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## CoE for Power Sector Regulation at IIT Delhi | National Current Affairs | 21 Jan 2026

### Why in News?

The **Union Minister for Power**, inaugurated a **Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Regulatory Affairs in the Power Sector** at IIT Delhi.

### Key Points

- **Collaborating Institutions:** The **CoE** is jointly established by **IIT Delhi**, the **Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC)** and **Grid Controller of India Ltd. (Grid India)**.
- **Purpose:** It will serve as a **national hub for regulatory research, advisory support, capacity building and knowledge dissemination** in power sector regulation.
  - **Focus areas:** The **CoE** will undertake **multidisciplinary research** on power sector **regulations, market design, grid operations, energy transition, decarbonisation pathways, digitalisation, energy storage and emerging technologies** like green hydrogen.
  - **Capacity building:** It will support **strengthening institutional capabilities** and provide structured training programmes for **regulators, policymakers, and other professionals**.
- **Role in energy transition:** By focusing on analytical tools and evidence-based research, the Centre will aid India's transition toward **clean energy, competitive markets and consumer-centric reforms**.
- **Institutional model:** The partnership integrates **regulatory leadership (CERC), system operation (Grid India)** and **academic excellence (IIT Delhi)** to inform future-ready regulatory frameworks.

**Read More:** [Central Electricity Regulatory Commission \(CERC\)](#), [Grid Controller of India Ltd.](#)

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## XV Finance Commission Grants Released for Assam | National Current Affairs | 21 Jan 2026

### Why in News?

The **Union Government** has released **₹213.9 crore** to **Assam** under the **Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV-FC) Grants** to strengthen **Rural Local Bodies (RLBs)** for the **financial year 2025-26**.

### Key Points:

- **Aim of Grant:** The funds aim to enhance **grassroots governance** and improve the delivery

of **basic civic services** in rural areas.

- **Coverage:** The grants were allocated for all 2,401 eligible rural local bodies (RLBs) across the state covering **2,192** Gram Panchayats, **182** Block Panchayats and **27** Zilla Parishads
  - The Ministry of Finance disbursed the funds based on recommendations from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- **Purpose of XV Finance Commission Grants:** Under the XV Finance Commission framework, grants are provided in **two instalments annually** and are categorised into:
  - **Untied Grants** – enabling PRIs to address **location-specific developmental needs** under the **Eleventh Schedule** of the Constitution.
  - **Tied Grants** – earmarked for **sanitation, solid and liquid waste management, drinking water supply**, and maintenance of **Open Defecation Free (ODF)** status.
- **Significance:** The release reinforces the Centre's commitment to **fiscal decentralisation, local self-governance**, and **rural infrastructure development**, strengthening the role of PRIs as institutions of **democratic grassroots planning**.

Read More: [XV Finance Commission](#), [Open Defecation Free](#)

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## Discovery Of A Rare Caecilian From Northern Western Ghats Of Maharashtra | National Current Affairs | 21 Jan 2026

### Why in News?

Scientists announced the discovery of a new species of blind caecilian, named **Gegeneophis valmiki**, from the northern Western Ghats of Maharashtra. This discovery is the first for its genus in over a decade.

### Key Points:

- **Location:** The species was first collected in **2017** on the **Valmiki Plateau** in the Satara district of Maharashtra.
- **Etymology:** It is named after the historic **Maharshi Valmiki Mandir** located near the discovery site reflecting the tradition of linking species nomenclature with geographic or cultural landmarks.
- **Research Team:** Led by the **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)**, the discovery involved researchers from Savitribai Phule Pune University, Balasaheb Desai College, and the Mhadei Research Centre.
- **Appearance:** Like other caecilians, *Gegeneophis valmiki* is a limbless, worm-like amphibian.
- **Fossorial Nature:** It is a **subterranean (underground)** dweller with eyes hidden beneath bone, earning it the common name "blind caecilian".
- **Ecological Role:** These animals are beneficial to agricultural ecosystems as their burrowing aerates the **soil** and enhances its structure while they feed on soil invertebrates.
- **Significance:** The Western Ghats, recognised as a global biodiversity hotspot, harbour many endemic amphibian species.
  - Globally, about 41% of amphibian species are threatened with extinction, making new species identification critical for conservation action.

Read more: [Zoological Survey of India](#), [Western Ghats](#)

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# C-DOT Receives SKOCH Award 2025 for Cell Broadcast Solution | National Current Affairs | 21 Jan 2026

## Why in News?

The **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** has been conferred the **SKOCH Award 2025** at the **104th SKOCH Summit** for its **Cell Broadcast Solution**, recognising its contribution to **public safety, disaster communication, and digital governance**.

## Key Points:

- **SKOCH Award 2025:** It was presented on **January 19, 2026**, during the **104th SKOCH Summit** in New Delhi.
- **Theme:** The summit followed the theme "**Resourcing Viksit Bharat**" and recognized excellence in governance, technology, and public service.
- **Cell Broadcast Solution:** C-DOT's CBS is a unified, national disaster and emergency alerting platform with several advanced capabilities:
  - **Geo-Targeted Alerts:** Delivers life-saving information to mobile phones within specific, high-risk geographical areas.
  - **Real-Time Multilingual Support:** Disseminates alerts in **21 Indian languages**, ensuring inclusive reach across diverse demographics.
  - **Network Resilience:** Unlike standard SMS, cell broadcast messages reach all devices in a targeted location instantly, even during **network congestion**.
- **Strategic Significance:** The solution aligns with international standards, including the **United Nations' "Early Warnings for All"** initiative and the **ITU's Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)**.
  - It is compatible with **2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G** technologies, ensuring broad coverage across different mobile network generations in India.
- **Align with Atmanirbhar Bharat:** It supports **national security, public safety, and citizen-centric governance**, aligning with **Digital India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiatives.

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# Khelo India Winter Games 2026 in Ladakh | National Current Affairs | 21 Jan 2026

## Why in News?

The **sixth edition of the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) 2026** was declared open in **Leh, Union Territory of Ladakh**.

## Key Points

- **Inauguration:** The event was inaugurated at **Nawang Dorjan Stobdan (NDS) Stadium** by the **Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta**.
- **Organising Authorities:** The event is being organised by the **Youth Services and Sports Department of Ladakh UT**, under the supervision of the **Sports Authority of India (SAI)**.
- **Sports Disciplines:** The Games include **ice sports** such as **ice hockey and ice skating**.
  - **Figure skating** has been added to the programme for the **first time**.
- **Format:** The 2026 edition is designed as a **two-leg competition-**
  - **Ice sports in Leh**

- **Snow events in Gulmarg (Jammu & Kashmir).**
- **Sports Policy in Ladakh:** The UT's **first Sports Policy** aims at **talent identification, inclusive sports, support for women and Divyang athletes, scholarships, job reservations, and world-class sports infrastructure.**
- **Significance:** The Games aim to build **competitive exposure** for athletes, align domestic competition with **international standards**, and develop winter sports infrastructure in the **Himalayan region.**

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