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Praggnanandhaa Becomes First Indian to Win Norway Chess

7 June 2026

PERSONS & AWARDS

GS1

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**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

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Praggnanandhaa Becomes First Indian to Win Norway Chess

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HOW

WHY IN NEWS

Indian Grandmaster **R. Praggnanandhaa** won **Norway Chess 2026**, held in **Stavanger, Norway**, becoming the **first Indian ever to win the elite tournament**. The victory, completed in the final round, came against one of the strongest fields in world chess and confirmed India's emergence as a global chess powerhouse.

ABOUT THE ACHIEVEMENT

DETAIL	INFORMATION
Player	R. Praggnanandhaa
Tournament	Norway Chess 2026
Venue	Stavanger, Norway
Milestone	First Indian to win Norway Chess

Norway Chess is among the most prestigious invitational tournaments in the world, traditionally featuring the very top players. An Indian winning it marks a generational shift in the global game.

INDIA'S CHESS RISE

Praggnanandhaa is part of a remarkable wave of young Indian Grandmasters who have taken the sport to the top tier:

- **D. Gukesh** became the youngest-ever undisputed World Chess Champion (2024).
- **R. Praggnanandhaa, Arjun Erigaisi** and **Gukesh** are all in the elite global ranks.

- India won the **Chess Olympiad (open and women's sections) in 2024 in Budapest**, a historic double gold.

This generation traces its inspiration to **Viswanathan Anand**, India's first Grandmaster (1988) and a five-time World Champion, who has mentored many of these players.

WHY IT MATTERS

Beyond sport, India's chess surge reflects:

- **A deep talent pipeline**, supported by academies, online platforms and a strong grassroots culture.
- **Soft power and youth icons**, with chess offering positive global visibility.
- **The cognitive-skills ecosystem**, where chess is increasingly linked to education.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Prelims

- **R. Praggnanandhaa** is the first Indian to win **Norway Chess** (2026, Stavanger)
- **D. Gukesh** became the youngest undisputed World Chess Champion (2024)
- India won **double gold** (open and women's) at the **2024 Chess Olympiad, Budapest**
- **Viswanathan Anand** was India's first Grandmaster (1988) and a five-time World Champion

Mains Angles

- 1 **GS1 Sports and Society:** Discuss the factors behind India's rise as a global chess power and the role of a strong talent pipeline.
- 2 **Essay/Ethics:** Sport as soft power and as a vehicle for youth aspiration and discipline.

FACTS CORNER

FACT	DETAIL
Player	R. Praggnanandhaa
Achievement	First Indian to win Norway Chess (2026)
Venue	Stavanger, Norway
Youngest World Champion	D. Gukesh (2024)
2024 Chess Olympiad	India won double gold (Budapest)
India's first Grandmaster	Viswanathan Anand (1988)

Sources: *The Hindu*, *Olympics*, *FIDE*

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