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# Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025 — Literary Excellence Across 24 Indian Languages

17 March 2026

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# Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025 — Literary Excellence Across 24 Indian Languages

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## ✎ WHY IN NEWS

The Sahitya Akademi announced its 2025 Annual Awards on March 16, 2026, recognising outstanding literary works in 24 Indian languages. The formal presentation ceremony is scheduled for March 31, 2026, in New Delhi.

## ABOUT SAHITYA AKADEMI

India's premier literary institution, the **Sahitya Akademi** (National Academy of Letters), was inaugurated on **March 12, 1954**. It functions as an autonomous body under the **Ministry of Culture** (registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, on January 7, 1956). The Akademi promotes Indian literature through awards, publications, translations, seminars, and literary exchange programmes.

The Akademi operates in **24 languages** — the 22 Scheduled languages listed in the **Eighth Schedule of the Constitution**, plus **English** and **Rajasthani**. Unlike government bodies, the selection of award winners is done entirely by **panels of literary peers** — no government official participates in the selection process, preserving the independence and literary credibility of the award.

### AWARD STRUCTURE

The **Sahitya Akademi Samman** (Annual Award) consists of:

**Cash prize:** ₹1 lakh

**Copper plaque** engraved with the citation

**Shawl** (traditionally symbolic of scholarly honour)

The Akademi also gives several other awards: **Bhasha Samman** (for contributions to classical and medieval literature), **Translation Prize**, **Bal Sahitya Puraskar** (children's literature), and **Yuva Puraskar** (young writers). The Annual Award is the most prestigious.

## SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS 2025 — COMPLETE WINNERS LIST

Language	Winner	Work	Genre
Assamese	Devabrat Das	<i>Karhi Khelar Sadhu</i>	Novel
Bengali	Prasun Bandyopadhyay	<i>Shrestha Kabita</i>	Poetry
Bodo	Sahaisuli Brahma	<i>Dwngnwi Lama Mwnse Gathwn</i>	Novel
Dogri	Khajur Singh Thakur	<i>Thakur Satsayie</i>	Poetry
<b>English</b>	<b>Navtej Sarna</b>	<b><i>Crimson Spring</i></b>	Novel
Gujarati	Yogesh Vaidya	<i>Bhattkhadaki</i>	Poetry
<b>Hindi</b>	<b>Mamta Kalia</b>	<b><i>Jeete Jee Allahabad</i></b>	Memoir
Kannada	Amresh Nugadoni	<i>Dada Seerisu Tande</i>	Short Stories
<b>Kashmiri</b>	<b>Ali Shaida</b>	<b><i>Najdavanek'y Pot Aalav</i></b>	Poetry
Konkani	Henry Mendonca (H.M. Pernal)	<i>Konkani Kavyem: Rupani Ani Rupakam</i>	Essay
Maithili	Mahendra	<i>Dhatri Paat San Gaam</i>	Memoir
Malayalam	N. Prabhakaran	<i>Maayaamanushyar</i>	Novel
Manipuri	Haobam Nalini	<i>Kanglamdriba Eephut</i>	Short Stories
Marathi	Raju Baviskar	<i>Kalyanilya Resha</i>	Short Stories
Nepali	Prakash Bhattarai	<i>Nepali Paramparik Sanskriti Ra Sabhyata Ko Dukuti</i>	Essay
Odia	Girijakumar Baliyar Singh	<i>Padapurana</i>	Poetry
Punjabi	Jinder	<i>Safety Kit</i>	Short Stories
Rajasthani	Jitender Kumar Soni	<i>Bharkham</i>	Short Stories
Sanskrit	Mahamahopadhyaya Sadhu Bhadreshdas	<i>Prasthanacatustaye Brahmaghosah</i>	Poetry
Santhali	Sumitra Soren	<i>Mid Birna Chenne Saon Inag Sagai</i>	Short Stories
Sindhi	Bhagwan Atlani	<i>Waghoo</i>	Short Stories

Language	Winner	Work	Genre
Tamil	Sa. Tamilselvan	<i>Thamiz Sirukathaiyin Thadangal</i>	Literary Criticism
Telugu	Nandini Sidha Reddy	<i>Animesha</i>	Poetry
Urdu	Pritpal Singh Betab	<i>Safar Jaari Hai</i>	Poetry

**Genre breakdown:** 8 Poetry · 4 Novels · 6 Short Story Collections · 2 Essays · 1 Literary Criticism · 1 Autobiography · 2 Memoirs

## NOTABLE WINNERS

### NAVTEJ SARNA (ENGLISH — CRIMSON SPRING )

Navtej Sarna is a distinguished Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer (1980 batch) turned author. He served as India's **High Commissioner to the United Kingdom** (January–November 2016) and **Ambassador to the United States** (November 2016 – December 2018). He was also India's **Ambassador to Israel** (2008–2012) and served as the **longest-serving spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs** (six years, under two Prime Ministers). He retired from the IFS on December 31, 2018. His literary works span historical fiction, biography, and essays — *Crimson Spring* is a novel set against the backdrop of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Earlier works include *The Book of Nanak* and *We Weren't Lovers Like That*.

### MAMTA KALIA (HINDI — JEETE JEE ALLAHABAD )

One of the foremost voices in contemporary Hindi prose, Mamta Kalia has been writing for over five decades. *Jeete Jee Allahabad* is a memoir that evokes the literary and cultural life of Allahabad — the historic city that nurtured Hindi literature, philosophy, and the freedom movement.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EIGHTH SCHEDULE

The **Eighth Schedule** of the Indian Constitution lists the **22 officially recognised languages** of India. These languages receive constitutional protection and are the basis for representation in official government communications.

The 22 Scheduled languages are: Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri (Meitei), Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Santhali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu.

Languages added later by amendment: **Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santhali** (added by the **92nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003**), taking the total from 18 to 22.

The Sahitya Akademi additionally awards **English** (the language of administration and inter-state communication) and **Rajasthani** (a major literary tradition not yet in the Eighth Schedule), making its total 24 languages.

## SAHITYA AKADEMI AND INDIA'S LITERARY TRADITION

India has the oldest continuous literary tradition in the world. Sanskrit literature dates to at least 1500 BCE (Vedic hymns). Regional language literature such as Tamil's **Sangam poetry** (approximately 300 BCE–300 CE), Bengali literature (12th century onwards), and Urdu poetry (from the Delhi Sultanate period) reflect the extraordinary diversity of India's literary heritage.

The Sahitya Akademi's mandate is to ensure all these traditions receive equal recognition and that literary works are translated across languages — a crucial function in a multilingual democracy.

### UPSC RELEVANCE

Sahitya Akademi founding year (1954), under Ministry of Culture (NOT Education), prize amount (₹1 lakh + copper plaque + shawl), languages covered (24), 8th Schedule languages (22), amendments adding Bodo/Dogri/Maithili/Santhal (92nd Amendment, 2003), English and Rajasthani winner names.

### MAINS GS1:

Role of literary institutions in preserving Indian cultural heritage; linguistic diversity and constitutional recognition; India's multilingual federalism; contribution of modern Indian literature to national identity.

## ★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

### SAHITYA AKADEMI — CORE DATA:

Founded: March 12, 1954 (constituted by Government resolution on December 15, 1952)

Under: **Ministry of Culture**

Type: Autonomous body; registered as a society under Societies Registration Act, 1860 (January 7, 1956)

Languages: 24 (22 Eighth Schedule languages + English + Rajasthani)

Prize: ₹1 lakh cash + copper plaque + shawl

2025 ceremony date: March 31, 2026, New Delhi

### 2025 AWARD WINNERS (KEY FOR PRELIMS):

English: Navtej Sarna — *Crimson Spring* (Novel)

Hindi: Mamta Kalia — *Jeete Jee Allahabad* (Memoir)

Kashmiri: Ali Shaida — *Najdavanek'y Pot Aalav* (Poetry)

Sanskrit: Mahamahopadhyaya Sadhu Bhadreshdas (Poetry)

Urdu: Pritpal Singh Betab — *Safar Jaari Hai* (Poetry)

### EIGHTH SCHEDULE — KEY FACTS:

Total Scheduled languages: 22

Originally (1950): 14 languages

92nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003: Added Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santhali (total went from 18 → 22)

Languages NOT in 8th Schedule but covered by Sahitya Akademi: English, Rajasthani

### OTHER SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS:

Bhasha Samman: Classical/medieval literature contributions

Translation Prize: Outstanding translations into Indian languages

Bal Sahitya Puraskar: Children's literature

Yuva Puraskar: Writers under 35 years

### OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

Tamil Sangam literature: approximately 300 BCE–300 CE; among oldest literary traditions in India

Navtej Sarna (English winner): IFS 1980 batch; HC to UK (Jan–Nov 2016), Ambassador to USA (Nov 2016–Dec 2018), Ambassador to Israel (2008–12); longest-serving MEA spokesperson

Mamta Kalia (Hindi winner): 50+ year career in Hindi prose

The selection is by literary peer panels — no government official involved (unlike many government awards)

Sources: [Sahitya Akademi](#), [Outlook India](#), [NE Now News](#)

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