

# Monthly Current Affairs: January 2026 Important Current Affairs

This special report covers key national and international events from January 2026. For those preparing for competitive exams, staying updated with current affairs and general knowledge is vital. We have curated the latest updates on appointments, awards, the economy, and the environment in a simplified format for your revision.

## National and International Economy

### 01 India Becomes the 4th Largest Economy

According to the 2025 IMF report, India has surpassed Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy by nominal GDP. Meanwhile, the UN WESP report projects India's GDP growth to hit 6.6% in 2026.

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- The IMF headquarters is in Washington, D.C.
- Kristalina Georgieva currently serves as the Managing Director.

### 02 Henley Passport Index 2026

India is ranked 80th in the latest Henley Passport Index, which measures the strength of passports globally. Singapore holds the top spot.

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- The index is published by the London-based firm 'Henley & Partners'.
- It relies on data from the International Air Transport Authority (IATA).

### 03 Other Key Indicators

- Apple remains the world's most valuable brand, according to the 2026 Brand Finance Global 500 report.
- India ranks third globally in rare earth element reserves, while China sits in first place.
- India is now the second-largest fish producer in the world.

- Bengaluru has been ranked the safest city in India (46th globally) in the 2026 Numbeo Safety Index.

## Appointments and Resignations

### 04 PV Sindhu's Role in BWF

Indian badminton star PV Sindhu has been appointed as the Chairperson of the BWF Athletes Commission for 2026-2029, marking a significant step for Indian representation in world badminton.

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- The BWF is headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- The federation was established in 1934.

### 05 Administrative and Political Appointments

- Sunetra Pawar has been sworn in as the first female Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra.
- Sadanand Vasant Date is the new DGP of Maharashtra.
- Shatrujeet Singh Kapoor has taken charge as the new Director General of the ITBP.
- Justice Manoj Kumar Gupta has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court.
- A.K. Balasubramanian is the new Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB).

### 06 International Appointments

- Mamadi Doumbouya has been elected as the new President of Guinea.
- Delsy Ricks has been appointed as the interim President of Venezuela.
- Shaya Mohsin Zindani is the new Prime Minister of Yemen.
- Yoweri Museveni has been re-elected as the President of Uganda.

## Environment and Biodiversity

## 07 Ramsar Sites and Tiger Projects

Uttar Pradesh's Patna Bird Sanctuary and Gujarat's Chhari Dhand have been added to the Ramsar list, bringing India's total to 98. Additionally, the Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary in Bihar has been declared a new Tiger Reserve.

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- The Ramsar Convention was signed in 1971 in Iran to preserve wetlands.
- India's largest Ramsar site is the Sundarbans wetland in West Bengal.

## 08 Environmental Updates

- Peru has become the first nation to grant legal rights to bees.
- Madhya Pradesh's Ratapani Tiger Project has been renamed the Dr. Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar Tiger Project.
- Kerala's Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary is now recognized as India's first butterfly sanctuary.
- Chandigarh has declared the 'Striped Tiger Butterfly' as its state butterfly.
- Arunachal Pradesh's Keyi Panyor district has emerged as India's first 'Bio-Happy' district.

## Defense and Security

## 09 INS Vagsheer and the 'Bhairav Force'

President Droupadi Murmu visited the Kalvari-class submarine INS Vagsheer at the Karwar Naval Base in Karnataka. In a major move, the Indian Army has formed a modern unit called 'Bhairav Force', consisting of 100,000 drone operators.

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- INS Arihant is India's first nuclear-powered submarine.
- DRDO celebrated its 68th Foundation Day on January 1, 2026.

## Sports and Awards

## 10 Australian Open 2026

Elena Rybakina (Kazakhstan) won the women's singles title, while Carlos Alcaraz (Spain) claimed the men's singles crown at the Australian Open 2026, held this January.

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- The Australian Open is the first of the four annual Grand Slams and is played on hard courts.

## 11 Major Honors

- The Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2025 was awarded to Graça Machel (Mozambique).
- Novak Djokovic received the Global Lifetime Achievement Award at the 13th Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum International Sports Awards.
- The Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2026 went to Lt. Col. Sita Ashok Shelke (Individual) and the Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (Institutional).
- Tamil composer Ilaiyaraaja received the Padmapani Award at the 11th Ajanta-Ellora Film Festival.

## 12 Other Sports News

- Smriti Mandhana became the second Indian woman to score 10,000 runs in international cricket.
- Vidarbha won the Vijay Hazare Trophy 2025-26, defeating Saurashtra.
- Aryan Varshney became India's 92nd Chess Grandmaster.
- Saina Nehwal and Alyssa Healy have announced their retirement from professional sports.

## Festivals and Days

## 13 World Hindi Day and Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

World Hindi Day is observed on January 10 every year; the 2026 theme was "Hindi – Bridging Traditional Knowledge and AI." Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated on January 9 to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's return to India from South Africa.

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- Hindi was adopted as an official language on September 14, 1949, which is why National Hindi Day is observed on September 14 in India.

## 14 Regional Festivals

- Jallikattu and Pongal were celebrated with great fervor in Tamil Nadu.
- Ladakh hosted the 'Spitik Gustor' mask dance festival.

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