

Highlights of 22 August 2026 Current Affairs

- **Analogue paneer** (also referred to as non-dairy or synthetic paneer) is a low-cost, processed substitute for traditional dairy paneer. While authentic paneer is made strictly by curdling milk using heat and mild acidulants (like lemon juice or vinegar), analogue paneer replaces milk fat and milk proteins with **vegetable oils (like palm oil or hydrogenated oil), modified starches, emulsifiers, and non-dairy plant proteins**.
- **Yu Zidi** (born October 16, 2012) is a 13-year-old Chinese competitive swimmer from Baoding, Hebei, who is set to represent China at the **2026 Asian Games** in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan (September 19 – October 4, 2026).
- **Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)** is an umbrella scheme launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in September 2018. It aims to ensure fair prices for farmers for their produce, strengthen the Minimum Support Price (MSP) mechanism, and protect agricultural households against distress sales during bumper harvests. A total budget allocation of **₹7,200 crore** is designated for FY 2026–27 to strengthen price support interventions, expand procurement infrastructure, and bolster domestic production of key pulses and oilseeds.
- Veteran South Indian actress **Sowcar Janaki** (born Sankaramanchi Janaki) passed away at the age of 94 on **August 21, 2026**, in Chennai following a brief period of age-related illness and hospitalization. Her death was formally announced by Nassar, President of the South Indian Artistes' Association (*Nadigar Sangam*). Her passing marks the end of an extraordinary, multi-faceted career that spanned **over seven decades**, across Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam cinema, as well as television and radio broadcasting.
- In a landmark 2:1 split verdict, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court of India—headed by Chief Justice of India **Surya Kant**, along with Justices **A.G. Masih** and **K. Vinod Chandran**—modified its earlier May 2025 mandate requiring three years of legal practice for entry-level judicial service examinations (Civil Judge Junior Division / Judicial Magistrate). The court reduced the mandatory active practice period from **three years to one year**, while integrating structured training and clerkship mechanisms to ensure practical legal competence.
- To curb illegal practices and corruption, dedicated toll-free helpline numbers have been operationalized in West Bengal. These helplines provide citizens with a direct mechanism to lodge complaints regarding extortion, syndicate "cut-money" culture, roadside illegal toll collections, and illicit liquor trade. Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed the functioning and response mechanism of these helplines in Siliguri alongside Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari, assuring swift and strict action on all registered complaints.
- **Madras Day** is celebrated annually on **August 22** to commemorate the founding of the city of Madras (now Chennai) in 1639. The year 2026 marks the **387th anniversary** of the land grant that laid the foundation for the modern metropolis on the Coromandel Coast.
- Sophie Adenot became the first French woman and second European woman to perform a spacewalk.
- In a major boost to India's indigenisation push in underwater warfare (*Aatmanirbhar Bharat*), DRDO's Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam, transferred the **Submarine-Fired Decoy (SFD)** technology—including systems like "Mohini"—to Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) notified the **₹62,500 crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS)** on August 21, 2026. Running from **FY 2026–27 to FY 2030–31**, this five-year program replaces the original Large-Scale Electronics PLI scheme to transition India from an assembly hub into a high-value design and manufacturing powerhouse.
- The Ministry of Education's Department of School Education & Literacy has announced 48 recipients for the National Teachers' Awards 2026. President Droupadi Murmu will present the awards at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on Teachers' Day (September 5, 2026).
- The **National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP)**, an institution functioning under the umbrella of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), officially launched **India's first Digital Soil Texture Map** on July 16, 2026. Released during the 98th ICAR Foundation Day, this GIS-integrated database provides high-resolution data on soil physical characteristics down to a **1-hectare level**.
- The United Nations observes the **International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief** annually on **August 22**. The day honors survivors and victims of religious intolerance, terrorism, and hate crimes globally, while reaffirming international commitments to fundamental human rights and freedom of religion or belief.