



UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Current Affairs Today – January 13, 2026

13 January 2026

SUBJECTS COVERED**HISTORY & CULTURE****IR****SCIENCE & TECH****POLITY****ECONOMY****ENVIRONMENT****SECURITY & DEFENCE****SOCIAL ISSUES****CURATED & WRITTEN BY****Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator •

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

Free UPSC & State PCS Resources

ujjari.com

Current Affairs Today — January 13, 2026

13 January 2026

WHY IN NEWS

Lohri 2026 was celebrated across Punjab and Haryana on January 13 — the bonfire festival marking the end of the winter solstice season. EAM S. Jaishankar unveiled India's BRICS Chairmanship 2026 logo and theme. India's National Quantum Mission reported key research milestones. India-Maldives diplomatic ties continued their gradual reset after the 2024 political strains.

LOHRI 2026 — PUNJAB'S BONFIRE HARVEST FESTIVAL

Lohri is celebrated on **January 13** every year — the evening before Makar Sankranti — primarily in **Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh**, and among Punjabi communities across India.

Rituals and traditions:

A **bonfire** (*lohri*) is lit in the centre of a gathering; families and neighbours circle it

Offerings into the fire: Rewar (sesame candy), peanuts, popcorn, gur (jaggery), and til (sesame) are thrown into the fire — symbolising thanksgiving for the harvest

Songs: Traditional Punjabi folk songs (*Sundar Mundriye*) are sung; young people perform bhangra and gidda

Cultural significance: Lohri is especially celebrated for newborns (first Lohri after a baby's birth) and newlywed couples (first Lohri after marriage)

Agricultural connection: Lohri marks the **end of the sugarcane and winter wheat sowing season** in Punjab. The days after Lohri begin to grow longer — symbolising the return of warmth and the promise of the spring rabi harvest (March–April).

Origin theories: The most popular folk etymology connects Lohri to **Dulla Bhatti** — a legendary Punjabi Robin Hood figure who revolted against the Mughal Emperor Akbar in the 16th century. Folk songs celebrate his rescue of abducted women from being sold.

UPSC Angle: GS-1 — Indian festivals; Punjab's agricultural calendar; folk culture and oral tradition.

INDIA ASSUMES BRICS CHAIRMANSHIP — LOGO AND THEME UNVEILED

External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** unveiled India's **BRICS Chairmanship 2026 logo and theme** on January 13, 2026, as India formally took over from Brazil.

India's BRICS 2026 theme: *"Fostering Resilience and Innovation for Sustainable Development"*

India's BRICS 2026 four pillars:

Resilience: Building economic and institutional resilience against external shocks

Innovation: Technology, digital economy, AI cooperation among BRICS nations

Cooperation: Enhanced South-South cooperation and multilateral reforms

Environmental Sustainability: Climate finance, clean energy, climate-resilient agriculture

India's chairmanship is notable:

India chairs the **expanded BRICS (BRICS+)**: 10 members — Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa + Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE (admitted at 15th Johannesburg Summit, 2023)

16th BRICS Summit under Brazil's chairmanship (2025, Kazan) was the 15th as original 5; 17th BRICS Summit to be hosted by India in 2026

India's BRICS chairmanship runs from January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026

UPSC Angle: GS-2 — BRICS; South-South cooperation; multilateralism reform; India's diplomatic priorities.

NATIONAL QUANTUM MISSION — INDIA'S Q-MILESTONES

India's **National Quantum Mission (NQM)**, launched on **April 19, 2023** with a corpus of **Rs 6,003 crore** for 2023–2031, reported key research milestones in early January 2026.

Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru and **TIFR (Tata Institute of Fundamental Research), Mumbai** demonstrated:

Quantum dot single photon sources — foundational for quantum key distribution (QKD) and quantum cryptography

Superconducting qubit systems operating at near-milli-Kelvin temperatures

Progress toward India's target of a **50-qubit quantum computing system** prototype by 2028 and a **1,000-qubit system** by 2031

NQM Key Targets:

Target	Timeline
50–1,000 qubit quantum computer	2028–2031
Satellite-based quantum communications (QKD)	2028
Quantum sensing and metrology applications	2026–2028
Long-distance quantum secure communication (2,000 km)	2031

Implementing agency: NQM is implemented under the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**, with four **Technology Hubs (T-Hubs)** being established at premier institutions.

UPSC Angle: GS-3 — Quantum computing; National Quantum Mission; India’s technology priorities; quantum cryptography; strategic technology race.

INDIA-MALDIVES RELATIONS — DIPLOMATIC RESET CONTINUES

India-Maldives bilateral ties continued their gradual **diplomatic reset** in January 2026. After the strained period of 2024 — during which President Mohamed Muizzu (elected September 2023 on an “India Out” platform) requested the withdrawal of Indian military personnel — the relationship has stabilised.

What changed in 2024:

Indian military personnel (about 77) deployed in Maldives for DORNIER aircraft and helicopter operations were replaced by Indian **civilian technical personnel** by May 2024

Maldives diversified partnerships — signing agreements with China (housing projects), Turkey, and others

India continued the **Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP)** — the longest sea bridge in India’s neighbourhood, connecting Male, Villingli, Gulhifalhu, and Thilafushi islands — India’s largest infrastructure project in the Maldives

Renewed engagement:

India extended a **\$50 million currency swap** under the SAARC currency swap framework to Maldives in 2025

EAM Jaishankar visited Male in mid-2025; India remained the top source of tourists to Maldives despite the 2024 diplomatic tensions

India maintained its **Neighbourhood First policy** commitment to Maldives

Strategic context: The Maldives lies astride India’s critical sea lines of communication in the Indian Ocean. The chain of islands stretches 900 km and controls access from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal through the Eight Degree Channel and Nine Degree Channel. Any base or significant Chinese infrastructure in the

Maldives would directly affect India's maritime security.

UPSC Angle: GS-2 — India's Neighbourhood First Policy; India-Maldives; SAARC; Indian Ocean Region (IOR); maritime strategy.

SC EXTENDS E-COURT PHASE III TIMELINE

The Supreme Court extended the implementation timeline for **e-Court Phase III** — the third phase of India's court digitisation project — noting significant infrastructure gaps in district and taluka courts.

e-Courts project:

Phase I (2011–2015): Computer infrastructure in courts; case management software (CIS)

Phase II (2015–2023): Video conferencing in courts; digital filing; National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)

Phase III (2023–2027): Cloud-based systems; AI-assisted case management; paperless courts; Suwavidha Centres for litigants; integration with police and prison systems

Key milestone: NJDG (National Judicial Data Grid) gives real-time data on 250 million pending cases across all courts in India. As of January 2026, there are approximately **5 crore (50 million) cases pending** in Indian courts — a figure that makes case digitisation a justice access imperative, not just a technology project.

UPSC Angle: GS-2 — Judicial reforms; access to justice; e-Courts project; NJDG; pendency crisis.

INDIA'S NON-FOSSIL FUEL CAPACITY CROSSES 266 GW — 50% MILESTONE

India's **installed non-fossil fuel electricity capacity** reached **266.78 GW** as of end of 2025 — a **22.6% year-on-year increase** — crossing the milestone of non-fossil sources forming more than **50% of total installed capacity**.

Breakup of non-fossil capacity (2025):

Solar: 131.81 GW (largest component)

Wind: 54.51 GW

Large Hydro: 50.91 GW

Bioenergy: 11.61 GW

Small Hydro: 5.16 GW

48 GW of renewable energy was added in 2025 alone

India's targets:

500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030 (NDC commitment under Paris Agreement)

Net Zero carbon emissions by 2070 (announced COP26, Glasgow)

UPSC Angle: GS-3 — Renewable energy sector, India’s climate commitments, NDC targets, Paris Agreement.

DRDO TESTS 3RD GEN MAN-PORTABLE ANTI-TANK GUIDED MISSILE (MPATGM)

DRDO conducted a successful **flight test of the 3rd-generation MPATGM (Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile)** on **January 12, 2026** at **KK Ranges, Ahilya Nagar (formerly Ahmednagar), Maharashtra**.

Key features:

Developed by: Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad (under DRDO)

Type: Fire-and-forget; **top-attack mode** (strikes tank from above — where armour is weakest)

Specs: Length 1.3 m; Diameter 120 mm; Weight ~14.5 kg

Production partners: Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) + Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)

Significance: Replaces imported anti-tank missiles; man-portable = infantry-carried without vehicle

UPSC Angle: GS-3 — Defence indigenisation, DRDO, Make in India in defence, anti-tank weapons.

NATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2026 — SWAMI VIVEKANANDA’S 163RD BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

January 12 is observed as **Rashtriya Yuva Divas (National Youth Day)** — the birth anniversary of **Swami Vivekananda** (born January 12, 1863, Calcutta).

Key facts:

India declared January 12 as National Youth Day in **1984**; first observed in **1985**

2nd Viksit Bharat Young Leaders’ Dialogue (VBYLD 2026): January 9–12, 2026, at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi** — PM Modi addressed ~2,500 youth leaders from all states

Swami Vivekananda’s famous address at the **Parliament of World’s Religions, Chicago, September 11, 1893** — began “Sisters and Brothers of America” — brought India’s spiritual philosophy to global attention

Ramakrishna Mission: Founded by Vivekananda in 1897; headquartered at Belur Math, West Bengal

UPSC Angle: GS-1 — Modern Indian thinkers; Swami Vivekananda’s philosophy (Vedanta, Karma Yoga, service as worship); Neo-Vedanta movement; Indian nationalism.

JUSTICE REVATI MOHITE-DERE — FIRST WOMAN CHIEF JUSTICE OF MEGHALAYA HC

Justice Revati Mohite-Dere was sworn in as the **Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court** in January 2026 — becoming the **first woman to hold this position**.

Key facts:

Oath administered by: Governor Chandrashekhar H. Vijayashankar at Raj Bhavan, Shillong

Previous post: Permanent Judge of the **Bombay High Court** (appointed 2016)

The appointment follows the Collegium system recommendation under Article 217 of the Constitution

India's first woman CJI: Justice Sanjib Banerjee (no — this refers to HCs; first woman CJI of India has not yet happened as of 2026)

UPSC Angle: GS-2 — Judiciary; gender representation in Indian judiciary; High Court structure (Article 214–231); Collegium system; women in leadership positions.

NELAPATTU BIRD SANCTUARY — ANDHRA PRADESH

The **Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary** in Andhra Pradesh came into focus in January 2026 amid discussions on wetland bird conservation in coastal Andhra.

Key facts:

Location: Near Sullurpeta, **Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh** (close to Pulicat Lake)

Significance: One of India's most important breeding sites for the **Spot-billed Pelican** (*Pelecanus philippensis*)

Vegetation: Barringtonia swamp forests — ideal nesting habitat

Pulicat Lake: India's **second-largest saltwater lake** (after Chilika); shared between Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu; Ramsar site

Other species: Grey Pelican, painted storks, spoonbills, herons

UPSC Angle: GS-3 — Protected areas, wetland conservation, Ramsar sites, bird sanctuaries in AP, Pulicat Lake.

BODA TYOHAR — HATTI TRIBE'S FESTIVAL, HIMACHAL PRADESH

Boda Tyohar — the biggest annual festival of the **Hatti tribe** — was celebrated in the Giri and Tons river basin region of **Sirmour district, Himachal Pradesh**.

Key facts:

The **Hatti tribe** inhabits the trans-Giri area straddling **Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand's Jaunsar-Bawar region**

The Hatti community traditionally practices **hat (haat — local market) trade** — their identity as “hat vendors” gives them the name “Hatti”

Recent development: Hatti community received **Scheduled Tribe (ST) status in 2023** — a long-pending demand, recognising their distinct identity and marginalisation

Boda Tyohar: Marks the traditional calendar's agricultural cycle; community gathering; local governance through the Hatti community councils

UPSC Angle: GS-1 — Tribal culture; GS-2 — ST recognition, Fifth/Sixth Schedule, social justice.

KHELO INDIA BEACH GAMES 2026 — KARNATAKA CHAMPIONS AT DIU

The **Khelo India Beach Games 2026** concluded at **Ghoghla Beach, Diu** (UT of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu) from **January 5–10, 2026**.

Key outcomes:

Overall champion: Karnataka (11 medals: 3 Gold, 2 Silver, 6 Bronze)

Runner-up: Tamil Nadu (8 medals); **Third:** Manipur (7 medals)

Sports featured: Beach Volleyball, Beach Soccer, Sepak Takraw, Kabaddi, Pencak Silat, Open Water Swimming

Participants: 1,100+ athletes from 30 states/UTs

Organiser: UT of DNHDD (Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu) + Sports Authority of India (SAI)

UPSC Angle: GS-2 — Sports governance; Khelo India Mission; SAI (Sports Authority of India; established 1984); federal sports framework.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Davinder Singh Garcha (December 7, 1952 – January 2026), Indian hockey legend, passed away at 73. He won the **Gold Medal at the 1980 Moscow Olympics** with the Indian hockey team, scoring **8 goals across 6 matches**. Post-retirement, he served as an IPS officer reaching the rank of Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Punjab Police. He received the **Major Dhyan Chand Award (2021)** — India's highest sports honour for lifetime contribution to sports.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Lohri (January 13; Punjab; bonfire festival; Dulla Bhatti legend; rewar, gur, peanuts); India BRICS Chairmanship 2026 (EAM Jaishankar; Jan 13 launch; theme “Fostering Resilience and Innovation”; 10-member BRICS+); NQM (April 19, 2023; Rs 6,003 crore; DST; 50-qubit 2028 target; 1,000-qubit 2031); India-Maldives (Greater Male Connectivity Project; SAARC swap \$50M; Eight/Nine Degree Channels); e-Courts Phase III (2023-2027; NJDG; 5 crore pending cases).

MAINS GS-2:

India-Maldives reset; BRICS expanded chairmanship; judicial pendency and e-courts.

MAINS GS-3:

National Quantum Mission targets and India’s position in the global quantum race.

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA
LOHRI 2026:

Date: January 13 (annual; day before Makar Sankranti)
 States: Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh
 Significance: end of winter solstice; bonfire offerings (rewar, til, gur, peanuts)
 Folk figure: Dulla Bhatti (Robin Hood of Punjab; Mughal-era rebel)
 Agricultural link: end of sugarcane harvest + winter wheat sowing season

BRICS 2026 INDIA CHAIRMANSHIP:

India assumed: January 1, 2026 (from Brazil)
 Logo/theme unveiled: January 13, 2026 by EAM Jaishankar
 Theme: “Fostering Resilience and Innovation for Sustainable Development”
 Four pillars: Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation, Environmental Sustainability
 BRICS+ 10 members: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa + Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE
 Expansion: 15th BRICS Summit Johannesburg 2023 (South Africa chairmanship)
 17th BRICS Summit: India (2026 host)

NATIONAL QUANTUM MISSION (NQM):

Launch: April 19, 2023; Ministry/Department: Department of Science and Technology (DST)
 Budget: Rs 6,003 crore (2023-2031); 8-year mission
 Targets: 50-qubit computer (2028); 1,000-qubit (2031); satellite QKD (2028); 2,000 km quantum communication (2031)
 Implementing institutions: IISc, TIFR, IIT Madras, IIT Bombay; 4 Technology Hubs

INDIA-MALDIVES:

Muizzu presidency: from September 2023; “India Out” platform
 Indian military withdrawal: completed May 2024 (77 personnel replaced by civilians)
 GMCP: Greater Male Connectivity Project; Rs 3,382 crore India EXIM Bank; longest sea bridge in neighbourhood
 Eight Degree Channel: between Lakshadweep and Maldives; critical SLOC
 Nine Degree Channel: between India and Maldives islands

E-COURTS PROJECT:

Phase I (2011-2015): computerisation
 Phase II (2015-2023): video conferencing; NJDG
 Phase III (2023-2027): cloud; AI; paperless; Suwavidha Centres
 NJDG: National Judicial Data Grid; real-time case pendency data; 250 million cases tracked
 Pending cases in India: ~5 crore (50 million) as of Jan 2026

INDIA NON-FOSSIL FUEL CAPACITY (END-2025):

Total: 266.78 GW (>50% of installed capacity); YoY growth: 22.6%
 Solar: 131.81 GW | Wind: 54.51 GW | Large Hydro: 50.91 GW | Bio: 11.61 GW | Small Hydro: 5.16 GW
 48 GW added in 2025 alone
 Target: 500 GW non-fossil by 2030 (NDC); Net Zero by 2070 (COP26)

DRDO MPATGM (3RD GEN):

Full form: Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile

Developer: DRDL (Defence Research and Development Laboratory), Hyderabad (under DRDO)

Test date: January 12, 2026; KK Ranges, Ahilya Nagar (Maharashtra)

Features: Fire-and-forget; top-attack mode; length 1.3 m; diameter 120 mm; weight ~14.5 kg

Production: BDL (Bharat Dynamics Ltd) + BEL (Bharat Electronics Ltd)

NATIONAL YOUTH DAY:

Date: January 12 (Swami Vivekananda birth anniversary; born 1863, Calcutta)

India declared it National Youth Day: 1984; first observed: 1985

Chicago address: Parliament of World's Religions; September 11, 1893; "Sisters and Brothers of America"

Ramakrishna Mission: Founded 1897; HQ: Belur Math, West Bengal

NELAPATTU BIRD SANCTUARY:

Location: Near Sullurpeta, Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh

Key species: Spot-billed Pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*); major breeding colony

Vegetation: Barringtonia swamp forests

Adjacent: Pulicat Lake (India's 2nd largest saltwater lake; shared AP-TN; Ramsar site)

HATTI TRIBE / BODA TYOHAR:

Location: Sirmour district, HP + Jaunsar-Bawar, Uttarakhand

Habitat: Giri and Tons river basin (trans-Giri area)

ST status: Granted 2023 (long-pending demand)

Boda Tyohar: Biggest annual community festival

KHELO INDIA BEACH GAMES 2026:

Venue: Ghoghla Beach, Diu (UT DNHDD); Dates: Jan 5–10, 2026

Champion: Karnataka (3G+2S+6B=11 medals)

Runner-up: Tamil Nadu; 3rd: Manipur; 1,100+ athletes; 30 states/UTs

DAVINDER SINGH GARCHA:

Olympic Gold: 1980 Moscow Olympics (Indian hockey); 8 goals in 6 matches

Award: Major Dhyan Chand Award (2021 — highest lifetime sports award)

Post-retirement: IPS officer, DIG Punjab Police

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

BRICS+ GDP: ~36% of global GDP; population ~45% of world

New Development Bank (NDB): BRICS bank; Shanghai; Dilma Rousseff as President (2023-2028)

SAARC Currency Swap: India provides swaps to neighbours under MoU; Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives beneficiaries

Maldives tourism: India was #1 source country (2022-23); slight decline after 2024 diplomatic row

BDL (Bharat Dynamics Ltd): Hyderabad; under Ministry of Defence; makes guided missiles, torpedoes

Pulicat Lake: 2nd largest saltwater lake in India after Chilika; straddling AP and TN; flamingo habitat

Sources: PIB, MEA, DST, AffairsCloud, GKToday

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

 linkedin.com/in/epicbharat

Published on ujjari.com · Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs