



BACKGROUNDERS
Press Information Bureau
Government of India

National Film Awards

A Nation's Tribute to the Magic of Indian Cinema

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National Film Awards — At a Glance

The National Film Awards are the country's most prestigious honours for excellence in the field of cinema. **Instituted in 1954**, they are conferred every year by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Over seven decades, the awards have recognised outstanding creative and technical achievement in Indian filmmaking. They cover three fields, namely feature films, non-feature films and writing on cinema.

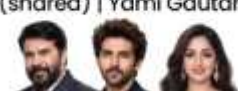


The **72nd National Film Awards** honour achievements in Indian cinema for the year 2024. The winners were announced on **18 July 2026** by the chairpersons of the three juries. The **President of India** will present the awards on **22 September 2026** at **Ekta Nagar (formerly Kevadia), in Gujarat**.

The awards reflect the rich linguistic, cultural and regional diversity of filmmaking across the country. They place large commercial productions and small independent films on a single national platform. This breadth is what gives the honour its standing among filmmakers and audiences alike.

72nd NATIONAL FILM AWARDS

FOR FILMS OF 2024 | RESULTS ANNOUNCED 18 JULY 2026

 HISTORIC VENUE SHIFT First time in 72 years the ceremony is held outside Delhi	 VENUE: EKTA NAGAR, GUJARAT Held at the Statue of Unity, Narmada district	 22 SEPTEMBER 2026 President Droupadi Murmu to confer awards on 92 winners
 BEST FEATURE FILM "Article 370" (Hindi)	BEST ACTOR & ACTRESS Mammootty & Kartik Aaryan (shared) Yami Gautam 	 DADASAHEB PHALKE AWARD Anant Nag, India's highest honour for cinema

Did You Know?

In a major policy initiative, the Ministry has decided to hold the awards in various parts of the country. Future editions will travel beyond the National Capital to different States and cities. The ceremony at Ekta Nagar will bring together cinematic talent from across India. It will embody the spirit of **Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat**.

Legacy & Evolution — Since 1954

The journey of Indian cinema began in 1913 with Dadasaheb Phalke's film **Raja Harishchandra**. The Film Enquiry Committee, set up in 1949, recommended the institution of the 'State Awards for Films'. They were constituted to honor and encourage the artistic and technical excellence in Indian cinema. The awards were established in 1954 and the first edition honoured the films of 1953.

The first edition of National Film Awards

The first edition covered three categories, namely feature films, documentary films and children's films. **Shyamchi Aai** in Marathi won the President's Gold Medal for the Best All-India Feature Film. **Mahabalipuram** won the President's Gold Medal for the Best Documentary Film, and **Do Bigha Zamin** received a Certificate of Merit. A modest beginning of seven honours thus opened seven decades of national recognition for Indian cinema.

Widening the canvas

Awards for artists and technicians were separately established for the films of the year 1967. Uttam Kumar and Nargis received the first Best Actor and Best Actress awards in 1968. The Best Actor award was then called **Bharat** and the Best Actress award **Urvashi**. The **Dadasaheb Phalke Award** was instituted in 1969 and first presented to Devika Rani. New categories and technical crafts were added steadily as Indian cinema grew in range.

Year	Milestone
1913	Dadasaheb Phalke completes Raja Harishchandra, a landmark in Indian film making.
1954	The awards are instituted as the State Awards for Films. The first honours go to films of 1953.
1967-68	Awards for artists and technicians begin. Uttam Kumar and Nargis win the first acting honours.
1969	The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is instituted. Devika Rani is the first recipient.
1973	The Directorate of Film Festivals begins administering the awards.
2022	The Directorate of Film Festivals is merged into NFDC, the present implementing body.
2026	The 72nd awards are announced in July. The ceremony is scheduled to be held at Ekta Nagar, Gujarat.

Purpose & Significance

The objectives of the National Film Awards are set out clearly in the official regulations. They encourage the

production of films of aesthetic and technical excellence and social relevance. They help audiences understand and appreciate the cultures of different regions of the country. In doing so, the awards also promote the unity and integrity of the nation.

The awards further encourage the study and appreciation of cinema as an art form. Books, articles and reviews carry critical appreciation of this art form to a wider readership.

Why the recognition matters

A National Award confirms that a film has met the highest standard set by the nation. It draws audiences towards work that might otherwise reach only a small circle of viewers. The honour travels with the filmmaker and opens doors for the next project.

Award Structure

The National Film Awards are organised in three sections, along with one lifetime honour. The **Feature Film** section is for full length films. The **Non-Feature Film** section for documentaries, short films, animation and other allied forms. The **Best Writing on Cinema** section honours the best book and the best film critic. The **Dadasaheb Phalke Award** stands apart as the highest honour in Indian cinema.

Section	Categories	Medal	Cash prize
Feature Films	26 (with special mentions)	Swarna Kamal, Rajat Kamal	Rs 3,00,000 and Rs 2,00,000
Non-Feature Films	16 (with special mentions)	Swarna Kamal, Rajat Kamal	Rs 3,00,000 and Rs 2,00,000
Best Writing on Cinema	2	Swarna Kamal	Rs 1,00,000
Dadasaheb Phalke Award	1	Swarna Kamal, shawl	Rs 10,00,000 for 72nd NFA

The feature film section includes Best Feature Film, Best Direction and Best Actor in a Leading Role among others. It also covers Best Children's Film, Best Cinematography, Best Music Direction and Best Costume Design. The non-feature section includes Best Documentary, Best Short Film and Best Animation Film. It also carries Best Arts and Culture Film, Best Narration or Voice Over and Best Script among others.

Every Language Has a Place

A Best Feature Film award is given in each language listed in Schedule VIII of the Constitution. Films in languages outside the Schedule are honoured through separate awards of their own. In the 72nd edition, **Dholi** in Garhwali and **IMBU** in Tulu were recognised under this provision.



NATIONAL FILM AWARDS – MEDALS & CASH PRIZES

 SWARNA KAMAL (GOLDEN LOTUS) Awarded for the highest recognition in a category Cash Prize: ₹3,00,000	 RAJAT KAMAL (SILVER LOTUS) Awarded across technical, supporting and non-feature categories Cash Prize: ₹2,00,000
SPECIAL CATEGORY	
 AWARDS FOR WRITING ON CINEMA Carry a Swarna Kamal medal Cash Prize: ₹1,00,000	 SPECIAL MENTIONS Recognised through a certificate

How the Awards Are Selected

Entries are invited every year for films certified during the preceding calendar year. The Ministry then constitutes separate juries for each of the three award sections. Distinguished contributors are drawn from the field of cinema, allied forms of art and the humanities to serve as the jury members.

A two-tier examination for feature films

Feature films are assessed through a two-tier process introduced from the 57th edition onwards. Five regional panels first shortlist the entries received from every part of the country. A central panel then decides the winners in the feature film section of the awards. The Non-Feature Film section and the Best Writing on Cinema section have their own juries. No entries are invited for the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, which follows a different route. A specially constituted committee of eminent film personalities recommends the recipient.

The juries of the 72nd edition

Shri Jayaraj chaired the Feature Film Jury for the 72nd National Film Awards. **Shri Aseem Sinha** chaired the Non-Feature Film Jury for the same edition. **Shri A. Chandrasekhar** chaired the Best Writing on Cinema Jury.

Eligibility in Brief

Films must be certified by the CBFC during the award year and must carry English subtitles. A feature film must run for more than 72 minutes. Dubbed, remade or re-edited versions already submitted are not eligible.

Recognition Across Indian Cinema

The National Film Awards look at cinema made in every part of the country. The 72nd edition honoured films in Marathi, Santhali, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada. Films in Tulu and Garhwali were also recognised, among several other languages. For the first time, a **Santhali film** was honoured in the Non-Feature Film section.

Angen, directed by Shri Ravi Raj Murmu, won the Best Debut Film of a Director. A first recognition of this kind widens the map of Indian cinema a little further.

Latest Edition — Key Highlights

The 72nd National Film Awards cover Indian films certified during the year 2024. **Article 370** won the award for Best Feature Film in this edition. Yami Gautam won Best Actress in a Leading Role for the same film.

Mammootty and Kartik Aaryan shared the award for Best Actor in a Leading Role. They won the award for **Bramayugam** and **Chandu Champion** respectively.

Shri Rajkumar Periasamy won the award for Best Direction for the Tamil film **Amaran**. **Kalki 2898 AD** was named Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment. Shri Randeep Hooda won the Best Debut Film of a Director award for **Swatantrya Veer Savarkar**. **Bhangaar** was adjudged Best Non-Feature Film and **Ram-Nami** was named the Best Documentary.



Current Awardees — 72nd National Film Awards

The table below carries the principal awards of the 72nd National Film Awards. Language awards, technical crafts and Special Mentions are recorded separately in the full list.

Award	Film (Language)	Awardee
Best Feature Film	Article 370 (Hindi)	Producers: Jio Studios and B62 Studios; Director: Aditya Suhas Jambhale
Best Direction	Amaran (Tamil)	Rajkumar Periasamy
Best Actor in a Leading Role	Bramayugam (Malayalam); Chandu Champion (Hindi)	Mammootty and Kartik Aaryan (shared)
Best Actress in a Leading Role	Article 370 (Hindi)	Yami Gautam
Best Actor in a Supporting Role	Bhakshak (Hindi)	Sanjay Mishra
Best Actress in a Supporting Role	Maharaja (Tamil); Mithya (Kannada)	Sachana Namidass and Ropashree Varkady (shared)
Best Debut Film of a Director	Swatantrya Veer Savarkar (Hindi)	Randeep Hooda

Award	Film (Language)	Awardee
Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment	Kalki 2898 AD (Telugu)	Producer: Vyjayanthi Movies; Director: Nag Ashwin Singireddy
Best Feature Film Promoting National, Social and Environmental Values	Captain Miller (Tamil)	Producer: Sathya Jyothi Films; Director: Arun Matheswaran
Best Children's Film	35 - Chinna Katha Kaadu (Telugu)	Producers: S Originals and Waltair Productions; Director: Nanda Kishore Emani
Best Music Direction	Article 370 (Hindi); Amaran (Tamil)	Shashwat Sachdev (Songs); G. V. Prakash Kumar (Background Music)
Best Non-Feature Film	Bhangaar (Marathi and English)	Producer and Director: Sumira Roy
Best Debut Film of a Director (Non-Feature)	Angen (Santhali)	Director: Ravi Raj Murmu
Best Documentary	Ram-Nami (Hindi)	Producer: BBP Studio Virtual Bharat Pvt. Ltd.; Director: Bharatbala Ganapathy
Best Direction (Non-Feature)	Statue of Unity - Ekta ka Prateek (Hindi)	Aanand L Rai
Best Book on Cinema	Naaniruvude Nimagaagi Naadiruvude Nanagaagi (Kannada)	Author: Kenchanuru Pradeep Kumar Shetty; Publisher: Mirror Pusthaka
Best Film Critic	Hindi	Sanjeev Shrivastava

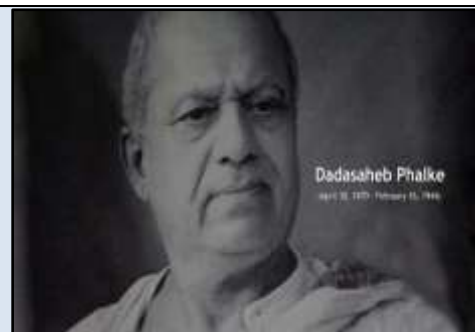
[Check the complete list of awardees and juries.](#)

Dadasaheb Phalke Award

The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is the highest honour in the field of Indian cinema. It was instituted in 1969, when it was presented to Devika Rani. The award commemorates Dadasaheb Phalke, who directed **Raja Harishchandra** in the year 1913. Recipients are recognised for outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian cinema.

Did You Know?

Dhundiraj Govind Phalke (1870-1944), known as Dadasaheb Phalke, directed *Raja Harishchandra* in 1913, India's first full-length feature film, and went on to make 94 features and 27 short films. Honoured as the **Father of Indian Cinema**, he is commemorated through the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, instituted by the Government of India in 1969.



Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2024

The Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2024 will be conferred on **Shri Anant Nag**. The Government of India announced the decision on 16 September 2026. He was born on 4 September 1948 in Karnataka and began

acting in the early seventies. He made his acting debut in the Kannada feature film **Sankalp**, and his Hindi debut with **Ankur**.

He has portrayed diverse characters in over 300 films across six Indian languages. His work also includes the widely loved television series **Malgudi Days**. He has won five Filmfare Awards and five Karnataka State Best Actor Awards. The Government of India honoured him with the **Padma Bhushan in 2025**. His cinematic journey spans more than five decades and has inspired generations of artists.

Recent Recipients

Shri Mohanlal received the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2023. Shri Mithun Chakraborty received the award for the year 2022. Smt. Waheeda Rehman received the award for the year 2021. Each award is presented at the National Film Awards ceremony of that edition.

Indian Cinema: Culture, Identity and Influence

Cinema remains one of India's most expressive art forms and one of its most powerful cultural assets. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting describes it as a powerful medium for creativity, culture and innovation. Beyond artistic expression, it sustains a vast creative economy: India's media and entertainment sector is now the world's fifth largest, supported by 2 to 2.5 million digital creators and a 40 to 60 percent cost advantage in animation and VFX services. Indian films also carry the country's soft power to global audiences, strengthening cultural heritage while creating livelihoods across languages and regions.

Continuing Contribution to Indian Cinema

Indian cinema today reaches audiences in more languages and formats than ever before. The National Film Awards remain the country's central measure of cinematic merit. They reward craft, courage and clarity of vision rather than commercial scale alone.

The move to Ekta Nagar carries the awards closer to audiences outside the capital. Future editions will travel to different states and cities across the country. Film cultures that grow far from the large studios will now find a national stage.

The 72nd edition already shows this promise at work in more than one way. A Santhali film enters the roll of honour for the very first time. A veteran of Kannada cinema receives the highest honour in the field. The awards thus continue to serve both the art and the nation.

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