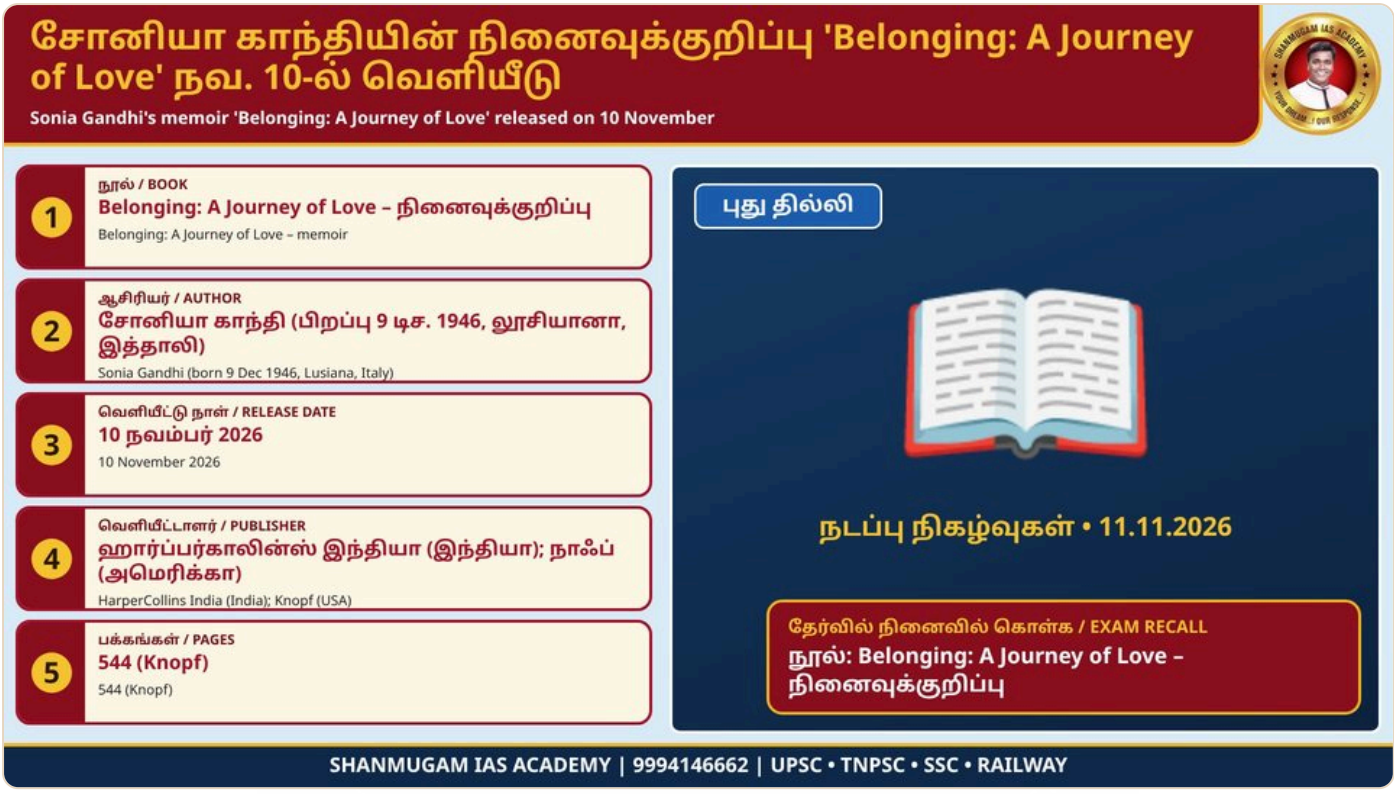
Sonia Gandhi's memoir 'Belonging: A Journey of Love' released

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News

The memoir of Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party and a Rajya Sabha member, 'Belonging: A Journey of Love', was released on 10 November 2026. It is published by HarperCollins India in India and by Alfred A. Knopf in the United States; the Knopf edition runs to 544 pages. According to the publisher, it traces her childhood in post-war Italy, her 1965 meeting with Rajiv Gandhi in Cambridge, her move to India, family losses, her entry into politics and her decision in 2004 to decline the prime ministership. The Indian edition was earlier to be published by Penguin Random House India; after that deal did not go through, HarperCollins India announced on 4 September 2026 that it would publish the Indian edition. Ahead of the release, Sonia Gandhi joined Instagram in October 2026 and shared the book's first look. Knopf announced an initial print run of 100,000 copies (Newslaundry).

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Book	Belonging: A Journey of Love – memoir
Author	Sonia Gandhi (born 9 Dec 1946, Lusiana, Italy)
Release date	10 November 2026
Publisher	HarperCollins India (India); Knopf (USA)

Point	Details
Pages	544 (Knopf)
Indian citizenship	1983
Congress president	1998–2017; interim 2019–2022 – longest-serving
Currently	Rajya Sabha member (Rajasthan, since 2024)

Background

- Sonia Gandhi was born in Italy in 1946, married Rajiv Gandhi in 1968 and became an Indian citizen in 1983. Articles 5–11 of the Constitution deal with citizenship; Article 11 gives Parliament the power to regulate citizenship by law. Accordingly, the Citizenship Act, 1955 lays down five modes – birth, descent, registration, naturalisation and incorporation of territory.
- The Indian National Congress held its first session in Bombay (Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College) on 28 December 1885, presided over by W.C. Bonnerjee; A.O. Hume was among its founders. Sonia Gandhi was president from 1998 to 2017 and interim president from 2019 to 2022, the longest tenure in the party's history.
- On 25 June 1975 a National Emergency was proclaimed under Article 352 on the ground of 'internal disturbance'. The 44th Amendment (1978) replaced that phrase with 'armed rebellion'; the grounds now are war, external aggression and armed rebellion, and the Cabinet's written advice is mandatory.
- After Nehru's death in 1964, Congress president K. Kamaraj played a key role in choosing Lal Bahadur Shastri, and in 1966 Indira Gandhi, as Prime Minister, earning the title 'Kingmaker'.

Tamil Nadu link: Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated on 21 May 1991 during an election campaign at Sriperumbudur in Kancheepuram district, where his memorial stands. 21 May is observed as Anti-Terrorism Day. K. Kamaraj, the 'Kingmaker' in the 1964 and 1966 choice of Prime Ministers, was from Virudhunagar.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Book: Belonging: A Journey of Love – memoir; Author: Sonia Gandhi (born 9 Dec 1946, Lusiana, Italy); Release date: 10 November 2026; Publisher: HarperCollins India (India); Knopf (USA).

What is the background to this news?

Sonia Gandhi was born in Italy in 1946, married Rajiv Gandhi in 1968 and became an Indian citizen in 1983. Articles 5–11 of the Constitution deal with citizenship; Article 11 gives Parliament the power to regulate citizenship by law. Accordingly, the Citizenship Act, 1955 lays down five modes – birth, descent, registration, naturalisation and incorporation of territory.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Who presided over the first session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay in December 1885?

A) Dadabhai Naoroji

B) A.O. Hume

C) Surendranath Banerjee

D) W.C. Bonnerjee

Answer: D – Explanation: Womesh Chunder (W.C.) Bonnerjee, at Gokuldas Tejpal College. Hume was a founder; Naoroji presided in 1886.

2. Sriperumbudur, where Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in 1991, is now in which district?

A) Kancheepuram

B) Tiruvallur

C) Chengalpattu

D) Vellore

Answer: A – Explanation: Kancheepuram district – 21 May 1991; a memorial stands there. 21 May is observed as Anti-Terrorism Day.

3. After the 44th Amendment, what are the grounds for a National Emergency under Article 352?

A) War, internal unrest

B) Financial crisis only

C) War, external aggression, armed rebellion

D) State machinery failure

Answer: C – Explanation: The 1978 Amendment replaced 'internal disturbance' (the 1975 ground) with 'armed rebellion'. Financial emergency is under Article 360.

4. Sonia Gandhi is a Rajya Sabha member from Rajasthan. Who elects a State's representatives to the Rajya Sabha?

A) State's Lok Sabha MPs

B) Elected MLAs

C) People directly

D) All MLAs and MLCs

Answer: B – Explanation: Article 80(4): the elected MLAs, by proportional representation through the single transferable vote. Legislative Council members have no vote.

5. Which Congress president was called 'Kingmaker' for steering the choice of Shastri (1964) and Indira Gandhi (1966) as PM?

A) S. Nijalingappa

B) K. Kamaraj

C) Morarji Desai

D) U.N. Dhebar

Answer: B – Explanation: K. Kamaraj of Virudhunagar; his 1963 'Kamaraj Plan' moved senior leaders to party work. Nijalingappa was president in 1968–69.

Sources: Business Standard (11 Nov 2026) – business-standard.com; Penguin Random House (Knopf book page) – penguinrandomhouse.com; Newslaundry (4 Sep 2026) – newslaundry.com; The News Minute – thenewsminute.com; IANS (4 Sep 2026) – ianslive.in; Business Today (22 Oct 2026) – businesstoday.in; Scroll (1885 Congress session) – scroll.in; ThePrint (Kamaraj) – theprint.in; Constitution of India. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.