



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 16, 2026

TAMILNADU

- **India's First Sovereign AI Park in Chennai**
- ✓ Government of Tamil Nadu (TN) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sarvam AI to establish India's first full-stack Sovereign Artificial Intelligence (AI) Park in Chennai, TN.
- ✓ The project will receive an initial investment of around Rs.10,000 crore and is projected to generate over 1,000 high-skilled deep-tech jobs.
- ✓ The Sovereign AI Park will be developed as a dedicated AI district, integrating high-performance AI computing infrastructure, secure data frameworks, advanced research and model training labs, and innovation clusters.
- ✓ The park will host a dedicated Institute for AI in Governance to develop AI for public-sector use, ensuring data security, ethics, and accountability.
- ✓ The park will support large-scale AI projects in education, healthcare, agriculture, and citizen services, while promoting Tamil-first AI models reflecting local language and culture.

NATIONAL

- **State Bank of India to Facilitate India-Israel Bilateral Trade Settlements in INR**
- ✓ State Bank of India (SBI), the only Indian bank with a branch in Israel, plans to facilitate bilateral trade between India and Israel in Indian Rupees (INR).

- ✓ Trade settlements will be done through the Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) mechanism, as permitted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), allowing exporters and importers to settle trade in INR.
- ✓ The bank will assist Indian workers in Israel by enabling remittances to India through NRI accounts and fintech partnerships.
- ✓ The initiative aligns with deepening economic ties, including progress towards an India-Israel Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the recently signed Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT).

➤ **Speed Post 24 and Speed Post 48 Services**

- ✓ Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia announced the launch of two new India Post services: Speed Post 24 and Speed Post 48.
- ✓ These services ensure time-bound delivery within 24 hours and 48 hours, respectively.
- ✓ The announcement was made during a programme held at Pichhor in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ The initiative is being seen as a major step towards modernisation of postal services in India.

➤ **IndusFood 2026**

- ✓ During IndusFood 2026, APEDA organised the BHARATI Startup Challenge to support export-ready startups by providing mentorship, market access, and policy facilitation.
- ✓ APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) launched a new initiative named BHARATI to support agri-food and agritech startups.
- ✓ BHARATI stands for Bharat's Hub for Agritech, Resilience, Advancement and Incubation for Export Enablement, aimed at promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and export opportunities in India's agricultural and food processing sectors.
- ✓ Selected startups will receive international exposure through participation in Gulfood (Dubai) and BIOFACH (Germany), helping them explore global markets and strengthen India's agri-export ecosystem.
- ✓ The BHARATI Startup Zone showcased over 100 innovative agri-startups working in areas such as value addition, agri-technology, processing, packaging, logistics, traceability, and sustainable export solutions.

➤ **National Sports Governance (National Sports Bodies) Rules, 2026**

- ✓ The Union Government has notified the National Sports Governance (National Sports Bodies) Rules, 2026.
- ✓ These Rules operationalise the provisions of the National Sports Governance Act, 2025.
- ✓ The objective is to promote transparency, accountability, athlete-centric governance and gender representation in sports administration, aligning India's sports governance with global best practices.
- ✓ The Rules lay down a comprehensive framework for the governance of National Sports Bodies and Regional Sports Federations.
- ✓ The aim is to create a transparent, accountable and athlete-driven sports ecosystem while ensuring a smooth transition to a statutory governance framework.

➤ **Union Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar Launches Logo, Theme and Website of BRICS India Chairship 2026**

- ✓ Union Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, unveiled the logo, theme and official website of India's BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Chairship 2026 at a launch ceremony held in New Delhi (Delhi).
- ✓ Theme: India's BRICS Chairship 2026 is guided by the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability", inspired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi's "Humanity First and People-centric" vision.
- ✓ The BRICS India 2026 logo is inspired by the lotus flower and blends tradition with modernity to reflect inclusivity, dialogue, and shared growth.
- ✓ Lotus petals depict the vibrant colours of BRICS members symbolising unity, while the central "Namaste" gesture conveys warmth, respect, and harmonious collaboration.
- ✓ The official website brics2026.gov.in was launched as a central platform for information dissemination during India's Chairship.

RANKING & INDEX

➤ **NITI Aayog's 4th Export Preparedness Index 2024**

- ✓ Chief Executive Officer (CEO) B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog released the 4th edition of the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024 a comprehensive assessment of the

export readiness and performance of Indian States and Union Territories (UTs) at an event held in New Delhi.

- ✓ Maharashtra has emerged as the top-ranked large state with 68.01 score, followed by Tamil Nadu (TN) with 64.41 and Gujarat with 64.02, while among the smaller states, Uttarakhand holds the top position with 52.07, followed by Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) with 51.08 and Nagaland with 46.42

IMPORTANT DAYS

➤ Indian Army Day - 15th January

- ✓ Indian Army Day 2026 is observed on 15th January 2026.
- ✓ The day marks the 75th birth anniversary of Indian Army Day.
- ✓ Indian Army Day is celebrated to commemorate the historic moment when Field Marshal K M Cariappa took over as the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from the British Commander-in-Chief.
- ✓ The formal and final transfer of command took place on 15 January 1949, which is observed annually as Indian Army Day.

