Graça Machel receives the 2025 Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace

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News

Graça Machel, Mozambican freedom fighter and humanitarian, was presented the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2025 on 19 November 2026 at Jawahar Bhavan, New Delhi. Sonia Gandhi, chairperson of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust, gave away the prize on Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary. The jury, chaired by former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon, cited her work in education, health, nutrition, economic empowerment and humanitarian work in difficult conditions; the choice was announced in January 2026. The prize carries ₹1 crore, a citation and a square trophy of banded haematite jasper, the same stone used at Shakti Sthal, Indira Gandhi's memorial. Mozambique's first Minister of Education and Culture after independence in 1975, she prepared the 1996 UN report on the impact of armed conflict on children. In her address she warned about nuclear weapons and the use of AI in war, and said there can be no talk of peace while women and girls live in fear.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Prize	Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development – 2025
Recipient	Graça Machel (Mozambique)
Presented	19 Nov 2026, Jawahar Bhavan, New Delhi

Point	Details
Presented by	Sonia Gandhi (Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust)
Jury chair	Shivshankar Menon
Award	₹1 crore, citation, trophy
Office	Mozambique's first Education & Culture Minister (1975)
UN report	Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (1996)

Background

- The Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust has given this prize since 1986, to those who work for international peace, disarmament, a new international economic order, the use of scientific discoveries for humanity and the enlarging of freedom.
- Mozambique lies in south-east Africa on the Indian Ocean; its capital is Maputo. A Portuguese colony, it became independent on 25 June 1975 after the FRELIMO-led liberation struggle. Graça's first husband, Samora Machel, was Mozambique's first President (killed in an air crash in 1986); she later married Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first Black President – having been First Lady of two countries.
- India–Africa ties: India led in the Non-Aligned Movement and in opposing colonialism and apartheid. Samora Machel visited India in April 1982 and Indira Gandhi visited Mozambique in August 1982 (ThePrint). India gave Nelson Mandela the Bharat Ratna in 1990.
- Graça Machel is a founding member of The Elders and helped set up 'Girls Not Brides' against child marriage. Her honours include UNHCR's Nansen Medal (1995) and the WHO Gold Medal (2018).

Tamil Nadu link: The Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) at Kalpakkam, Chengalpattu district, bears her name – begun in 1971 as the Reactor Research Centre and renamed in 1985, it is India's centre for fast breeder reactor research, the basis of stage two of India's three-stage nuclear programme.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

Graça Machel, Mozambican freedom fighter and humanitarian, was presented the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2025 on 19 November 2026 at Jawahar Bhavan, New Delhi.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Prize: Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development – 2025; Recipient: Graça Machel (Mozambique); Presented: 19 Nov 2026, Jawahar Bhavan, New Delhi; Presented by: Sonia Gandhi (Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust).

What is the background to this news?

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Practice questions (with answers)

1. Mozambique, Graça Machel's country, was a colony of which European power until its independence in 1975?

A) Britain

B) Portugal

C) France

D) Belgium

Answer: B – Explanation: Portugal – independence on 25 June 1975 after the FRELIMO struggle; capital Maputo. Angola too was a Portuguese colony.

2. Who was the first person who was not an Indian citizen to be awarded the Bharat Ratna?

A) Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

B) Nelson Mandela

C) Mother Teresa

D) Martin Luther King Jr

Answer: A – Explanation: Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan ('Frontier Gandhi') – 1987. Machel's husband Nelson Mandela got it in 1990; Mother Teresa (1980) was an Indian citizen.

3. The prize trophy is made of the same stone used at Indira Gandhi's memorial in New Delhi. What is that memorial called?

A) Shanti Van

B) Vir Bhumi

C) Shakti Sthal

D) Vijay Ghat

Answer: C – Explanation: Shakti Sthal – banded haematite jasper. Shanti Van is Nehru's memorial, Vir Bhumi Rajiv Gandhi's and Vijay Ghat Lal Bahadur Shastri's.

4. Where is the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), India's centre for fast breeder reactor research?

A) Tarapur

B) Trombay

C) Kudankulam

D) Kalpakkam

Answer: D – Explanation: Kalpakkam, Chengalpattu district – set up in 1971 as the Reactor Research Centre and renamed in 1985. BARC is at Trombay.

5. Graça Machel's landmark 1996 report for the UN examined the impact of armed conflict on whom?

A) Refugees

B) Journalists

C) Children

D) Peacekeepers

Answer: C – Explanation: Children – after this 'Machel Report' the UN created the post of Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

Sources: The Indian Express, 19 Nov 2026; ThePrint, 19 Nov 2026; The Tribune, 22 Jan 2026; Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust – indiragandhi.in; padmaawards.gov.in (Bharat Ratna list); igcar.gov.in (IGCAR history); UNHCR (Nansen Medal 1995). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.