CA & GK

Best Newspaper for CLAT Aspirants: A Complete Guide to Choosing the Right Daily in 2026

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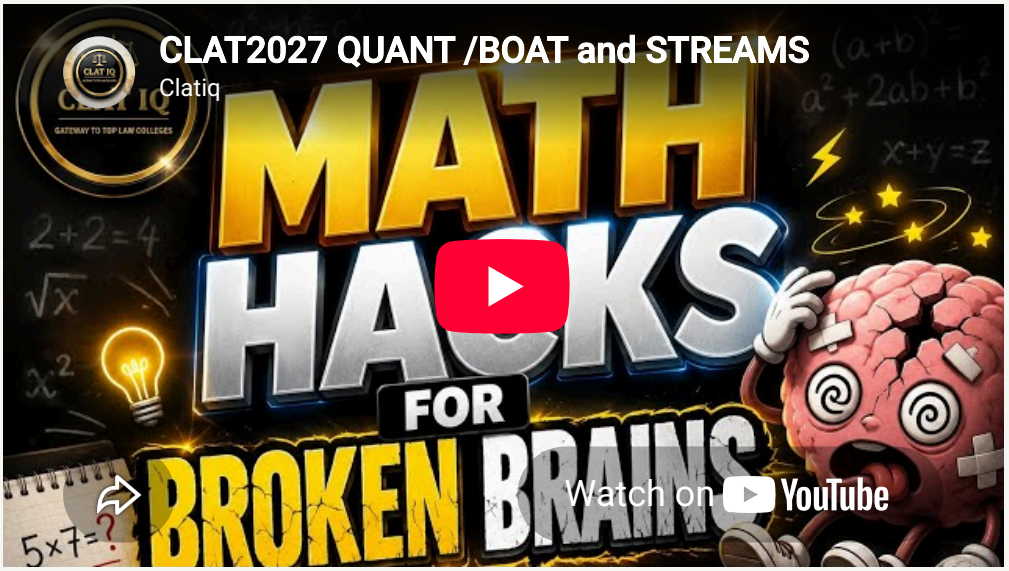


Introduction

Ask any CLAT topper what habit made the biggest difference to their preparation, and nine times out of ten, “reading the newspaper daily” will be somewhere near the top of the list. The Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) has, over the past few attempts, shifted decisively toward passage-based, comprehension-driven questions — even in sections like Legal Reasoning and General Knowledge/Current Affairs. This means that CLAT no longer rewards rote memorisation of facts; it rewards the ability to read dense text quickly, understand context, infer meaning, and connect events to their broader implications.

A newspaper, read consistently and intelligently, does exactly this. It is not just a source of “current affairs facts” for the GK section — it is a daily comprehension and vocabulary-building exercise, a civics lesson, an editorial-writing masterclass, and a window into how law, policy, and society intersect. But here’s the catch: not every newspaper serves this purpose equally well, and reading the wrong one (or reading the right one the wrong way) can waste hundreds of hours over a two-year preparation cycle.

This guide takes a deep, honest look at which newspapers actually work best for CLAT preparation, why they work, how to use them efficiently, and how to build a sustainable daily reading habit that pays off on exam day.



Why Newspaper Reading Matters So Much for CLAT

Before comparing newspapers, it’s worth understanding exactly what CLAT expects from you, because that shapes which newspaper — and which sections of that newspaper — deserve your attention.

1. The GK and Current Affairs Section

This section draws heavily on events from the preceding 12–18 months: legislative changes, court judgments, government schemes, international relations, sports, awards, and important reports. A newspaper is the primary raw material for this section, especially because most static GK can be picked up from static GK compilations, but current affairs simply cannot be “learned” from a book written months earlier.

2. English Language and Reading Comprehension

CLAT's English section now largely consists of 450-word passages drawn from contemporary articles, opinion pieces, and non-fiction excerpts — often from newspapers or magazines themselves. Regular newspaper reading trains your brain to read unfamiliar, moderately difficult prose quickly and extract the main idea, tone, and argument — exactly the skill tested here.



3. Legal Reasoning

Legal Reasoning passages increasingly draw from real-world legal developments — new legislation, landmark judgments, policy debates around law. A newspaper with

strong legal and judicial coverage gives you a running start on these passages because you're not encountering the underlying issue for the first time in the exam hall.

4. Logical Reasoning (indirectly)

Editorials and opinion pieces are essentially structured arguments — premises, assumptions, counter-arguments, and conclusions. Reading them regularly sharpens your ability to identify argument structure, which is the core skill tested in Logical Reasoning.

5. Vocabulary and Writing Style

Editorial and opinion sections use precise, formal English — the register CLAT passages are written in. Reading them regularly expands vocabulary organically, in context, which is far more effective than memorising word lists.

Given all this, your newspaper choice should be judged on five criteria: **depth of coverage, quality of editorial writing, legal and judicial reporting, language level, and consistency/reliability.**

The Newspapers CLAT Aspirants Actually Use — A Detailed Review

1. The Hindu

Why it's the most recommended newspaper for CLAT:

The Hindu is, by a wide margin, the most commonly recommended newspaper among CLAT toppers, coaching institutes, and mentors. There are concrete reasons for this, not just tradition.

- **Language quality:** The Hindu is written in formal, structured English that closely mirrors the register used in CLAT's English and Legal Reasoning passages. Reading it consistently trains you for the exact kind of prose you'll encounter on exam day.
- **Editorial depth:** Its edit page and op-ed section (typically two to three pieces daily) are argument-dense, well-structured, and cover policy, economy,

international relations, and law with genuine analytical depth — ideal for building Logical Reasoning intuition.

- **Legal and judicial coverage:** The Hindu tracks Supreme Court and High Court judgments, constitutional issues, and legislative developments more thoroughly than most other English dailies, which directly benefits Legal Reasoning and the legal-current-affairs overlap in GK.
- **Low sensationalism:** It maintains a relatively neutral, fact-first tone rather than a dramatic or tabloid-style one, which makes it easier to extract objective information for GK purposes.

Limitations:CLAT Legal Reasoning: Complete Guide & Tricks for Beginners 2026

- Its language can feel dense or slow for absolute beginners in the first few weeks — this is normal and improves with practice.
- Some sections (sports, city-specific news) are less relevant and can be safely skipped.

Verdict: For most aspirants, The Hindu remains the single best all-round newspaper for CLAT, particularly if you're preparing over a longer runway (one to two years) and can afford the initial adjustment period.



2. The Indian Express

Why it's a strong alternative or supplement:

The Indian Express has earned a reputation as arguably the most incisive and politically independent editorial voice among Indian English dailies, and its

"Explained" section deserves special mention.

- **The "Explained" section:** This is a goldmine for CLAT aspirants. It breaks down complex current events — a new law, a court ruling, an international development — into structured, digestible explainers, often with context and background. This is almost tailor-made for GK current affairs revision.
- **Strong editorial and opinion pages:** Its op-eds are argumentative and often present multiple perspectives on contested issues, which is excellent training for spotting assumptions and counter-arguments.
- **Investigative and policy journalism:** The Express often breaks stories and follows policy issues with more persistence than competitors, giving you deeper context on ongoing matters.

Limitations:

- Language is slightly more accessible than The Hindu, which is a plus for beginners but means slightly less rigorous training for advanced comprehension.
- Editorial slant, while less pronounced than in some other papers, still exists — read critically.

Verdict: An excellent primary choice, and arguably the best supplement to The Hindu if you have time to read two newspapers. The "Explained" section alone justifies at least a daily skim.

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3. Business Standard / The Economic Times / Livemint (Financial Dailies)

CLAT's GK section, and increasingly its Legal Reasoning passages, dip into economic policy, budget provisions, trade law, taxation, and business regulation. A financial daily fills this gap that general newspapers often leave thin.

- **Business Standard** is known for relatively neutral, policy-focused reporting and solid analysis of government schemes and economic legislation.
- **Livemint** offers crisp, shorter-format writing that's easier to read quickly, along with good explainer content on economic policy.
- **The Economic Times** is useful for business and corporate news but is less essential unless you're specifically strong in economics-heavy questions.

Verdict: Not a replacement for The Hindu or The Indian Express, but a valuable weekly (not necessarily daily) supplement — especially reading the front page and opinion section once or twice a week for major policy stories.CLAT 2026 UG Syllabus

4. Times of India

Times of India is India's most widely circulated English daily, and its accessibility is both its strength and its weakness for CLAT purposes.

- **Strengths:** Very accessible language, wide coverage, good for building a reading habit if you find The Hindu intimidating at first.
- **Weaknesses:** Editorial and opinion content is comparatively thinner and less analytically rigorous. Its language level is also somewhat below what CLAT passages typically demand, so relying on it exclusively may leave a comprehension gap.

Verdict: A reasonable starting point for absolute beginners to build the daily habit, but most serious aspirants should transition to The Hindu or Indian Express within a few months.

5. Hindustan Times

Hindustan Times sits between Times of India and The Hindu in terms of language difficulty and editorial depth. It has decent political and policy coverage and a reasonably strong opinion section.

Verdict: A solid middle-ground option, though it doesn't distinctly outperform The Hindu or Indian Express in any specific category that would make it a first choice.

6. The Tribune / Regional English Dailies

For aspirants in North India, The Tribune offers solid regional and national coverage with reasonably good editorial content, though its reach and depth on national/international issues is narrower than the national dailies above

Verdict: Fine as a regional supplement but not a substitute for a national daily with strong pan-India and international coverage.

Comparison at a Glance

Newspaper	Language Level	Editorial Depth	Legal/Judicial Coverage	Best For
The Hindu	High	Very High	Very Strong	Overall best; serious, long-term aspirants
The Indian Express	Moderate-High	High	Strong	Explainers; second newspaper or alternative
Business Standard / Livemint	Moderate	Moderate	Weak (strong on economy)	Economic/policy supplement
Times of India	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Weak	Beginners building the habit
Hindustan Times	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Middle-ground daily
The Tribune	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Regional supplement

So, Which One Should You Actually Read?

CLAT 2026 UG Syllabus

If you want a single, direct answer: **The Hindu is the best overall newspaper for CLAT preparation**, and if you can manage a second source, **The Indian Express (especially its "Explained" section)** is the ideal complement. Together, these two cover almost everything CLAT demands — language training, editorial reasoning, legal and constitutional developments, and current affairs — better than any single alternative.

That said, the "best" newspaper is ultimately the one you will actually read, understand, and retain information from, every single day, for the next one to two years. A newspaper you find so difficult that you abandon it after three weeks is worse than a simpler one you stick with consistently. If The Hindu genuinely

overwhelms you at the start, there's nothing wrong with beginning on Times of India or Hindustan Times for a month to build the reading habit and vocabulary, then graduating to The Hindu once you're comfortable.

How to Read the Newspaper for CLAT — It's Not About Reading Everything

A common mistake aspirants make is trying to read the newspaper cover to cover every single day. This is neither necessary nor sustainable. Here is a more efficient, exam-oriented approach.

Step 1: Prioritise Sections

Not all sections carry equal weight for CLAT. Focus your daily time on:

- **Front page** (major national and international news)
- **Editorial and Opinion pages** (for argument structure and vocabulary)
- **National and International news pages**
- **Explainer sections** (like Indian Express's "Explained")
- **Legal, judiciary, and Parliament-related news**
- **Business/economy front page** (headlines and key policy news, not full financial analysis)

You can largely skip: astrology, entertainment gossip, classifieds, and hyper-local city news, unless a specific story has national significance.

Step 2: Read Actively, Not Passively

Passive reading — skimming without engagement — leaves almost nothing behind after a week. Instead:

- Underline or note unfamiliar words and look up their meanings the same day.
- For editorials, try to identify the author's central argument, the evidence used, and any counter-arguments addressed. This mirrors exactly what Logical Reasoning and Legal Reasoning demand.
- For news stories, ask yourself: who, what, when, where, why, and what's the broader significance? This last question — significance — is what separates a fact you'll forget from a fact you'll retain and be able to connect to an exam question.

Step 3: Maintain a Current Affairs Notebook or Digital Note

Don't rely on memory alone. Maintain a running document (physical notebook or a notes app) organised by month, where you jot down:

- Important government schemes and their key features
- Landmark judgments and their core holdings
- New legislation and amendments
- International summits, agreements, and their significance
- Appointments, awards, and rankings

Spend five to ten minutes at the end of each day transferring the two or three most important pieces of news into this notebook. Over a year, this becomes an invaluable, self-made revision resource — far more effective than any third-party compilation because you wrote it yourself.

Step 4: Weekly and Monthly Revision

Set aside 30–45 minutes every Sunday to revise the week's notes. At the end of each month, condense the month's notes into a one- or two-page summary. This spaced repetition is what actually moves information from short-term to long-term memory — a single reading, no matter how careful, is not enough.

Step 5: Time-Box Your Reading

Reading the newspaper should not consume your entire study day. A focused 45–60 minutes daily (excluding note-making) is generally sufficient if done actively. Aspirants who spend two to three hours "reading the newspaper" every day are usually reading passively and inefficiently — better to read less, but more attentively.

Supplementing the Newspaper: What Else You Need

A newspaper alone, however well-chosen, is not a complete current affairs strategy. Consider supplementing it with:

- **Monthly current affairs magazines or compilations** (many coaching institutes publish these) to catch anything you might have missed and to get pre-organised, exam-focused summaries.
- **A reliable static GK source** for historical facts, geography, polity basics, and so on, since newspapers only cover current events.
- **Legal news-specific sources** that track Supreme Court and High Court judgments in more structured detail than a general newspaper, since Legal Reasoning increasingly draws on recent legal developments.
- **Weekly current affairs quizzes**, which force active recall — the single most effective way to convert reading into exam-ready knowledge.

Common Mistakes CLAT Aspirants Make with Newspaper Reading

1. **Switching newspapers too often.** Consistency in source matters more than finding the "perfect" one. Constantly switching disrupts habit formation and note continuity.
2. **Reading without note-making.** Information not written down is information that will largely be forgotten within weeks, especially for a GK section that draws on 12–18 months of events.
3. **Ignoring the editorial page.** Many aspirants read only the news pages and skip editorials, missing out on the single best resource for both Logical Reasoning practice and advanced vocabulary.

4. **Starting too late.** Current affairs for CLAT typically covers roughly the preceding one to one-and-a-half years. Starting your newspaper habit only three or four months before the exam leaves serious gaps that are very hard to fill retroactively.
5. **Reading in isolation from the syllabus.** It helps to occasionally cross-check what you're reading against previous years' CLAT GK questions, to calibrate what level of detail is actually expected (usually significance and key facts, not exhaustive detail).
6. **Neglecting revision.** A single read-through, however careful, fades quickly. Build revision into your routine from day one rather than treating it as an afterthought before the exam.

A Sample Daily and Weekly Routine

Daily (45–60 minutes):

- 20 minutes: Front page, national, and international news (active reading, noting key facts)
- 15 minutes: Editorial and opinion page (identify argument, note new vocabulary)
- 10 minutes: Explainer section or legal/judicial news
- 10 minutes: Transfer key points into your current affairs notebook

Weekly:

- One 30–45 minute session to revise the week's notes
- Attempt a weekly current affairs quiz if available

Monthly:

- Condense the month's notes into a one-to two-page summary
- Cross-check your notes against a monthly current affairs compilation to catch gaps

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Conclusion

There is no single newspaper that magically guarantees a good CLAT score — the newspaper is a tool, and like any tool, its value depends entirely on how consistently and intelligently you use it. That said, if you're looking for the newspaper that best matches CLAT's language level, editorial rigour, and legal-current-affairs overlap, **The Hindu** stands out as the strongest overall choice, with **The Indian Express** — particularly its "Explained" section — as an excellent complement or alternative. More important than which newspaper you choose, though, is building the discipline to read actively, note consistently, and revise regularly, starting as early as possible in your preparation timeline. A daily habit sustained over a year will do more for your CLAT score than any single "best" resource read inconsistently. Choose a newspaper you can commit to, build the habit early, and let consistency — not perfection — carry you through to exam day.