बदलना means to change — which is perhaps nothing to get very excited about. But this everyday verb has two points of interest that make it stand out from the herd.

Firstly, बदलना, which derives from Arabic badal, is one of a surprisingly small group of Hindi verbs in which a non-Sanskritic loanword becomes a Hindi verb stem. Others include ख़रीदना (Persian *khārīd*) and Rajiv Gandhi’s spontaneous coining ल)ज़ना (English ‘to lose’). Hindi does not usually follow this pattern of using a loanword as a verb stem, preferring to embed the loan in a phrase verb using करना or होना, such as बेंग करना or बेंग होना — there is no *बेंगना. (बेंग is from Persian.)

Secondly, बदलना carries both intransitive meaning (भाषा बदलती है Language changes) and transitive meaning (हम अपनी मातृभाषा नहीं बदल सकते We cannot change our mother-tongue). Such duality of verbal function is common enough in English, where the verb to cook can have either the food or the chef as subject, but is much less common in Hindi, which favours separate verbs of related stem such as पकना/पकाना to cook, सूखना/सुखाना to dry, टूटना/टोड़ना to break. The two-facedness of a verb such as बदलना cannot be tolerated for long, and Hindi is quick to distinguish the two different functions through the use of compounds: बदल जाना intransitive, बदल देना transitive!

As usual, we turn to OHED for an overview of meanings, starting at the root with the noun बदल and then following through with the verb and other derivatives.

### बदल [A. *badal*], m. change; exchange, substitution. 2. return, retaliation. 3. reg. = बदला, 5. — करना, to exchange (with, or for, के साथ, or से); to substitute (for, से). - भिला-बदल, m. change of district, or residence.

### बदलना [cf. H. *badalnā*], v.i. & v.t. 1. v.i. to change, to be changed; to vary; to be transformed. 2. to be exchanged (for sthg. else). 3. to be removed; to be transferred; to be transplanted. 4. to change for the worse; to look older; to fade. 5. v.t. to change (sthg.), to alter; to transform; to disguise. 6. to exchange (for, से); to barter. 7. to remove; to transfer; to transplant. 8. to misrepresent (a meaning, an intention). 9. to shift (one’s ground). बात, to prevaricate.

### बदलाई [cf. H. *badalvānā*], f. = बदलाई.

### बदलवाना [cf. H. *badalvānā*], v.t. to cause to be changed, &c. (by, से); to change.

### बदल [A. *badal*], m. 1. exchange. 2. interchange. 3. compensate; compensation; restitution. 4. return, retaliation; vengeance; reprisal. 5. ppn. (w. के). in exchange or return (for). — करना (का)), to exchange (for, से) चुकाना, to exact a return (= लेना). देना (को), to give in return; to make recompense, &c.; to give back what one gets, to retaliate. लेना, to take revenge (for, का, on, से); to get one’s own back, to retaliate. बेंग में, adv. in exchange, &c.

### बदलाई [cf. H. *badalnā*], v.t. 1. exchange; barter. 2. sthg. given in exchange; a replacement. 3. price of exchange.

### बदलना [cf. H. *badalnā*], v.t. = बदलना.
बदलाव badlāv [cf. H. badalna], v.t. exchange; replacement.
बदलाहट badlāhat [cf. H. badalnā], f. change; a change.

बदली [cf. H. badlī], f. 1. change; exchange; substitution. 2. sthg. or someone exchanged; substitute; relief (of a watch). 3. transfer. — करना (की), to change; to exchange; to relieve; to transfer. में, adv. in exchange.

This last headword, बदली, is to be distinguished from a Sanskrit homonym:

बदली [vārdalīkā], f. 1. cloudiness. 2. a small cloud.

All these words are common in everyday use and in journalism, whose brief is, after all, to document change. Here are some internet headlines; the first four use the verb बदलना on its own, the remainder (after the chameleon) use it compounded with जाना, देना, or लेना.

बदलता भारत
Changing India
बदल रहा है थार का मिजाज
The mood of the Thar desert [in Rajasthan] is changing
कठिन नहीं है भार्य बदलना
It is not hard to change [one's] destiny
चर्च को बदलना होगा रवैया: पोप फ्रांसिस
The church will have to change its ways: Pope Francis

गिरिरंग की तरह रंग बदलने वाला कभी सुख नहीं पाता
A person who changes (colour) like a chameleon can never find happiness
अमेरिका ने बनाई बिशा बदल लेने वाली गोली
America has made a direction-changing bullet
क्या पाकिस्तान हमेशा के लिए बदल जाएगा?
Will Pakistan change for ever?
श्री जे से बदल जाएगी मोबाइल फोन की दुनिया?
The world of the mobile phone will change with 3G
दस साल में काफी बदल गया टीवी
TV has changed a lot in ten years.
क्या आपने अपना नाम बदल दिया है? [context: passport renewal]
Have you changed your name?
گजब! 30 दिन में अखिलेश ने बदल दिए 130 अफसर!
Too much! In 30 days Akhilesh [Yadav, Chief Minister of UP] has substituted 130 officials!
अगर आप का भी यही घटना है [123456] तो बदल दीजिए अभी
If you have this same password [123456], change it immediately

A derivative of बदलना lacking from OHED’s entries above is the derogatory term बदलबू turncoat, all too useful in the context of rivalry between political parties (बल). It features the suffix -ū, which often carries a teasing denigration — as in nicknames such as मोटू Fatso, लंबू Lanky, छोटू Titch. Some turncoat headlines:

नेताओं का बदलबू खेल, आज यहां – कल वहां!
The turncoat game of politicians: here today, there tomorrow!
बदलबू नेता पर हम क्यों करें विश्वास
Why should [we] trust a turncoat politician
बदलबू विधायकों की सदस्यता रद्द
Membership of turncoat legislators cancelled

Although बदलना covers a wide range of contexts, it does not fully satisfy the human need to contemplate ‘change’ in all its manifestations. Using OHED as a reverse dictionary (by typing ‘change’ as the search item) leads us on an astonishing tour of the many different words and expressions offered by Hindi for the phenomenon of change. We will look at just a few examples:

In formal contexts, the tatsama word परिवर्तन takes over. Its परि- prefix means ‘around’ and is cognate with Latinate English peri- (as in periphery, peripatetic etc.) while वर्तन means ‘turning’.

धर्म परिवर्तन : क्या किसी ने जानी महिलाओं की इच्छा?
Religious conversion: did anyone ascertain what women want?
जलवायु परिवर्तन के कारण हिमालय में गिल्लियार पिघल रहे हैं, इस बात का कोई पुरातन साक्ष्य नहीं है
There is no firm evidence that the Himalayan glaciers are melting because of climate change
कृषि के हब्ज परिवर्तन के लिए गो माता का सहारा
Mother Cow’s assistance in prisoners’ change of heart

The Sanskritic compound हवय परिवर्तन is fairly obviously calqued on the English change of heart (a ‘heart transplant’ is not intended!); and another calque from English may be involved in the vernacular Hindi expression मन बदलना to change one’s mind.

The Arabic loanword तबदील and its Persian derivative तबदीली often refer to some kind of transformation or change in form; and the related word तबादला is a transfer.
Because of flooding, heaven turned into hell [in Jammu & Kashmir]

Havelock Road Colony [in Lucknow] is being turned into a ruin

A change in the weather [brings] a cold spell back to the state [of Himachal]

Transfers of 4 police inspectors and 20 deputy inspectors

The Sanskrit loanword विकार (and its participial adjective विकृत) bears a specific sense of change for the worse, or deviance from an established norm. Here are the OHED entries:

विकार vi-kār [S.], m. 1. change. *2. specif. change for the worse, deterioration (esp. of health). 3. damage, harm (as to health). 4. disorder, sickness; an abnormality. 5. Av. agitation of mind. 6. an altered form; gram. a declined or conjugated form. — विकारमय, adj. harmful, destructive.

विकृत vi-kt [S.], adj. 1. changed. *2. specif. changed for the worse: damaged, impaired (as health). 3. mutilated, maimed. 4. deformed. 5. disordered (health, or mind). 6. imperfect, incomplete. 7. gram. oblique (case).

And finally some internet headlines:

Mental disorders can be remedied

Terrorism is the consequence of a warped mentality.