpetologist)

Mechuka Slender Arm Frog – Named after Mechuka Valley, West Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh

Genus: Leptobrachella (Slender Arm Frogs) – small leaf-litter frogs

Significance: Arunachal Pradesh is a global biodiversity hotspot; new species discoveries highlight the richness of Northeast India's fauna

Methodology: Morphological and molecular (genetic) analysis to distinguish from related species

UPSC Angle: GS-3 Environment – Biodiversity of Northeast India; Arunachal Pradesh as biodiversity hotspot; amphibian diversity as indicator of ecosystem health; species naming conventions; PeerJ as open-access peer-reviewed journal.

RATAPANI TIGER RESERVE — MP TO RENAME AFTER ARCHAEOLOGIST

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister announced renaming the **Ratapani Tiger Reserve** after eminent archaeologist **Dr. Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar**:

Ratapani TR: ~1,271 sq km; located in **Raisen and Sehore** districts, MP; notified as tiger reserve in 2013; core zone: Ratapani WLS

Why Ratapani is significant: Contains **Bhimbetka Rock Shelters** (UNESCO World Heritage Site; prehistoric rock art; 30,000 years old) within its landscape

About Dr. V.S. Wakankar (1919–1988): Archaeologist who discovered the **Bhimbetka rock shelters** in 1957; also worked on Kayatha culture excavations; received **Padma Shri**

Renaming significance: Honouring the discoverer of Bhimbetka whose work area overlaps the TR

UPSC Angle: GS-1 History & Culture — Bhimbetka rock shelters (UNESCO WHS; Mesolithic period; Madhya Pradesh); GS-3 Environment — Tiger Reserve notification and management; Project Tiger; Madhya Pradesh as India's tiger state (highest tiger count ~785 as of 2022 census).

INDIA'S RICE EXPORTS SURGE — 21.55 MILLION TONNES IN 2025

India's **rice exports surged 19.4%** in 2025:

Volume: **21.55 million tonnes (MT)** — second-highest export volume on record

Growth: 19.4% increase year-on-year; following lifting of export restrictions in late 2024

Context: India had imposed export bans and minimum export prices (MEPs) on rice in 2023-24 to control domestic prices (following erratic monsoon)

India's share: India is the world's largest rice exporter (~40% global rice trade share); top export destinations: Philippines, Indonesia, China, Sub-Saharan Africa

Significance: Rebound reflects normalised domestic supply and government policy reversal

UPSC Angle: GS-3 Economy — Agricultural export policy (MEP, export bans, trade agreements); India's rice sector (MSP, procurement, FCI); India's role in global food security; rice export restrictions and WTO obligations.

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA
INDIA'S RE CAPACITY (JANUARY 2026):

Total RE (incl. large hydro): ~210 GW
 Solar: ~100 GW; Wind: ~48 GW; Large Hydro: ~47 GW
 Target: 500 GW non-fossil by 2030
 India rank: 4th globally in RE; 3rd in solar; 4th in wind
 India crossed 100 GW solar: November 2024 (4th country globally)

INDIA'S NDC TARGETS:

500 GW non-fossil energy capacity by 2030
 50% of energy from renewables by 2030
 Reduce GDP emissions intensity by 45% from 2005 levels by 2030
 Net-zero emissions by 2070

INDIA-SRI LANKA:

AKD: Anura Kumar Dissanayake; JVP/NPP coalition; elected September 21, 2024
 AKD first foreign visit: India, December 2024
 India LoC to Sri Lanka during 2022 crisis: \$4 billion
 Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm: 99 tanks; IOC operates; joint development
 Katchatheevu: small island ceded to Sri Lanka by India in 1974 (PM Indira Gandhi)

UPI:

NPCI: National Payments Corporation of India; under RBI
 UPI launched: April 2016
 December 2025: ~16.7 billion transactions; ~Rs 23.3 lakh crore
 International presence: UAE, Singapore, France, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, others

GRAP/AIR QUALITY:

GRAP: Graded Response Action Plan; 4 stages (Poor/Very Poor/Severe/Severe+)
 CAQM: Commission for Air Quality Management; statutory body; October 2020
 NCAP: National Clean Air Programme; January 2019; 131 non-attainment cities; 40% PM reduction target by 2026
 NGT: National Green Tribunal Act, 2010; HQ New Delhi

DRDO SCRAMJET / HYPERSONIC:

Scramjet: Supersonic combustion ramjet; no moving parts; requires intake air supersonic (>Mach 5 flight)
 Hypersonic: >Mach 5 (5x speed of sound; ~6,125 km/h at sea level)
 HSTDV: Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle; DRDO programme; test flight Sep 2020 (Mach 6, 20 sec)
 BrahMos: India-Russia JV; supersonic (~Mach 3); range 290–900 km; inducted in all three services
 India's Jan 2026 test: 12+ min full-scale scramjet ground test; Hyderabad; actively cooled engine

PINAKA MLRS:

Type: Multi-Launch Rocket System; salvo fire capability (12 rockets in 44 sec)

Ranges: Mk-I: 40–90 km; Enhanced Mk-I: 75 km; Mk-II: 120 km; Advanced: 300 km

Developer: DRDO + TASL (Tata Advanced Systems Ltd); Bharat Forge

Inducted: 1999 (Kargil War); exported to Armenia (2024), France (evaluation)

Indigenous content: 80% after TASL upgrade

NEW FROG SPECIES — ARUNACHAL PRADESH:

Species 1: Soman's Slender Arm Frog (named after Dr. P.V. Soman)

Species 2: Mechuka Slender Arm Frog (named after Mechuka Valley, West Siang, Arunachal)

Genus: Leptobranchella; Family: Megophryidae

Published: PeerJ (open-access peer-reviewed journal); discoverers: University of Delhi scientists

Context: Arunachal Pradesh has one of India's highest rates of new species discovery

RATAPANI TIGER RESERVE — BHIMBETKA CONTEXT:

TR area: ~1,271 sq km; Districts: Raisen + Sehore, Madhya Pradesh; notified TR: 2013

Bhimbetka Rock Shelters: UNESCO World Heritage Site (2003); Mesolithic-Chalcolithic era; 30,000 years of human habitation

Wakankar: Dr. V.S. Wakankar (1919–1988); Padma Shri; discovered Bhimbetka 1957; also excavated Kayatha culture sites

MP tigers (2022 census): ~785 (highest in India); 6 Tiger Reserves: Bandhavgarh, Kanha, Pench, Tadoba, Satpura, Panna, Sanjay-Dubri + Ratapani

INDIA RICE EXPORTS:

2025 volume: 21.55 MT (19.4% increase; 2nd highest on record)

India's global share: ~40% of world rice trade (largest exporter)

Export ban context: India banned non-basmati white rice in August 2023; lifted September 2024

Top buyers: Philippines, Indonesia, China, Sub-Saharan Africa

Basmati exports: India's premium rice; GI-tagged; major export to Middle East

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

MNRE: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (does not include large hydro — that falls under Ministry of Power/MoP)

PM-KUSUM: PM Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan — solar pumps for farmers; MNRE

National Solar Mission: launched 2010 (originally under JNNSM — Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission); target revised to 280 GW by 2030

NSG: National Security Guard; established 1984 (post-Operation Blue Star); under MHA; HQ Manesar; "Black Cats"; NSG Act 1986

BISAG-N: Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics; Gandhinagar, Gujarat; under DST; provides satellite-based geospatial services to government

National Road Safety Week 2026: January 11–17; Ministry of Road Transport; focuses on helmets, seat belts, drunk driving, pedestrian safety

INDIA-FIJI AGRICULTURE COOPERATION MOU EXTENDED — 5 YEARS

India and **Fiji** signed a **5-year extension** of their bilateral Agriculture Cooperation MoU (January 2026), establishing a **Joint Working Group (JWG)** to strengthen agricultural sector ties.

Focus areas: Agricultural research exchange, food processing technology, crop diversification, post-harvest management

India-Fiji relations: Fiji has a significant Indian-origin population (~38%); Hindi is a national language of Fiji alongside English and iTaukei; bilateral ties rooted in Indian diaspora (Girmitiyas — indentured labourers brought to Fiji 1879–1916)

India’s agriculture diplomacy: India has similar MoUs with 40+ countries; part of a broader strategy to export agricultural expertise, secure food supply chains, and leverage Fiji as a Pacific hub

ICAR involvement: Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) — under DARE (Department of Agricultural Research and Education) — is the nodal agency for international agriculture cooperation

UPSC Angle: GS-2 International Relations — India-Pacific Islands diplomacy; India-Fiji diaspora ties; agriculture cooperation as soft power; GS-3 — ICAR role; food security cooperation.

★ ADDITIONAL FACTS — INDIA-FIJI:

INDIA-FIJI:

Girmitiyas: Indian indentured labourers brought to Fiji (1879-1916) under British colonial contracts; ~40,000 arrived; formed basis of Indo-Fijian community

Fiji Indian diaspora: ~38% of Fiji’s population; Hindi = national language of Fiji

MoU: 5-year extension + Joint Working Group; nodal body: ICAR (under DARE, MoAFW)

ICAR: Indian Council of Agricultural Research; est. 1929; HQ New Delhi; 100+ research institutes

Sources: MNRE, PIB, MEA, AffairsCloud

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