

Daily Current Affairs

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Kaziah Liz Mejo Crowned Miss Universe India 2026

- Miss Universe India 2026 is 19-year-old **Kaziah Liz Mejo of Keralam** who has won the right to be the representative of India at **the Miss Universe 2026** in Puerto Rico that will take place in November this year.
- The winner was declared among 52 contestants after the final round that took place in Zee Studios, Jaipur on August 23. The crown of Miss Universe India 2025 was given by Manika Vishwakarma to her successor. This win for Kaziah Liz Mejo comes after almost three years of preparations.
- As Miss Universe India 2026, Kaziah will represent India in the 75th Miss Universe contest set to take place in Puerto Rico in November 2026.
- Several other contestants were also recognized in the contest,
- Vaishnavi Gannesh – First Runner-up and Miss International India 2026
- Anushri Satavlekar – Second Runner-up
- Tejaswini Shrivastava – Third Runner-up
- Anubha Vashist Chaudhary – Fourth Runner-up



GM Pranesh M Wins Kanizsa Open 2026 Title

- Grandmaster Pranesh M, the young chess talent from India, has claimed victory in the Kanizsa Open 2026 Group A event that was played in Nagykanizsa, Hungary.
- The 19-year-old Grandmaster from the state of Tamil Nadu ended up winning the championship from a tie on superior tie-break scores after being tied in the first position after nine rounds of play.
- Pranesh was playing the final round as there was still some uncertainty over the winner of the championship. In the last round, he managed to beat German Grandmaster Vadim Petrovskiy and got a score of 7 points out of 9 rounds.
- Pranesh M is an Indian Grandmaster aged 19 years who belongs from Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu. He began his participation in the event with an FIDE rating of 2673 and ranked 44th in the August 2026 **FIDE rankings**.



UPI Completes 10 Years

- Unified Payments Interface (UPI). Introduced on 25 August 2016 by the NPCI (National Payments Corporation of India) under the regulatory authority of the RBI (Reserve Bank of India), UPI is a revolutionary system that has transformed the way people and organizations conduct their payments.
- UPI has witnessed phenomenal growth over the years. The annual transaction volume grew from 1.78 crore in FY 2016-17 to more than 24,162 crore in FY 2025-26.

- That is a 13,000 times rise in annual transaction volume within less than a decade. The transaction value has risen too, from ₹0.07 lakh crore in FY 2016-17 to ₹314 lakh crore in FY 2025-26.
- Nowadays, the influence of UPI has significantly expanded beyond the borders of India. Based on the information shared by the government, UPI was responsible for almost 49% of the global transaction volume for real-time payments in 2025.
- According to IMF, UPI became the world's biggest real-time payment system in terms of transaction volumes thanks to India's digital payments infrastructure.
- Today, UPI works in 11 different countries,
 - United Arab Emirates
 - France
 - Bhutan
 - Sri Lanka
 - Nepal
 - Singapore
 - Mauritius
 - Qatar
 - Cambodia
 - Greece
- MaldivesThe coming decade seems to be as crucial for UPI as the previous one. Since transaction volume is already extremely high, the key challenges in the following years will be the increase of both users and merchants who participate in the process and the improvements of innovation, security and convenience.



US Removes Syria from Terrorism Sponsor List

- The United States Department of State removed Syria from its list of State Sponsors of Terrorism on 24 August 2026. The designation had remained in force since 29 December 1979.
- The Department of State also revoked the designation of the al-Nusrah Front, also known as Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist organisation on the same date.
- The State Sponsors of Terrorism list is a United States foreign policy tool used by the Department of State. It is linked to restrictions on foreign assistance, defence exports, and certain financial transactions. The list is separate from the Specially Designated Nationals List maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).
- OFAC removed HTS from its SDN List and revoked Syria General License 25 on 24 August 2026. General licences are authorisations issued by OFAC for specified transactions that would otherwise be prohibited under sanctions rules. The 45-day congressional review period began after Secretary of State Marco Rubio notified Congress on 8 July 2026.



US Launches Operation Economic Outcast

- On 24 August 2026, the United States announced “Operation Economic Outcast”, a sanctions campaign led by Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent against Iran.
- The measures expanded U.S. sanctions coverage to five sectors of the Iranian economy and targeted 60 individuals, entities, and vessels linked to cyber operations, oil sales, and procurement networks.
- Operation Economic Outcast is a U.S. economic and diplomatic pressure campaign directed at Iran. The United States Department of the Treasury used the campaign to widen restrictions on digital assets and cryptocurrency, weapons-related technology, gold, airlines, and shipping.
- Secondary sanctions are penalties imposed by one country on third-party persons, firms, or banks that conduct business with a sanctioned state. In this case, U.S. officials warned that foreign entities facilitating transactions with Iran could face exclusion from the U.S. dollar system.



NSG Launches First All-Women Commando Course

- The **National Security Guard (NSG) Training Academy** launched India's first-ever **Mahila Commando Conversion Course (MCCC)** on 24 August 2026 at its garrison in **Manesar, Haryana**.
- The 12-week residential programme is designed for selected women personnel from State Police Forces and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and includes counter-terrorism training, weapons handling, marksmanship, tactical intervention, and hostage rescue drills.
- The National Security Guard is a federal counter-terrorism force under the MHA. It was raised in 1984 after **Operation Blue Star** and the **assassination of PM Indira Gandhi**, and it functions as a specialised force for anti-hijacking, counter-terror operations, and high-risk security duties.
- The **Mahila Commando Conversion Course** is a 12-week intensive residential training programme. It is structured to build advanced operational skills in female personnel drawn from police and paramilitary formations.
- The course began on 24 August 2026 at the NSG Training Academy in Manesar.
- The first batch included 25 women constables from the Rajasthan Armed Constabulary's 5th Battalion at Ghatgate.
- The training syllabus includes physical conditioning, weapons proficiency, marksmanship, tactical intervention, and hostage rescue drills.
- The programme uses the theme and hashtag "She Who Dares, Leads".



AIIA Launches “GARBHINI MITRA”

- The All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), New Delhi, an autonomous premier institution under the Ministry of Ayush, has introduced the Garbhini Mitra Course for the 2026–2027 academic session.
- The initiative is a structured healthcare skill-development programme aimed at creating trained personnel to provide appropriate health education, lifestyle guidance, and community-level support to women during pregnancy and the postnatal period.
- The Garbhini Mitra initiative complements, rather than replaces, clinical antenatal care. Routine check-ups, diagnostic tests, and monitoring of blood pressure and haemoglobin remain essential.



AYUSH

AIIA Launches "GARBHINI MITRA" Course to Strengthen Ayurveda-Based Maternal Wellness Support

Posted On: 24 AUG 2026 2:03PM by PIB Delhi

The All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), New Delhi, an autonomous premier institution under the Ministry of Ayush, has introduced the Garbhini Mitra Course for the 2026–2027 academic session. The initiative is a structured healthcare skill-development programme aimed at creating trained personnel to provide appropriate health education, lifestyle guidance, and community-level support to women during pregnancy and the postnatal period.

The course is rooted in the traditional Ayurvedic concepts of Garbhini Paricharya (antenatal care), Sutika Paricharya (postnatal care), and Garbhadhana Vidhi (pre-conceptional care). Designed as a six-month offline training programme running from Monday to Friday between 3:00 PM and 5:00 PM, it equips participants with practical skills in trimester-specific dietetics, lifestyle modifications, pregnancy-safe yoga, emotional support during labour, newborn massage, and basic life support protocols. The curriculum also emphasizes infection control, sanitization, biomedical waste management, and workplace safety.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who was crowned Miss Universe India 2026?

- A. Manika Vishwakarma
- B. Vaishnavi Gannesh
- C. Kaziah Liz Mejo
- D. Anushri Satavlekar

Answer: C. Kaziah Liz Mejo

2. Kaziah Liz Mejo will represent India at Miss Universe 2026, which is scheduled to be held in:

- A. India
- B. Puerto Rico
- C. France
- D. Singapore

Answer: B. Puerto Rico

3. Which Indian Grandmaster won the Kanizsa Open 2026 Group A title?

- A. R Praggnanandhaa
- B. Arjun Erigaisi

- C. Pranesh M
- D. D Gukesh

Answer: C. Pranesh M

4. UPI was introduced in India in which year?

- A. 2014
- B. 2015
- C. 2016
- D. 2017

Answer: C. 2016

5. Which organisation developed the Unified Payments Interface (UPI)?

- A. RBI
- B. NPCI
- C. SEBI
- D. NABARD

Answer: B. NPCI

6. On which date did the United States remove Syria from its State Sponsors of Terrorism list?

- A. 20 August 2026
- B. 22 August 2026
- C. 24 August 2026
- D. 25 August 2026

Answer: C. 24 August 2026

7. Operation Economic Outcast, launched by the United States in August 2026, was directed primarily against:

- A. Russia
- B. Iran
- C. Syria
- D. North Korea

Answer: B. Iran

8. Where was India's first Mahila Commando Conversion Course launched?

- A. Gurugram, Haryana
- B. Manesar, Haryana

- C. New Delhi
- D. Jaipur, Rajasthan

Answer: B. Manesar, Haryana

9. What is the duration of the NSG's Mahila Commando Conversion Course?

- A. 6 weeks
- B. 8 weeks
- C. 10 weeks
- D. 12 weeks

Answer: D. 12 weeks

10. The “GARBHINI MITRA” course was introduced by which institution?

- A. AIIMS New Delhi
- B. National Health Authority
- C. All India Institute of Ayurveda
- D. Indian Council of Medical Research

Answer: C. All India Institute of Ayurveda