



Chhattisgarh Launches 'Gaudham Yojana' for Stray Cattle Conservation | Chhattisgarh | 18 Mar 2026

Why in News?

On **14th March, 2026**, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister launched the '**Gaudham Yojana**' at Lakhasar village in **Bilaspur district**. The scheme aims to provide safe shelter for stray and abandoned cattle while bolstering the rural economy through cow-based organic industries.

Key Points:

- **Target Infrastructure:** The state plans to establish **1,460 Gaudhams** (10 per development block) across Chhattisgarh.
- **Phased Rollout:** In the first phase, 29 Gaudhams across 11 districts were virtually inaugurated.
- **Financial Assistance for Fodder:** A tiered daily subsidy per animal has been introduced to encourage long-term care:
 - **Year 1:** ₹10 per animal/day.
 - **Year 2:** ₹20 per animal/day.
 - **Year 3:** ₹30 per animal/day.
 - **Year 4 onwards:** ₹35 per animal/day.
- **Infrastructure Support:** The government will allocate **₹5 lakh annually** per facility for maintenance and repairs.
- **Honorarium for Caretakers:** Monthly payments are provisioned for **Shepherds (₹10,916)** and **Gau-sevaks (₹13,126)**.
- **Training Hubs:** Known as '**Surabhi Gaudhams**', these facilities will double as training centres for animal husbandry and the production of value-added products like **vermicompost** and **natural insecticides**.
- **Significance:** Scheme highlights the shift towards **cow-based micro-entrepreneurship** and **organic farming** to provide **local self-employment**.
 - **Public Safety:** Aims to reduce road accidents caused by stray cattle on national and state highways.
- **Governance:** Demonstrates the use of **Registered Samitis and NGOs** to manage government-funded public assets.

Read More: [NGOs](#), [Micro-entrepreneurship](#), [Organic farming](#)

60th Jnanpith Award for 2025 | National Current Affairs | 18 Mar 2026

Why in News?

Vairamuthu has been selected for the **60th Jnanpith Award (for 2025)**, becoming the **third Tamil**

writer to receive the prize and the **first** to be recognised for **Tamil poetry**.

Key Points:

- **About:** The Jnanpith Award is the **highest literary honour** in India, instituted in 1961 and awarded annually for outstanding contributions to **literature in Indian languages**.
- **Recognition:** Vairamuthu is the **third Tamil writer** to win the Jnanpith Award after **Akilan (1975) and Jayakanthan (2002)**.
 - Apart from literature, he is a renowned **lyricist in Tamil cinema**, having written over 7,000–8,000 songs and won multiple National Awards.
 - His novel **Kallikkaattu Ithihasam**, depicting **displacement due to the Vaigai dam**, received the **Sahitya Akademi Award in 2003**.
- **Dedication:** He dedicated the award to **Tamil people and society**, highlighting the cultural importance of the honour.
- **Major Awards:**
 - **National Film Award (Best Lyrics) - 7 times**
 - **Padma Shri (2003)**
 - **Padma Bhushan (2014)**
 - **Sahitya Akademi Award (2003)**
- **Award Components:** The award carries a cash prize of **₹11 lakh**, a bronze statuette of Goddess Saraswati (Vagdevi), and a citation.
- **Previous Winners:**
 - **58th (2023):** Jagadguru Rambhadracharya & Gulzar
 - **59th (2024):** Vinod Kumar Shukla
- **First Winner:** The first Jnanpith Award (**1965**) was given to **G. Sankara Kurup**.
- **First Woman Winner:** The first woman to receive the Jnanpith Award was **Ashapura Devi in 1976** for her novel **Pratham Pratisruti**.
- **Significance:** The award reinforces India's linguistic diversity and highlights the contribution of regional literature to the national cultural landscape.

Read More: [60th Jnanpith Award for 2025](#)

98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026) | National Current Affairs | 18 Mar 2026

Why in News?

The **98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026)** were held on 15 March 2026 at the **Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles**, where **One Battle After Another** emerged as the biggest winner.

Key Points:

- **About Oscars:** The Academy Awards are presented annually by the **Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS)** to honour excellence in global cinema across various categories.
- **Venue & Host:** The ceremony took place at the Dolby Theatre, Los Angeles, and was hosted by Conan O'Brien.
- **Best Picture:** **One Battle After Another** won Best Picture and dominated the awards with a total of **six Oscars**.
- **Best Director:** **Paul Thomas Anderson** won Best Director for **One Battle After Another**.
- **Best Actor:** **Michael B. Jordan** won Best Actor for **Sinners**, marking his first Oscar win.

- **Best Actress: Jessie Buckley** won Best Actress for *Hamnet*.
- **Supporting Roles:**
 - Best Supporting Actress: Amy Madigan (*Weapons*)
 - Best Supporting Actor: Sean Penn (*One Battle After Another*)
- **Screenplay Awards:**
 - Best Original Screenplay: *Sinners* (Ryan Coogler)
 - Best Adapted Screenplay: *One Battle After Another*
- **International & Animation:**
 - Best International Feature Film: *Sentimental Value* (Norway)
 - Best Animated Feature: *KPop Demon Hunters*
- **Documentary Awards:**
 - Best Documentary Feature: *Mr Nobody Against Putin*
 - Best Documentary Short: *All the Empty Rooms*
- **Technical Awards Highlights:**
 - Best Cinematography: *Sinners*
 - Best Film Editing: *One Battle After Another*
 - Best Sound: *F1*
 - Best Visual Effects: *Avatar: Fire and Ash*
 - Best Production Design, Costume & Makeup: *Frankenstein*
- **New Category:** A new award for Best Casting was introduced, won by Cassandra Kulukundis for *One Battle After Another*.
- **Special Highlight:** A rare tie occurred in Best Live Action Short Film between *The Singers* and *Two People Exchanging Saliva*.
- **Overall Tally:**
 - *One Battle After Another* – 6 awards
 - *Sinners* – 4 awards
 - *Frankenstein* – 3 awards
- **Best Original Song:** You might want to add that "**Golden**" from *KPop Demon Hunters* won Best Original Song, making it the **first K-Pop song to win an Oscar**.
- **Significance:** The Oscars 2026 highlighted **global diversity**, introduction of new categories, and dominance of select films, reflecting **evolving trends in world cinema**.

Read More: [Oscars Awards 2025](#)

Sahitya Akademi Award 2025 | National Current Affairs | 18 Mar 2026

Why in News?

The **Sahitya Akademi Award** is a prestigious literary honour **conferred annually** by the Sahitya Akademi for outstanding books in **24 recognised Indian languages**.

Key Points:

- **Statutory Status:** The Sahitya Akademi is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, **established in 1954**.
- **Languages Covered:** Awards are given in **24 languages including English and Rajasthani** (though not in the Eighth Schedule), along with **22 scheduled languages of the Constitution**.
- **Categories Covered:** Awards were given across genres including poetry (8), novels (4), short stories (6), essays (2), literary criticism (1), autobiography (1), and memoirs (2).
- **Eligibility Criteria:** The award is given to the most outstanding book of literary merit published in

the previous five years in any of the recognised languages.

- **Major Awardees: Language - Title & Genre - Author:**
 - Assamese - Karhi Khelar Sadhu (Novel) - Devabrat Das
 - Bengali - Shrestha Kabita (Poetry) - Prasun Bandyopadhyay
 - Bodo - Dwngnwi Lama Mwnse Gathwn (Novel) - Sahaisuli Brahma
 - Dogri - Thakur Satsayie (Poetry, Couplets) - Khajur Singh Thakur
 - English - Crimson Spring (Novel) - Navtej Sarna
 - Gujarati - Bhattkhadaki (Poetry) - Yogesh Vaidya
 - Hindi - Jeete Jee Allahabad (Memoir) - Mamta Kalia
 - Kannada - Dada Seerisu Tande (Short Stories) - Amaresh Nugadoni
 - Kashmiri - Najdavanek'y Pot Aalav (Poetry) - Ali Shaida
 - Konkani - Konkani Kavyem: Rupani Ani Rupakam (Essays) - Henry Mendonca (H.M. Pernal)
 - Maithili - Dhatri Paat San Gaam (Memoir) - Mahendra
 - Malayalam - Maayaamanushyar (Novel) - N. Prabhakaran
 - Manipuri - Kanglamdriba Eephut (Short Stories) - Haobam Nalini
 - Marathi - Kalyanilya Resha (Autobiography) - Raju Baviskar
 - Nepali - Nepali Paramparik Sanskriti Ra Sabhyata Ko Dukuti (Essays) - Prakash Bhattarai
 - Odia - Padapurana (Poetry) - Girijakumar Baliyar Singh
 - Punjabi - Safety Kit (Stories) - Jinder
 - Rajasthani - Bharkhama (Stories) - Jitender Kumar Soni
 - Sanskrit - Prasthanacatustaye Brahmaghosah (Poetry) - Mahamahopadhyaya Sadhu Bhadreshdas
 - Santali - Mid Birna Chenne Saon Inag Sagai (Short Stories) - Sumitra Soren
 - Sindhi - Waghoo (Stories) - Bhagwan Atlani
 - Tamil - Thamiz Sirukathaiyin Thadangal (Literary Criticism) - Sa. Tamilselvan
 - Telugu - Animesha (Poetry) - Nandini Sidha Reddy
 - Urdu - Safar Jaari Hai (Poetry) - Pritpal Singh Betab
- **Young & Children Categories:** The Akademi also confers Yuva Puraskar and Bal Sahitya Puraskar to recognise young writers and children's literature respectively.
- **Award Components:** The award consists of an engraved copper plaque, a shawl, and a cash prize of ₹1,00,000.
- **Award Ceremony:** The awards will be presented on 31 March 2026 in New Delhi.
- **Significance:** The awards promote **literary excellence** and reflect **India's rich linguistic diversity**, strengthening **national integration through literature**.

Read More: [Yuva Puraskar and Bal Sahitya Puraskar, Sahitya Akademi Award 2025](#)

India Tops World Para Athletics Grand Prix with Record 208 Medals | National Current Affairs | 18 Mar 2026

Why in News?

India delivered a historic performance at the **World Para Athletics Grand Prix**, finishing at the top of the medal tally with a **record 208 medals**. The achievement highlights India's growing strength in **para-sports** and its commitment to inclusivity in athletics.

Key Points:

- **Host:** The Grand Prix was hosted in **New Delhi**, India.
- **Participation:** Athletes from multiple countries participated under the aegis of **World Para Athletics**, a body governed by the **International Paralympic Committee**.
- **Final Medal Tally:** India finished with **75 Gold, 69 Silver, and 64 Bronze medals**.

- **Global Standings:** Russia finished second with **35 medals** (15 Gold, 14 Silver, 6 Bronze), while Bosnia and Herzegovina took third place.
- **Largest Contingent:** India fielded its largest-ever squad of **219 athletes**.
- **Podium Sweeps:** Indian athletes dominated several events, winning all three medals in categories such as the **Men's Shot Put F57** (Shubham Juyal leading with gold) and the **Men's 800m T53-T54**.
- **Star Performers:**
 - **Preeti Pal:** The double Paris 2024 Paralympic medallist was the standout athlete, securing a **Double Gold** in the Women's 100m and 200m (T35-T37).
 - **Sumit Antil:** The reigning Paralympic champion lived up to his reputation, winning **Gold in Men's Javelin Throw (F43/F44/F64)** with a massive throw of 69.25 metres.
 - **Praveen Kumar:** The Paralympic high jump star also secured **Gold** in his category.
 - **Manojkumar Sabapathi:** Led a clean sweep in the **Men's 800m T53-T54**.
- **Growth of Parasports:** The record haul highlights the success of government initiatives like the **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)** and **Khelo India Para Games** in identifying and nurturing talent.

Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2026 | National Current Affairs | 18 Mar 2026

Why in News?

Renowned **veena** exponent **Jayanthi Kumaresh** has been selected for the prestigious **Sangita Kalanidhi** award, which will be presented during the **100th Annual Conference and Concerts** of the **The Music Academy, Madras**.

Key Points:

- **Award Recognition:** **Sangita Kalanidhi** is considered the **highest honour in Carnatic music**.
- **Centenary Milestone:** Founded in **1928** (following the 1927 INC session in Madras), the Music Academy celebrates its **100th year** of existence in 2026-27.
- **The "Sangita Kalanidhi" Title:** Considered the "Nobel Prize" of Carnatic music, it is awarded annually to an individual who has made a lifetime contribution to the field of music.
- **Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh:** A sixth-generation musician, she is the niece of the legendary violin maestro **Lalgudi Jayaraman** and a disciple of **Padmavathy Ananthagopalan**.
- **Contribution to Veena:** She is credited with globalising the **Saraswati Veena**. Her playing style, known for its "Gayaki" (vocal) quality, bridges the gap between traditional Carnatic music and contemporary global collaborations.
- **Innovation:** She is the founder of "**Indian National Orchestra**" and has pioneered the "CUPPA" (Carnatic Music Understanding for Popular Public Appreciation) series to make classical music accessible to the masses.
- **Awards:** She is already a recipient of the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Award** and has performed at prestigious venues like the United Nations and the Theatre de la Ville, Paris.
- **Other Major Awards Announced:** The Music Academy also announced several other key recognitions for 2026:
 - **Sangita Kala Acharya:** Awarded to veteran musicians **G.S. Mani** and **R. Vedavalli** (vocalists) for their role in teaching and preserving traditional "Pathantara."
 - **TTK Awards:** Conferred upon **Neyveli Skanda Subramanian** (Mridangam) and **S. Kasim & S. Babu** (Nagaswaram exponents).
 - **Musicologist Award:** Awarded to **Dr. Meenakshi S.S.** for her research into ancient musical treatises.

- **Nritya Kalanidhi (Dance):** The title for the 100th Dance Festival will be awarded to veteran Bharatanatyam exponent **Malavika Sarukkai**.
- **Significance:** The award highlights the importance of preserving and promoting **Carnatic music traditions**.
- **Revival of Veena Tradition:** The recognition of a veena artiste underscores efforts to **revive interest in traditional instruments**, which face declining popularity.

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