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- *Coco Gauff and Arthur Fils Win Cincinnati Open 2026 Singles Titles in Ohio*
- *Uttar Pradesh and Yamanashi Sign Four MoUs, Launching ₹600-Crore Fund for Japanese MSMEs*
- *Veteran Actress Sowcar Janaki Dies at 94 After Distinguished Career in South Indian Cinema*
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- *Indian Air Force Concludes Pitch Black and Udara Shakti 2026 Exercises in Australia and Malaysia*

Pranesh M Wins Kanizsa Open 2026 Chess Title



- Indian Grandmaster Pranesh M, aged 19, has won the Group A title at the Kanizsa Open 2026 in Nagykanizsa, Hungary.
- He secured the championship after defeating Germany's Vadim Petrovskiy with the white pieces in the ninth and final round.

Key Highlights:

- Pranesh finished the nine-round tournament with 7 points. Four players shared the top score, but Pranesh emerged champion on the basis of the tiebreak criteria. The other players at seven points included Or Bronstein of Israel, Andrei Volokitin of Ukraine and India's Karthik Venkataraman.
- Pranesh has a FIDE rating of 2673 and was ranked 44th in the August 2026 FIDE World Rankings. He hails from Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu.
- The Kanizsa Open 2026 featured nine rounds under the Swiss-system format. The tournament was organised in Group A and Group B, with players from several countries participating.

About Pranesh M:

- Pranesh M is an Indian chess Grandmaster and one of the country's promising young players. His victory at Kanizsa adds to India's growing presence in international chess competitions.

About FIDE:

- FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs) is the international governing body for chess. It awards official titles such as Grandmaster (GM), International Master (IM), FIDE Master (FM) and others.
- The Grandmaster title is the highest standard title awarded by FIDE, apart from the separate honorary title of FIDE Honorary Grandmaster.
- Formation: 1924 in Paris, France
- Founder: Pierre Vincent
- Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland
- President: Viswanathan Anand (acting)

Exam Focus Points:

- Winner: Pranesh M
- Tournament: Kanizsa Open 2026
- Country: Hungary
- City: Nagykanizsa
- Final Opponent: Vadim Petrovskiy
- Score: 7 points from 9 rounds
- FIDE Rank: 44th
- Key Concept: Tiebreak determines the winner when players finish with equal points.

Cincinnati Open 2026: Coco Gauff and Arthur Fils Win Singles Titles



- Coco Gauff of the USA and Arthur Fils of France won the women's and men's singles titles respectively at the Cincinnati Open 2026, one of the major hard-court tournaments preceding the US Open.

Coco Gauff – Women's Singles

- Coco Gauff defeated compatriot Jessica Pegula 6–2, 6–4 in the final to win her second Cincinnati Open title. The victory was her first title of 2026 and her fourth WTA 1000 title.
- Gauff had earlier won the Cincinnati title in 2023. With this victory, she joined Serena Williams and Victoria Azarenka as the only women to win the Cincinnati WTA 1000 singles title twice in the Open Era.
- The final was the first all-American women's singles final at Cincinnati in 56 years.

Arthur Fils – Men's Singles

- Arthur Fils defeated American Frances Tiafoe 6–3, 1–6, 6–0 to claim his maiden ATP Masters 1000 title.
- The 22-year-old Frenchman became the youngest French Masters 1000 champion in the history of the series. He also rose to a career-high No. 11 in the ATP rankings following the victory.
- The men's final was historic as it was the first ATP Masters 1000 final between two Black players.

About Cincinnati Open:

- The Cincinnati Open, officially the Cincinnati Masters, is played on hard courts at the Lindner Family Tennis Center in Mason, Ohio, USA. It is classified as a WTA 1000 event on the

women's tour and an ATP Masters 1000 event on the men's tour.

2026 Champions:

Category	Winner	Country
Men's singles	Arthur Fils	France
Women's singles	Coco Gauff	United States
Men's doubles	Orlando Luz / Rafael Matos	Brazil / Brazil
Women's doubles	Marie Bouzková / Linda Nosková	Czech Republic / Czech Republic

Exam Focus Points:

- Tournament: Cincinnati Open 2026
- Women's Champion: Coco Gauff, USA
- Women's Runner-up: Jessica Pegula, USA
- Men's Champion: Arthur Fils, France
- Men's Runner-up: Frances Tiafoe, USA
- Gauff's Score: 6–2, 6–4
- Fils' Score: 6–3, 1–6, 6–0
- Surface: Hard court
- Women's Category: WTA 1000
- Men's Category: ATP Masters 1000
- Venue: Mason, Ohio, USA
- Key Achievement: Fils' first Masters 1000 title; Gauff's second Cincinnati title

Uttar Pradesh–Japan's Yamanashi Sign Four MoUs and Launch ₹600-Crore

MSME Fund



- The Uttar Pradesh Government and Yamanashi Prefecture of Japan have signed four

Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to deepen cooperation in skills, technical training, tourism and technology.

- The agreements were announced during the Japan–India Business Networking Event in Lucknow on 21 August 2026.

Key Areas of Cooperation:

- Skill Development: Invest UP and the Technical Training & Research Centre, Kanpur will

collaborate on technical training, workforce development and placement opportunities.

- **Tourism:** Uttar Pradesh and Yamanashi will promote Buddhist and cultural tourism, particularly to attract Japanese visitors to destinations in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Japanese GCCs:** The two sides will encourage Japanese Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in Uttar Pradesh, especially in Noida and Greater Noida.
- **Skilled Workforce:** The partnership aims to develop a pool of Japanese-language-proficient workers to meet employment requirements in Japan.

₹600-Crore MSME Fund:

- Yamanashi Governor Kotaro Nagasaki announced a ₹600-crore fund to support Yamanashi-based MSMEs investing in Uttar Pradesh. The fund is expected to facilitate Japanese MSME investment, technology linkages and employment generation in the state.

Additional Initiatives:

- Uttar Pradesh will establish a dedicated Yamanashi Desk at Invest UP to facilitate Japanese investments. The state will also coordinate with JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) and JICA (Japan International

Cooperation Agency) to address investor concerns and accelerate project implementation.

- The partnership also has potential significance for green hydrogen, advanced manufacturing and technology cooperation, with Uttar Pradesh seeking to strengthen its industrial ecosystem through Japanese expertise.

About Yamanashi:

- Yamanashi Prefecture is located in central Japan and is known for Mount Fuji, tourism, agriculture and manufacturing. Its capital is Kofu.

Exam Focus Points:

- States/Region: Uttar Pradesh–Yamanashi, Japan
- MoUs: 4
- Fund: ₹600 crore
- Fund Beneficiaries: Yamanashi-based MSMEs investing in UP
- Event: Japan–India Business Networking Event
- Venue: Lucknow
- Yamanashi Governor: Kotaro Nagasaki
- Investment Facilitation: Yamanashi Desk at Invest UP
- Key Organisations: JETRO and JICA
- Focus: Skills, tourism, technology, GCCs and MSMEs

Sowcar Janaki Passes Away at 94



- Veteran South Indian actress Sowcar Janaki, one of the most respected figures in Indian cinema, passed away in Chennai at the age of 94 following age-related health issues.

About Sowcar Janaki:

- Her birth name was Sankaramanchi Janaki. She began her film career with the 1950 Telugu film Shavukaru, directed by L. V. Prasad. The success of the film gave her the screen name “Sowcar”, by which she became popularly known.
- She subsequently worked in Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam cinema and appeared alongside several legendary actors, including N. T. Rama Rao, Sivaji Ganesan, M. G. Ramachandran and Dr. Rajkumar. Her career included leading roles

as well as character roles across different generations.

- She also performed in more than 300 stage shows and worked in television. Her television debut came in 1991 with the Tamil programme Oorarinda Rahasyam on Doordarshan. Her last theatrical appearance was in the 2023 Telugu film Anni Manchi Sakunamule.

Awards and Honours:

- Padma Shri – 2022, awarded by the Government of India for her contribution to Indian cinema.
- Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award - South for Outstanding contributions to South Indian Cinema (1984)
- Recipient of two Nandi Awards:

- Kalaimamani (1969)
- Karnataka Rajyotsava Award (2015)

Exam Focus Points:

- Person(Obituary): Sowcar Janaki
- Birth Name: Sankaramanchi Janaki
- Age at Death: 94 years
- Died: 21 August 2026
- Place: Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- Debut Film: Shavukaru (1950)
- Debut Language: Telugu
- Padma Shri: 2022
- Other Awards: Kalaimamani, Nandi Awards, Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award

INS Mangrol Delivered to Indian Navy



- It is propelled by waterjets and equipped with torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets, advanced radars and sonars.

ASW Shallow Water Craft Programme:

- Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi has delivered INS Mangrol, the third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), to the Indian Navy.
- The vessel is designed to strengthen India's capability to detect and counter underwater threats in coastal and shallow waters.

- INS Mangrol is the third of eight ASW-SWCs being built by CSL for the Indian Navy.
- The first vessel, INS Mahe, was delivered in October 2025, while INS Malwan, the second vessel, was delivered in March 2026.
- These vessels are specifically designed to operate in shallow coastal waters, where conventional larger anti-submarine platforms may face operational limitations.

Key Features of INS Mangrol:

- INS Mangrol has over 80% indigenous content, reflecting India's growing self-reliance in naval shipbuilding.

The vessel is equipped for:

- Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW)
- Underwater surveillance
- Low-Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO)
- Mine warfare

Significance:

- Maritime security: Enhances India's ability to monitor and protect coastal waters.
- Anti-submarine capability: Strengthens detection and engagement of underwater threats.
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat: More than 80% indigenous content supports defence indigenisation.
- Domestic shipbuilding: Highlights the growing role of Indian shipyards and domestic defence manufacturers.

- Indian Ocean security: Strengthens India's maritime surveillance and coastal defence capabilities.

Exam Focus Points:

- Ship: INS Mangrol
- Builder: Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)
- Location: Kochi, Kerala
- Type: Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft
- Series: 3rd of 8

- Indigenous Content: Over 80%
- Propulsion: Waterjets
- Major Systems: Torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets, radar and sonar
- Primary Role: Coastal ASW and underwater surveillance
- Named After: Mangrol, a coastal town and minor port in Junagadh district, Gujarat
- Previous Vessel: INS Mangrol was also the name of an earlier Indian Naval minesweeper that served until 2004.

ADB Loan to Modernise Chennai's Water Supply and Sanitation

Infrastructure



- The Government of India has signed a \$230 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the Chennai Climate-Resilient Water Security and Sewerage Project. The project aims to modernise Chennai's water supply and sewerage systems, improve climate resilience and provide safer and more reliable urban water services.

Key Features:

- The project will benefit around 4.5 million people across the Greater Chennai area and cover approximately 426 sq km.

Major interventions include:

- Construction of over 170 km of water-supply and sewer pipes.
- Upgradation of 7 water pumping stations and 38 sewer pumping stations.

- Strengthening of water-utility assets and operations through performance-based contracts.
- Introduction of digital monitoring and data-driven decision-making.
- Development of a citywide ring-main system to improve water pressure, reliability and equitable distribution.

Climate-Resilient Water Security:

- The project seeks to make Chennai's urban water system more resilient to climate change and natural hazards. It will also improve wastewater collection and treatment and reduce pollution from untreated wastewater.

About ADB:

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) was established in 1966 and is headquartered in Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, Philippines. It is a multilateral development bank supporting sustainable and inclusive development in the Asia-Pacific region. ADB currently has 69 members, including 50 from the region.
- President: Masato Kanda

Exam Focus Points:

- Loan: \$230 million
- Organisation: Asian Development Bank

- Project: Chennai Climate-Resilient Water Security and Sewerage Project
- Location: Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- Beneficiaries: 4.5 million
- Key Areas: Water supply, sanitation, sewerage and climate resilience

- Special Feature: Citywide ring-main system
- SDGs: SDG 6 and SDG 11
- ADB Headquarters: Manila, Philippines
- ADB Established: 1966

India–Mauritius Sign Long-Term Fuel Supply Agreement



- India and Mauritius have signed a five-year long-term fuel supply agreement under which Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) will meet Mauritius' entire import requirement for petrol, high-speed diesel (HSD) and aviation turbine fuel (ATF). The agreement was signed during Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri's visit to Mauritius in August 2026.

- Training and capacity building of Mauritian officials
- Biofuels cooperation
- Broader cooperation in the oil and gas sector

Additional Development:

- A 27.5 thousand metric tonne (TMT) bunker marine fuel storage facility of India Oil (Mauritius) Ltd. (IOML) is being developed at Mer Rouge, Port Louis. It is expected to strengthen Mauritius' position as a bunkering hub in the Indian Ocean.

Mauritius:

- Capital: Port Louis
- President: Dharam Gokhool
- Currency: Mauritian rupee

Key Highlights:

- The agreement was signed between IOCL and Mauritius' State Trading Corporation (STC). It aims to provide Mauritius with assured fuel supplies and protection from global price volatility. It is also described by the government as the first long-term supply agreement in recent years by an Indian public-sector oil marketing company outside South Asia.
- Alongside the supply agreement, India and Mauritius exchanged a Government-to-Government MoU on Oil and Gas Cooperation. It covers:
- Petroleum product supplies

Exam Focus Points:

- Agreement: Five-year fuel supply pact
- Indian Supplier: IOCL
- Mauritian Partner: State Trading Corporation (STC)
- Products: Petrol, HSD and ATF
- MoU: Oil and Gas Cooperation
- Indian Minister: Hardeep Singh Puri
- Mauritian PM: Navinchandra Ramgoolam
- Bunker Facility: 27.5 TMT
- Location: Mer Rouge, Port Louis
- Country: Mauritius
- Strategic Region: Indian Ocean

India–Singapore Deepen Cooperation in Semiconductors, Digital Payments and Green Energy



- India and Singapore have agreed to deepen cooperation in semiconductors, advanced manufacturing, digital payments, healthcare, skills, connectivity and green energy at the 4th India–Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) held in Singapore.

Key Areas of Cooperation:

- Semiconductors & Advanced Manufacturing:
- Both countries discussed strengthening semiconductor supply chains, attracting Singaporean companies and suppliers to India, and establishing industry-led semiconductor training centres to develop skilled manpower.

Digital Payments:

- India's UPI and Singapore's PayNow linkage is being expanded. Cross-border transactions through the linkage reached nearly S\$21 million in the first half of 2026, more than six times the level recorded during the same period in 2025.

Healthcare:

- The countries are exploring greater cooperation in healthcare and medicine, including technology, skills and capacity building.

Green Energy & Sustainability:

- Cooperation is being expanded in green hydrogen, clean energy and green shipping. The two sides are also working on the Singapore–India Green and Digital Shipping Corridor.

Food Security & Telecommunications:

- India's FSSAI and Singapore Food Agency signed an MoU on food safety, while TRAI and Singapore's IMDA exchanged a Letter of Intent on telecommunications and broadcasting.

Exam Focus Points:

- Meeting: 4th India–Singapore Ministerial Roundtable
- Venue: Singapore
- Year: 2026
- Key Areas: Semiconductors, fintech, healthcare, skills, green energy
- Payment Link: UPI–PayNow
- Semiconductor Link: Advanced manufacturing & skills
- Green Initiative: Singapore–India Green and Digital Shipping Corridor
- Strategic Status: Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
- ISMR Established: 2022

India's First Non-GMO Popcorn Maize Hybrid Seed Launched

- Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan launched India's first non-GMO high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid seed at Musunuru in Eluru district, Andhra Pradesh.
- The initiative has been described as an important step towards agricultural self-reliance, indigenous innovation and greater value creation for farmers.



Key Features:

- The newly developed hybrid is a non-Genetically Modified Organism (non-GMO) popcorn maize variety with high expansion capacity, making it suitable for the popcorn industry.
- The launch is significant because it seeks to promote domestic development of specialised maize varieties, reducing dependence on imported seed material and strengthening India's agricultural innovation ecosystem.
- The Vice-President also felicitated farmers and interacted with agricultural stakeholders during the programme at the Gourmet Popcornica Factory in Musunuru.

What is Non-GMO?

- Non-GMO means the crop has not been genetically modified through modern genetic-engineering techniques to introduce or alter specific genes.
- A hybrid seed, however, is produced by crossing selected parent lines to combine desirable characteristics. Therefore, hybrid does not mean GMO.

Significance:

- Agricultural self-reliance: Promotes indigenous seed development and reduces dependence on imported specialised varieties.
- Farmer income: Specialised high-value crops can provide opportunities for better returns through value-added agricultural markets.
- Food processing: Supports India's growing processed-food and snack industry.
- Innovation: Demonstrates the role of agricultural research in developing commercially useful crop varieties.
- Aatmanirbhar Bharat: Strengthens domestic capabilities in seeds, crop improvement and agri-value chains.

Maize – Facts:

- Scientific name: Zea mays
- Maize is one of the world's major cereal crops.
- It is used for food, animal feed, starch, biofuel and industrial products.
- Popcorn is a special type of maize whose kernels expand when heated because of moisture trapped inside the kernel.

Exam Focus Points:

- Achievement: India's first non-GMO high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid seed
- Launched by: C. P. Radhakrishnan
- Place: Musunuru, Eluru, Andhra Pradesh
- Crop: Maize
- Key Concepts: Non-GMO, hybrid seed, agricultural innovation

IAF Concludes Multinational Exercises Pitch Black and Udara Shakti 2026



- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has successfully concluded its participation in Exercise Pitch Black 2026 in Australia and Exercise Udara Shakti 2026 in Malaysia, demonstrating India's operational reach and strengthening defence partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region.

Exercise Pitch Black 2026:

- Pitch Black is a major multinational air-combat exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). In 2026, the IAF deployed its Rafale fighter aircraft and operated alongside air forces from more than 20 countries.
- The exercise involved complex Large Force Employment (LFE) missions in high-threat and multi-domain operational environments. It provided participating air forces an opportunity to improve interoperability, tactical coordination and exchange of operational best practices.
- During the 2026 edition, IAF aircrew conducted high-intensity combat missions and joint tactical manoeuvres with Malaysian forces. The exercise focused on refining air-combat tactics, mission planning, operational flexibility and tactical interoperability.

Exam Focus Points:

Exercise Udara Shakti 2026:

- Udara Shakti is a biennial bilateral air-combat exercise between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF).
- Force: Indian Air Force
- Exercises: Pitch Black & Udara Shakti
- Pitch Black Host: Australia
- Udara Shakti Partner: Malaysia
- Australian Air Force: RAAF
- Malaysian Air Force: RMAF
- IAF Fighter: Rafale
- Key Areas: Air combat, interoperability, tactical coordination and operational readiness



Lets Revise

- ❖ Who won the Group A title at the Kanizsa Open 2026? **Indian Grandmaster Pranesh M.**
- ❖ Who won the men's singles title at the Cincinnati Open 2026? **Arthur Fils of France.**
- ❖ Which Japanese prefecture announced a ₹600-crore fund to support its MSMEs investing in Uttar Pradesh? **Yamanashi Prefecture.**
- ❖ Which veteran South Indian actress, who acted in nearly 400 films, passed away at the age of 94 in August 2026? **Sowcar Janaki.**
- ❖ INS Mangrol, recently delivered to the Indian Navy, belongs to which category of vessel? **Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC).**
- ❖ Which multilateral development bank has provided a \$230 million loan for modernising Chennai's water and sanitation infrastructure? **Asian Development Bank (ADB).**
- ❖ Which Indian company will meet Mauritius' entire import requirement of petrol, diesel and ATF under the new five-year agreement? **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL).**
- ❖ Which two countries are strengthening cooperation in semiconductors, digital payments, healthcare and green energy through the India–Singapore Ministerial Roundtable? **India and Singapore.**
- ❖ India's first non-GMO high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid seed was launched in which state? **Andhra Pradesh.**
- ❖ Exercise Pitch Black is hosted by which country? **Australia.**
- ❖ Udara Shakti is a bilateral air exercise between India and which country? **Malaysia.**



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IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT AFFAIRS IN UPSC EXAMINATIONS

Current Affairs hold a crucial place in the preparation for the UPSC Civil Services Examination. A comprehensive understanding of recent national and international developments helps aspirants strengthen their General Studies foundation and develop a well-rounded perspective on important issues. Topics such as government policies, schemes, economy, international relations, science and technology, environment, defence, social justice, governance, reports, indices, appointments, awards, and major global events are highly relevant for both the Prelims and Mains examinations. Regular study of current affairs not only enhances factual knowledge but also improves analytical ability, critical thinking, answer-writing skills, and decision-making aptitude. Since UPSC questions often connect contemporary developments with static subjects, consistent preparation of current affairs enables aspirants to understand issues in depth and present balanced, informed, and relevant answers. It also plays an important role in Essay writing, Ethics, and the Personality Test, giving candidates a strong edge throughout the examination process.

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