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Current Affairs Today – January 25, 2026

25 January 2026

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WHY IN NEWS

January 25, 2026 marks the 16th National Voters Day (ECI's 76th founding anniversary), the announcement of 131 Padma Awards 2026 on Republic Day eve, and National Tourism Day — with President Droupadi Murmu addressing the nation on the eve of the 77th Republic Day.

16TH NATIONAL VOTERS DAY (NVD) — JANUARY 25, 2026

National Voters Day is observed annually on January 25 — the founding anniversary of the Election Commission of India (ECI), established on **January 25, 1950**.

16th NVD 2026:

Theme: “My India, My Vote” | Tagline: “Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy”

Events held across India: Voter pledge ceremonies, enrolment drives, digital literacy camps

ECI's 76 years — Key Data:

Established: **January 25, 1950** (day before Republic Day)

Constitutional basis: **Article 324** — “Superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to Parliament and to the Legislature of every State and of elections to the offices of President and Vice-President”

First Chief Election Commissioner: **Sukumar Sen** (1950–1958) — conducted India's first two General Elections (1951–52 and 1957)

Current Chief Election Commissioner: **Gyanesh Kumar** (from March 2024)

Voter base: ~**96.8 crore** registered voters as of the 2024 General Election (18th Lok Sabha)

ECINET Launch 2026: The ECI launched **ECINET** (Electoral Commission Integrated Network) — a unified digital platform integrating **40+ ECI applications** into a single interface. Key features:

Electoral roll management

Voter services portal (form submission, enrolment, corrections)

Election monitoring dashboard for field officers

Grievance redressal system

Transparency portal for party accounts

Delhi Declaration 2026: At the India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management (IICDEM 2026), the **Delhi Declaration 2026** was adopted with five pillars:

- Clean electoral rolls
- Free and fair elections
- Research and knowledge sharing
- Use of technology in elections
- Capacity building for election management bodies

Historical context: NVD was first observed on January 25, **2011** (1st NVD) — the 61st anniversary of ECI's founding, as part of an initiative to recognise newly enrolled young voters and promote voter participation.

PADMA AWARDS 2026 — ANNOUNCED ON REPUBLIC DAY EVE

The **Padma Awards 2026** were announced by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the eve of Republic Day — January 25, 2026.

Total: 131 Awards

Category	Count
Padma Vibhushan	5
Padma Bhushan	13
Padma Shri	113
Total	131

Other dimension	Count
Posthumous	16
Women	19
Foreign/NRI/PIO/OCI	6

State-wise leaders: Maharashtra (15) — Tamil Nadu (13) — Uttar Pradesh (11) — West Bengal (11)

Padma Vibhushan (5) — Selected Notable Recipients:

Recipient	Field	Notes
Dharmendra Singh Deol	Arts/Cinema	Posthumous; veteran Bollywood actor (“He-Man of Bollywood”)
V.S. Achuthanandan	Public Affairs	Posthumous; former Chief Minister of Kerala (2006–2011); veteran CPM leader; known for anti-corruption campaigns

Padma Bhushan (13) – Selected Notable Recipients:

Recipient	Field	Notes
Mammootty	Arts/Malayalam Cinema	3-time National Award winner; 50+ years in Malayalam cinema
Alka Yagnik	Arts/Playback Singing	Most-streamed female artist globally 2023 (Spotify); playback singer for 5 decades
Uday Kotak	Trade and Industry/Banking	Founder & former MD+CEO, Kotak Mahindra Bank

Padma Shri (113) – Selected Notable Recipients:

Recipient	Field	Notes
Rohit Sharma	Sports/Cricket	Captain, Indian men’s cricket team; 5-time IPL title winner with Mumbai Indians
Harmanpreet Kaur	Sports/Cricket	Captain, Indian women’s cricket team; first Indian woman to score 200+ in ODIs
Praveen Kumar	Sports/Para-Athletics	Gold medalist, 2024 Paris Paralympics (High Jump T64 category)
R. Madhavan	Arts/Film	Actor and filmmaker; <i>Rocketry: The Nambi Effect</i> (2022)

Padma Awards – Institutional Framework:

Instituted: 1954 by Government of India

Suspended twice: 1978–79 (under Morarji Desai government) and 1993–97 (under P.V. Narasimha Rao government)

Selection process: Padma Awards Committee (chaired by Cabinet Secretary) → recommendations to PM’s Office → Home Minister → President

Maximum per year: 120 (excluding posthumous and foreign nationals)

Presentation ceremony: Typically March–April at Rashtrapati Bhavan

Constitutional status: Supreme Court ruled Padma Awards are NOT “titles” under **Article 18** (which prohibits hereditary titles by the state); they are honorifics/suffixes, not conferred as hereditary distinctions

PRESIDENT MURMU’S ADDRESS TO THE NATION

President **Droupadi Murmu** addressed the nation on the eve of the 77th Republic Day (January 25 evening).

Key themes highlighted:

- 75 years of India as a republic — achievements under constitutional governance
- India’s democratic resilience: 18 General Elections conducted peacefully
- Constitutional values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity
- India’s rise as a global economic power and voice of the Global South
- Welfare of marginalised communities and women’s empowerment
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat and India’s technological achievements (ISRO, Chandrayaan-3, Aditya-L1)
- Tribute to freedom fighters who sacrificed for the nation
- Call for constitutional responsibility among citizens

Note on Presidential address tradition: The President of India traditionally addresses the nation on Republic Day eve (January 25) — similar to the Republic Day eve address on August 14 before Independence Day. These are distinct from the **President’s Address to Parliament** (under Article 87 — delivered at the commencement of the first session of each year).

NATIONAL TOURISM DAY — JANUARY 25, 2026

National Tourism Day is observed on January 25 every year in India.

National Tourism Day 2026 Theme: “Rural and Community-Centric Tourism”

The theme reflects the Government’s focus on:

- Developing rural tourism as a livelihood generation tool
- Heritage village preservation
- Community-owned tourism enterprises
- Reducing concentration of tourist footfall in a few urban monuments

Key government schemes for tourism:

PRASHAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive) — development of pilgrimage sites

Swadesh Darshan — integrated tourist circuit development (thematic routes)

E-Visa — 166+ countries (India's e-Visa expansion)

India tourism data: India received ~9.2 million international tourist arrivals in 2024 (target: 30 million by 2030).

International context: World Tourism Day is September 27 (UNWTO — UN World Tourism Organization, HQ: Madrid, Spain).

PERSONS IN NEWS

I.S. Bindra (1941–January 25, 2026): Former BCCI President (1993–1996) and long-serving Punjab Cricket Association President (1978–2014) passed away on January 25, 2026. He:

Brought the **1987 ICC Cricket World Cup** to India (along with Pakistan) — the first World Cup held outside England

Hosted the **1996 ICC Cricket World Cup** in India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka

In **1994**, challenged Doordarshan's monopoly on cricket broadcasting before the Supreme Court — enabling private broadcasters like ESPN and Trans World International (TWI) to enter India, transforming Indian cricket's commercial value and ultimately enabling the IPL era

The **Punjab Cricket Association Stadium, Mohali** (IS Bindra Stadium) is named after him

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

NATIONAL VOTERS DAY 2026 (16TH NVD):

Date: **January 25** each year; 16th NVD = **2026**

1st NVD: **January 25, 2011**

Theme 2026: **“My India, My Vote”**

ECI founded: **January 25, 1950**

Constitutional basis: **Article 324**

First CEC: **Sukumar Sen** (1950–1958)

Current CEC: **Gyanesh Kumar** (from March 2024)

Registered voters (2024 General Election): **~96.8 crore**

ECINET: Unified platform integrating **40+ ECI applications**

Delhi Declaration 2026: 5 pillars (clean rolls, free/fair elections, research, technology, capacity building)

PADMA AWARDS 2026:

Announced: **January 25, 2026** (Republic Day eve)

Total: **131** | PV: **5** | PB: **13** | PS: **113**

Posthumous: **16** | Women: **19** | Foreign/NRI: **6**

State leaders: **Maharashtra (15)**, Tamil Nadu (13), UP (11), WB (11)

Notable: Dharmendra (PV, posthumous), V.S. Achuthanandan (PV, posthumous), Mammooty (PB), Alka Yagnik (PB), Rohit Sharma (PS), Harmanpreet Kaur (PS)

Instituted: **1954** | Suspended: **1978–79 and 1993–97**

Max per year: **120** (excluding posthumous + foreign)

Selection: Padma Awards Committee (Cabinet Secretary) → PM → Home Minister → President

Constitutional: NOT “titles” under **Article 18** (Supreme Court)

Presentation: Rashtrapati Bhavan, typically March–April

NATIONAL TOURISM DAY:

Date: **January 25** (India) | **September 27** = World Tourism Day (UNWTO, Madrid)

Theme 2026: **“Rural and Community-Centric Tourism”**

International tourists 2024: **~9.2 million** (target: 30 million by 2030)

I.S. BINDRA:

BCCI President: **1993–1996**

PCA President: **1978–2014**

Brought **1987** and **1996** ICC World Cups to India

Doordarshan monopoly challenge: **1994** SC case; enabled ESPN/TWI

Stadium named: **Punjab Cricket Association Stadium (IS Bindra Stadium), Mohali**

Died: **January 25, 2026** (age 84)

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

PRASHAD: Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (Ministry of Tourism)

Swadesh Darshan: Integrated tourist circuit scheme

UNWTO: UN World Tourism Organization (HQ: Madrid, Spain); September 27 = World Tourism Day

President's Address to Nation: January 25 (Republic Day eve) + August 14 (Independence Day eve)

President's Address to Parliament: Article 87 (first session of each year; Budget session opening)

IS Bindra's impact: His 1994 SC case opened cricket to private broadcasters → commercial boom → IPL (2008)

Sources: PIB, ECI India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Tourism

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