

Highlights of 24 August 2026 Current Affairs

- Veteran Indian actress **Sankaramanchi Janaki**, affectionately known as **Sowcar Janaki**, passed away on August 21, 2026, at the age of 94 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, following a brief hospitalization for age-related illnesses.
- Former Indian National Congress (INC) leader and three-time Member of Parliament **Sajjan Kumar** passed away at the age of 80 in New Delhi, following a prolonged illness while serving a life sentence.
- The Himachal Pradesh Forest Department has signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business (ISB-BIPP)**. The partnership aims to leverage science and technology-enabled governance to unlock an estimated **₹22,600 crore** in untapped forest and pastoral economy potential across the state.
- The Government of Chhattisgarh signed two major Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) during the **PM GatiShakti & LEADS 2025 Dissemination Workshop** held in Raipur. Jointly organized with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), the agreements aim to accelerate data-driven administrative planning and multimodal logistics efficiency.
- During the third National Space Day celebrations in Ahmedabad, ISRO Chairman Dr. V. Narayanan announced that India is actively working toward establishing its own space station, the **Bharatiya Antariksha Station (BAS)**, by **2035**.
- McLaren's Lando Norris secured a brilliant victory at the **2026 Dutch Grand Prix** at Zandvoort, clinching his second consecutive win of the Formula 1 season. Norris crossed the finish line 11.536 seconds ahead of Mercedes driver Andrea Kimi Antonelli, with George Russell rounding out the podium in third.
- The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, approved a major amendment to state service rules, allowing female state government employees to avail **180 days (6 months) of maternity leave twice during their service period**, while officially **abolishing the mandatory two-year waiting gap** between leaves.
- At the **U20 World Wrestling Championships** in Slovakia, the Indian women's wrestling contingent delivered an exceptional campaign, wrapping up their events with a stellar total of **six medals** (1 gold, 3 silver, and 2 bronze).
- The **20th Asian Games (Aichi-Nagoya 2026)** will take place from **September 19 to October 4, 2026**, in the Aichi Prefecture and the city of Nagoya, Japan. Marking the second time the multi-sport extravaganza returns to Japan (and the first in 32 years), the games will bring together thousands of athletes from across the continent.
- India successful production and testing of the first 100% indigenous AK-203 '**Sher**' rifle at the Korwa Ordnance Factory in Amethi marks a decisive transition from licensed assembly to complete self-reliance under the *Make in India* and *Atmanirbhar Bharat* frameworks.
- Australian left-arm fast bowler **Mitchell Starc** has rewritten the record books, becoming the **leading wicket-taker in ICC World Test Championship (WTC) history**. Starc achieved the milestone during the second Test against Bangladesh in Mackay, where he produced a devastating match-winning performance to power Australia to an innings-and-51-run victory.

- The **Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA)**—signed at Al-Safa Palace in Makkah—marks a transformative moment in West Asian and Eurasian geopolitics. By formalizing a collective security framework among three of the Muslim world’s prominent military and economic powers, the pact reshapes regional deterrence and introduces new strategic calculations for India.
- The Andhra Pradesh government has officially cleared a massive technology investment, approving **AM AI Factory Pvt Ltd** to establish a cutting-edge **Green Integrated AI Data Centre Facility** in Visakhapatnam.
- Indian Grandmaster **Pranesh M** triumphed at the **Kanizsa Open 2026 Group A** chess tournament held in Nagykanizsa, Hungary, putting on a stellar performance to claim the championship title.
- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has mandated a strict limit on mobile connections nationwide, capping ownership at **9 SIM cards** for the rest of India and **6 SIM cards** for J&K, Assam, and Northeast states. Starting August 24, 2026, telecom operators must use the Digital Intelligence Platform to automatically block or suspend new SIM requests that exceed these limits to curb cybercrime and identity fraud.