

Daily Current Affairs

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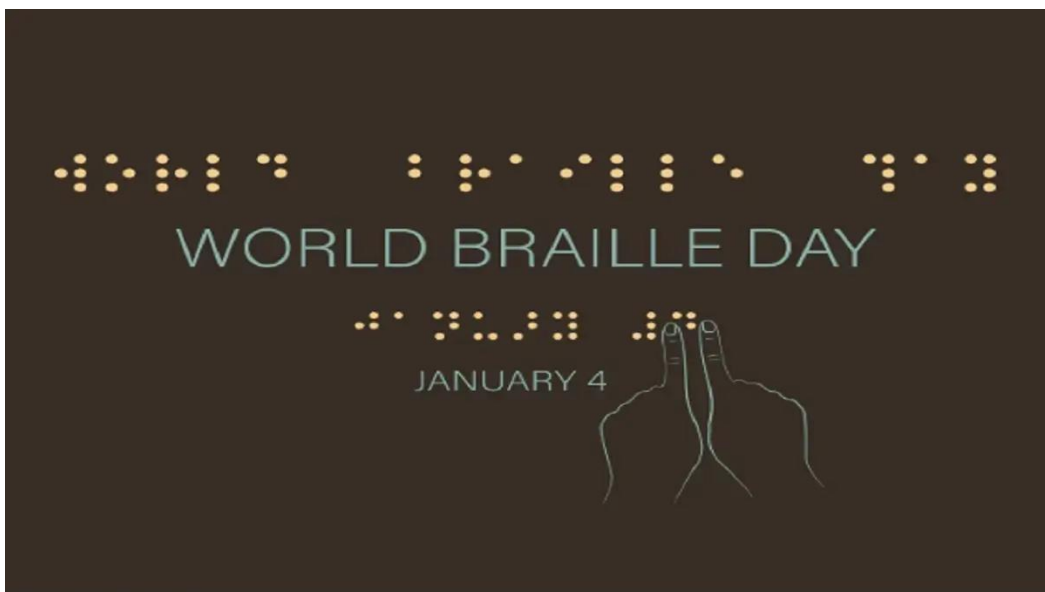
National Bird Day 2026

- National Bird Day 2026 observed on **January 5**, drawing attention to the vital role birds play in maintaining ecological balance. From pollination to pest control, birds support healthy ecosystems.
- The day serves as a reminder that habitat loss, climate change, and illegal trade continue to threaten bird populations worldwide, making conservation efforts more important than ever.
- National Bird Day was established in 2002 by the Avian Welfare Coalition. It coincides with the historic Christmas Bird Count in the United States, one of the longest-running wildlife surveys.
- The **Indian Peafowl (Peacock)**, scientifically known as *Pavo cristatus*, is the **national bird of India**.
- It was declared the national bird in **1963** due to its cultural, religious, and ecological significance.
- The peacock is protected under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**
- and is widely depicted in Indian art, folklore, and traditions.
- **Salim Ali** is fondly known as the “**Birdman of India**.”
- He was a pioneering ornithologist whose extensive bird surveys laid the foundation for modern ornithology in India.
- His work significantly influenced bird conservation policies and public awareness across the country.



World Braille Day 2026

- Every year on January 4, the world observes World Braille Day, a day dedicated to celebrating one of the most powerful tools of inclusion ever created. Braille is not just a system of reading and writing.
- World Braille Day marks the birth anniversary of **Louis Braille**, the French educator who invented the Braille system.
- Although Braille was invented in the **19th century**, its global importance received official recognition when the **United Nations** declared **January 4** as **World Braille Day in 2019**.



Sjoerd Marijne Returns as Coach of Indian Women's Hockey Team

- The Indian women's hockey team has received a major boost with the appointment of an experienced international coach. The return of a familiar face is expected to strengthen team preparation and performance in upcoming global tournaments.
- This move comes at a crucial time as India prepares for important international qualifiers, aiming to build on past successes and secure a place on the world stage.
- Sjoerd Marijne is a well-known Dutch hockey coach with strong international experience.
- He previously coached the Indian women's hockey team and guided them to a historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.
- This was India's best-ever performance in women's hockey at the Olympics and came after a gap of over 36 years since their earlier Olympic appearance.
- Marijne's first major assignment will be the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup Qualifiers, to be held in Hyderabad, Telangana, from 8 to 14 March.
- These matches are crucial for securing India's place in the upcoming World Cup.



PM Modi Opens 72nd National Volleyball Tournament

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **72nd National Volleyball Tournament in Varanasi** through video conferencing. Addressing players and officials, he highlighted how the values of volleyball teamwork, coordination, and shared responsibility mirror India's development journey.
- **National Volleyball Tournament**
- Organized annually by the Volleyball Federation of India.
- Brings together state and institutional teams.
- Platform for talent scouting and national selection.
- Encourages grassroots participation in volleyball.
- One of India's oldest national-level team sports tournaments.
- **Volleyball Federation of India**
- Sport: Volleyball
- Jurisdiction: India
- Abbreviation: VFI
- Founded: 1951 (74 years ago)
- Headquarters: Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India



Integrated Security Hub Launched

- India has taken another step to strengthen security and governance in its island territories. With a focus on technology-driven surveillance and coordination, a major security infrastructure project has been launched in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

- The initiative reflects the government's broader vision of combining national security, development, and tourism in strategically important regions.
- The Integrated Command and Control Centre, built at a cost of **₹229 crore**, is a high-tech facility designed to strengthen security management and emergency response in the islands.
- It integrates **surveillance, communication, and coordination** among multiple agencies under one platform.
- The **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** hold immense strategic and geopolitical importance due to their location near major international sea lanes in the Indian Ocean.
- Strengthening security infrastructure in the islands enhances maritime security, disaster management, and surveillance.
- **Andaman Islands**
 - Proximity: Closer to mainland India, stretch Nearly 800 km north-south
 - Major Islands: North, Middle, and South Andaman
 - Capital: Port Blair (South Andaman)
 - Strategic Importance: Near Ten Degree Channel and Malacca Strait
- **Nicobar Islands**
 - Location: South of Andamans, separated by Ten Degree Channel
 - Capital: Car Nicobar
 - Strategic Importance: Indira Point – India's southernmost tip, near major sea routes



Andhra Pradesh Leads India's Investment Race in FY26

- Andhra Pradesh has emerged as India's leading investment destination in the current financial year. According to a recent report, the state has attracted the largest share of proposed capital investments, reflecting rising investor confidence.
- Strong government policies, focus on infrastructure, and faster approvals have helped Andhra Pradesh move ahead of traditional industrial states and signal a shift in India's growth geography.
- As per a Bank of Baroda report, Andhra Pradesh secured 25.3% of India's total proposed investments in the first nine months of FY26, the highest among all states.
- The state has taken a clear lead in proposed capital investments.
- Andhra Pradesh captured 25.3% of total proposed investments in FY26 so far.
- It moved ahead of Odisha (13.1%) and Maharashtra (12.8%).
- Nationwide investment announcements touched ₹26.6 lakh crore, up 11.5% year-on-year.



US Move on Venezuela's Oil

- The US has announced control over Venezuela's oil sector, signalling possible large-scale revival of its oil production and a shift in global energy dynamics.
- US plans to involve major American oil companies.
- Objective is to repair ageing oil infrastructure.
- Venezuela currently produces far below its capacity.
- The plan could increase oil exports in the future.

- Implementation, if successful, will take several years.



Republic Day 2026: EU Leaders Likely to Be Chief Guests

- India's Republic Day celebrations on 26 January 2026 are expected to carry strong diplomatic significance, with European Union (EU) leaders likely to attend as chief guests.
- EU has officially accepted India's invitation, underlining the growing importance of the **India–EU Strategic Partnership** at a time of shifting global economic and geopolitical alignments.
- **Ursula von der Leyen** is known for steering major EU initiatives such as the European Green Deal and the Competitiveness Compass, aimed at strengthening the EU's economic resilience amid competition from the United States and China.
- The visit of EU leaders is expected to coincide with the India–EU Summit, tentatively planned for **27 January 2026**, although no official confirmation has been issued yet. If held, the summit would come at a crucial moment as India–EU **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** negotiations have resumed after years of stagnation.



China Commissions a New Missile Destroyer

- China has recently strengthened its naval power by commissioning a new advanced warship named **Loudi**. This development highlights how quickly the Chinese Navy is expanding its fleet in order to match or challenge the naval strength of the United States.
- The **Loudi is a Type 052D guided missile destroyer** inducted into the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy. A destroyer is a powerful warship designed to protect other naval vessels and carry out offensive operations.
- China's navy has grown rapidly over the last few years. According to a BBC report, **China now operates more warships than the United States**, making it the largest navy in the world by number of ships.
- With the induction of Loudi, China has already added 11 combat vessels in 2025, including its advanced aircraft carrier Fujian. This reflects China's long-term goal of becoming a major global maritime power.



MoSPI Launches New Logo and Mascot 'Sankhyiki'

- Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) unveiled its new logo and official mascot 'Sankhyiki (सांख्यिकी)' in New Delhi, Delhi.
- The launch aligns with the central theme "Data for Development", highlighting the growing role of reliable, timely, and transparent data in evidence-based policymaking and governance.
- Sankhyiki will be actively used in **National Sample Surveys (NSS)**, awareness programmes, educational material, digital platforms, and public events. Through these channels, the mascot will encourage public participation, promote statistical literacy, and strengthen trust in official data.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When was National Bird Day 2026 observed?

- A. January 1
- B. January 4
- C. January 5
- D. January 10

Answer: C. January 5

2. National Bird Day was established in 2002 by which organization?

- A. World Wildlife Fund
- B. United Nations

- C. Avian Welfare Coalition
- D. BirdLife International

Answer: C. Avian Welfare Coalition

3. What is the scientific name of the Indian national bird, the Peacock?

- A. Pavo indicus
- B. Pavo cristatus
- C. Pavus maximus
- D. Indica pavonis

Answer: B. Pavo cristatus

4. The peacock was declared India's national bird in which year?

- A. 1950
- B. 1956
- C. 1963
- D. 1972

Answer: C. 1963

5. Who is popularly known as the "Birdman of India"?

- A. M. S. Swaminathan
- B. Salim Ali
- C. R. Sukumar
- D. Sunita Narain

Answer: B. Salim Ali

6. World Braille Day is observed every year on which date?

- A. January 1
- B. January 2
- C. January 4
- D. January 5

Answer: C. January 4

7. World Braille Day marks the birth anniversary of which personality?

- A. Helen Keller
- B. Louis Pasteur
- C. Louis Braille
- D. Jean Piaget

Answer: C. Louis Braille

8. Who has returned as the coach of the Indian women's hockey team?

- A. Graham Reid
- B. Michael Nobbs
- C. Sjoerd Marijne
- D. Ric Charlesworth

Answer: C. Sjoerd Marijne

9. Sjoerd Marijne guided the Indian women's hockey team to their best-ever Olympic performance at which Olympics?

- A. Rio 2016
- B. London 2012
- C. Tokyo 2020
- D. Paris 2024

Answer: C. Tokyo 2020

10. Sjoerd Marijne's first major assignment after returning will be the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup Qualifiers held in which city?

- A. Bhubaneswar
- B. Bengaluru
- C. New Delhi
- D. Hyderabad

Answer: D. Hyderabad