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## Current Affairs - 10 January 2026

### UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (UN



UNITED NATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
(UN DESA)

#### DESA)

- Rooted in the United Nations Charter and guided by the transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN DESA upholds the development pillar of the United Nations.
- It is based at UN Headquarters in New York, United States.
- Its Divisions and Offices work together towards a common goal to **promote the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.**
- Its work addresses a range of cross-cutting issues that affect peoples' lives and livelihoods.
- From poverty reduction to governance to finance to the environment, UN DESA's work is about human progress for all, especially the most vulnerable.
- UN DESA's work programme can be categorized into **three areas: norm-setting, analysis, and capacity-building.**
- What is UN DESA doing?
  - Facilitates the negotiations of Members States in many intergovernmental bodies to address ongoing or emerging global challenges;
  - Provides substantive support to intergovernmental processes on development issues in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;
  - Advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in the UN conferences and summits into programmes at the country level;
  - Collaborate closely with its partners at regional and country levels in helping countries to formulate and implement development strategies;
  - Compiles, generates, and analyses a wide range of economic, social, and environmental data and information on which member states of the United Nations draw.



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### WHAT IS THE NATIONAL IED DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIDMS)?



The Home and Cooperation Minister recently launched the National IED Data Management System (NIDMS), marking a significant step towards strengthening the country's counter-IED and internal security architecture.

- It is a **national-level digital platform** developed by the National Security Guard's (NSG) National Bomb Data Centre.
  - It will enable **systematic data collection and analysis** related to **Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)**, enhancing the investigation process of terrorist incidents in the country.
  - It will function as a **two-way, integrated online platform** accessible to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), Anti-Terrorism Squads, state police forces and all **Central Armed Police Forces**.
  - **Data related to any explosion or IED incident** across the country **can be uploaded** and analysed to support investigations.
  - The platform will play a crucial role in "**supporting post-blast investigations** and enhancing **coordination among various security and law enforcement agencies** across the country.
  - NSG has **maintained a comprehensive database of bomb explosions since 1999**, which will **now be made available** to law enforcement agencies nationwide **through NIDMS**.
  - The system will **help analyse patterns of attacks, modus operandi and types of explosives used**, and assist in **establishing linkages** between incidents.
  - This platform will strengthen the process of collecting, standardizing, integrating, and securely sharing IED-related data.
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### KEY FACTS ABOUT DAL LAKE



- It is a **mid-altitude urban freshwater lake** located in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.
  - It is **surrounded by the Pir Panjal mountains**.
  - It is integral to tourism and recreation in Kashmir and is named the “**Jewel in the crown of Kashmir**” or “**Srinagar’s Jewel**”.
  - It is **one of the world’s largest natural lakes** and also known as the **Lake of Flowers**.
  - The lake gets its water mainly from the **Telbal stream**. This stream flows from the **Jhelum River**.
  - The wetland is divided by causeways into four basins: **Gagribal, Lokut Dal, Bod Dal, and Nagin** (although Nagin is also considered an independent lake).
  - **Lokut-dal and Bod-dal** each have an island in the centre, known as **Rup Lank (or Char Chinari)** and **Sona Lank**, respectively.
  - The **floating gardens, locally known as "Rad,"** are a spectacular highlight of the lake.
    - These are **patches of land that float** on the water. **Farmers grow vegetables and flowers** on them.
  - Dal Lake is also popular for the **floating market**, where **vendors have their own Shikaras/wooden boats** and approach tourists.
  - The **shoreline** of the lake is encompassed by a **boulevard lined with Mughal-era gardens, parks, houseboats, and hotels**.
  - **Mughal Gardens:**
    - **Nishat Bagh:** This is known as the "**Garden of Joy**." It is a terraced garden with fountains.
    - **Shalimar Bagh:** This garden is called the "**Abode of Love**." It was **built by Emperor Jahangir**.
    - **Chashma Shahi:** This garden is famous for its **natural spring**.
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### SCRAMJET ENGINE



- A Scramjet (Supersonic Combustion Ramjet) is an air-breathing engine designed to operate efficiently at hypersonic speeds (Mach 5 and above).

- It does **not** use rotating compressors, relying instead on the vehicle's high speed to compress air.
- Scramjets enable **supersonic combustion**, making them suitable for **Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCMs)**.
- It carries **liquid Hydrogen as fuel** and **liquid Oxygen for combustion** (oxidiser) to generate thrust.
  - The fuel efficiency of the scramjets tends to be significantly better than that of traditional turbojets and ramjets.
- **India is the fourth country** to demonstrate the flight testing of a Scramjet Engine.
- **Scramjet Engine Working Principle:**

**Air intake:** Vehicle must already be flying at supersonic speeds (Mach 3+).

**Compression:** High-speed movement compresses the incoming air.

**Combustion:** Hydrogen fuel is injected and ignited while air remains supersonic.

**Thrust Generation:** Expanding gases create thrust (based on Newton's Third Law).

Scramjets **need rocket-assisted takeoff** as they **can't generate thrust at zero speed**.

### What are Hypersonic Missiles?

- It refers to one which **travels faster than Mach 5**, or five times the speed of sound.
- **There are two types:**
  - **Hypersonic Glide vehicles (HGV):** These are launched from a rocket, similar to regular ballistic missiles, before gliding to a target.
  - **Hypersonic Cruise Missiles:** They are powered throughout their flight via air-breathing engines called Scramjets, after acquiring their target.



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### PANKHUDI PORTAL



- It is launched by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
- It is an **integrated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** and partnership facilitation digital portal.
- **Aim:** It is aimed at strengthening coordination, transparency, and structured stakeholder participation in **initiatives for women and child development**.
- **Key Features of PANKHUDI Portal:**
  - **Single-window digital platform:** It works as a as a **single-window digital platform, Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributors, corporate entities, and government agencies.**
  - **Key Thematic Areas:** **Nutrition, health, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), child welfare, protection and rehabilitation, and women's safety and empowerment.**
  - **Supports Flagship Missions:** It supports and strengthens the implementation of flagship missions—**Mission Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0, Mission Vatsalya, and Mission Shakti.**
  - **Transparency:** Contributors register on the portal, identify initiatives, submit proposals, and track the status of their contributions through clearly defined approval workflows.
  - **Non- Cash Financial Transactions:** All contributions through the portal are accepted only **through non-cash modes.**
- **Significance:** It marks a significant step towards **leveraging digital solutions for inclusive, collaborative, and outcome-oriented development** of women and children across India.



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### CREATOR'S CORNER PLATFORM



Recently, the Prasar Bharati launched 'Creator's Corner' on DD News to empower digital creators nationwide.

- It was **launched by the Prasar Bharati.**
- It is a dedicated platform for showcasing **content created by digital creators** from across the **country on DD News.**
- **Aim:** To **promote the digital economy** by encouraging the creation of quality content and expanding its reach through a **partnership between Prasar Bharati and individual content creators.**
- It will feature content on a **wide range of themes including;**
  - News and Current Affairs, Culture, Travel, Cuisine, Art and Literature, Music and Dance, Health and Wellness, Education, Science and Technology, inspiring stories, Environment and Sustainable Development, and Entertainment
- **Revenue Model:** This initiative would operate on a **revenue-sharing model.**
- **Significance:** This initiative represents a **mutually beneficial partnership**, providing digital creators a credible platform and the extensive reach of Prasar Bharati/DD News to showcase their work.

### Key Facts about Prasar Bharati

- It is the **Public Service Broadcaster** of the country.
- It is a **statutory autonomous body** established in 1997 under the **Prasar Bharati Act.**
- **Objective:** To conduct public broadcasting services intended to inform and entertain the public.
- It comprises the **Doordarshan Television Network** and **All India Radio**, which were earlier media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- **Headquarter:** New Delhi.



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### SAMAGRA SHIKSHA 3.0 - REIMAGINING SCHOOL EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

- Samagra Shiksha is an integrated, centrally sponsored scheme for school education covering the entire continuum from pre-primary to senior secondary level.
  - Launched in 2018 by subsuming **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan**, **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan**, and **Teacher Education** schemes, it marked a shift toward a holistic and unified approach to school education.
  - Samagra Shiksha 3.0 represents the next phase of this reform journey, aligned with five years of **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** implementation and India's long-term vision of **Viksit Bharat** by 2047.
  - **Core Objectives**
    - Universal enrolment up to Class XII
    - Reduction in dropout rates
    - Improvement in foundational and grade-level learning outcomes
    - Strengthening teacher capacity and school leadership
    - Ensuring equity for socio-economically disadvantaged groups
  - **Key Focus Areas**
    - **Access and Infrastructure:** Bridging regional and social gaps in schooling facilities
    - **Quality of Learning:** Age-appropriate learning benchmarks, curriculum equivalence across boards, and competency-based assessments
    - **Teacher Capacity Building:** Continuous professional development, pedagogical reforms, and leadership training
    - **Digital Education:** Integration of technology, digital platforms, and Artificial Intelligence in classrooms
    - **Equity and Inclusion:** Support for girls, children with disabilities, SC/ST students, and aspirational districts
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### REIMAGINING INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION UNDER NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP)

- **NEP 2020:** It emphasises on **multidisciplinary** education, flexibility, research, innovation, and global engagement.
- **Comparative insight:** China's sustained state focus on higher education highlights the importance of consistent policy direction and institutional trust—a lesson relevant for India.

#### Major Shifts in Indian Higher Education:

- **Institutionalisation of the research ecosystem:**
  - **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF):** It focuses on long-term scientific research and industry–academia collaboration.
  - ₹1-lakh-crore Research, Development and Innovation (**RDI**) Scheme: It promotes private-sector participation and market-ready innovation.
  - **Significance:** Together, they create a dual-track research model—basic research and applied innovation.
- **Institutional innovation and academic reforms:**
  - **Curricular changes:** New undergraduate programmes (e.g., IIMs). Inclusion of well-being, life skills, apprenticeships.
  - **Degree flexibility:** Introduction of four-year undergraduate programmes with exit options. Bachelor's with Honours in Research for global competitiveness.
- **Institutional capacity building:** For example, new interdisciplinary schools at Ashoka University.
  - **Global recognition:** (QS World University Rankings 2026)
    - 54 Indian universities featured (up from 11 in 2015 and 46 in 2025).
    - India is the 4th most represented country and fastest-rising G20 nation.

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- **Changing global mobility landscape:**
  - Over 1.25 million Indian students study abroad (MEA data).
  - **Challenges:** Visa restrictions, geopolitics.
  - **Emerging trend:** Foreign universities entering India. Indian institutions expanding overseas.
  - **Implication:** Need for high-quality domestic alternatives and globalised higher education.

### Challenges and Way Ahead:

- **Fragmented regulatory architecture:** Ensure regulatory consolidation.
- **Uneven quality across institutions:** Achieve 50% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 2035.
- **Limited physical capacity of campuses:** Treat higher education as national infrastructure.
- **Gaps in science exposure and practical training:** Leverage digital and internet expansion for scalable learning.
- **Trust deficit between state and private institutions:** Technology-enabled delivery, high academic standards, and state–institution collaboration (public and private).

### Conclusion:

- India stands at a **pivotal moment** in its higher education journey. With NEP-led reforms, the direction is clear and momentum is building.
  - Achieving a **Viksit Bharat** will depend on sustained implementation, mutual trust, and an unwavering commitment to educational excellence—positioning India not just as a mass educator, but as a **global knowledge leader**.
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