

# THE DAILY GK DOSE

## TAMIL POET & LYRICIST VAIRAMUTHU WINS JNANPITH AWARD 2025

- **A Historic "First" for Tamil Poetry:** While he is the third Tamil writer to receive India's highest literary honor (following Akilan in 1975 and Jayakanthan in 2002), he is the first to win it specifically for Tamil poetry. The previous two recipients were primarily recognized for their prose and novels.
- **Ending a 24-Year Wait:** This award returns to Tamil Nadu after a nearly quarter-century gap. The last Tamil recipient, Jayakanthan, was honored in 2002. Vairamuthu dedicated the win to "Tamil society and its people," noting that it fulfills a long-standing desire for Tamil poetry to be recognized at this national level.
- **Recognition of a Prolific Career:** The honor acknowledges his vast literary contribution, which includes over 37 books and roughly 7,500 film songs. Notable works highlighted by the committee include his Sahitya Akademi-winning novel *KallikattuIthikasam*, as well as *KaruvachiKaaviyam* and *Thanneer Desam*.

## NHAI TO REVISE FASTAG ANNUAL PASS FEE FROM 1ST APRIL 2026

- **Fee Increase to ₹3,075:** Starting April 1, 2026, the cost of the FASTag Annual Pass will increase from ₹3,000 to ₹3,075. This ₹75 hike is in line with the National Highways Fee Rules, 2008, which allow for annual inflation-linked adjustments.

- **Eligibility and Validity:** The pass remains exclusive to non-commercial vehicles (cars, jeeps, and vans). It is valid for one year or 200 toll crossings, whichever occurs first, and can be used at approximately 1,150 fee plazas across India's National Highways and Expressways.
- **Seamless Activation:** Users can purchase or renew the pass via the Rajmarg Yatra app or the official NHA website. Once paid, the pass typically activates on the existing FASTag linked to the vehicle within two hours, eliminating the need for frequent balance top-ups for regular commuters.

## JOSE ANTONIO KAST RIST TOOK OATH AS PRESIDENT OF CHILE



- **Sharpest Rightward Shift Since 1990:** He succeeds Gabriel Boric, a left-wing leader who left office with low approval ratings, signaling a public rejection of the previous administration's progressive agenda.
- **Landslide Electoral Mandate:** Kast secured the presidency after a resounding victory in the December 2025 runoff against Communist Party candidate Jeannette Jara. He won with roughly 58% of the vote, achieving one of the highest vote shares in Chile's modern history by campaigning on a platform of "security, order, and freedom."

## IMPORTANT FACTS

### OSCARS 2026 (98<sup>TH</sup> ACADEMY AWARDS) – WINNER LIST

- **Best Picture:** *One Battle After Another*
- **Best Director:** Paul Thomas Anderson – *One Battle After Another*
- **Best Actor:** Michael B. Jordan – *Sinners*
- **Best Actress:** Jessie Buckley – *Hamnet*
- **Best Supporting Actor:** Sean Penn – *One Battle After Another*
- **Best Supporting Actress:** Amy Madigan – *Weapons*.

## U.S. & SOUTH KOREA KICK OFF MASSIVE JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE 'FREEDOM SHIELD'

- **"All-Domain" Operational Focus:** Unlike traditional drills, Freedom Shield 26 focuses on a multi-domain environment, integrating land, sea, air, space, and cyber elements. Key events include combined airborne operations with the 11th Airborne Division and the first-ever integration of advanced ROK-U.S. bridging equipment during dynamic river-crossing exercises.
- **Massive Scale and Duration:** The 11-day exercise (running until March 19) involves roughly 18,000 South Korean troops alongside thousands of U.S. personnel.

## SUMIT ANTIL WON GOLD IN MEN'S JAVELIN THROW AT WORLD PARA ATHLETICS GRAND PRIX 2026

- **Leading an All-Indian Podium:** Competing in the combined F43/F44/F64 category, Antil secured gold with a powerful throw of 69.25 meters. His performance led a clean sweep for India, with compatriots Pushpendra Singh (56.91m) and Poonam Ram (49.48m) taking silver and bronze, respectively.
- **Exceeding "Off-Season" Expectations:** Antil noted that the result was better than anticipated, as he is currently in an "off-season loading phase" of training.
- **Targeting the 75m Milestone:** Following this win, Antil reaffirmed his ultimate goal: becoming the first para-javelin thrower in history to breach the 75-meter mark. He plans to use upcoming international events, including the Nottwil Grand Prix in May, to build momentum toward this historic target for the 2026 Asian Para Games..

## GOVT APPOINTS KV RAMANA MURTY AS MEMBER OF SEBI

- **Three-Year Tenure:** Murty has been appointed for a period of three years from the date he assumes charge, or until further orders. His appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on March 11, 2026, filling a key vacancy on the regulator's board.

- **Vast Administrative Background:** A 1991-batch officer of the Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS), Murty previously served as the Additional Controller General of Defence Accounts. He is not new to SEBI, having earlier served as a part-time member on the board as a representative of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- **Strengthening the SEBI Board:** With his induction, the SEBI board now has its full quota of four whole-time members (joining Kamlesh Chandra Varshney, Amarjeet Singh, and Sandip Pradhan).

## JESSIE BUCKLEY WINS BEST ACTRESS AT OSCARS 2026



- **Historic Win for Ireland:** Buckley made history as the first Irish performer ever to win the Oscar for Best Actress. While Irish actors have been nominated in this category before (such as Saoirse Ronan and Ruth Negga), Buckley is the first to take home the statuette.
- **Role in Hamnet:** She won for her portrayal of Agnes Shakespeare, the wife of William Shakespeare, in Chloé Zhao's adaptation of Maggie O'Farrell's bestselling novel. The film explores the couple's

grief following the death of their 11-year-old son, Hamnet

- **A "Mother's Day" Dedication:** Since the ceremony coincided with Mother's Day in the UK and Ireland, Buckley delivered an emotional speech dedicating the award to the "beautiful chaos of a mother's heart."

## FORMER AIFF GENERAL SECRETARY KUSHAL DAS PASSED AWAY

- **Longest-Serving General Secretary:** A Chartered Accountant by profession, Das served as the General Secretary of the AIFF for 12 years (2010–2022). His tenure was one of the longest in the federation's history, during which he oversaw the structural modernization of "Football House" and the creation of several new administrative departments.
- **Architect of Major Tournaments:** He played a pivotal role in bringing world-class football to India, most notably serving as a key organizer for the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup, which set global attendance records. He also secured the hosting rights for the 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup and the 2022 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.
- **Commercial and Youth Development:** Das was instrumental in securing the landmark marketing partnership with Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) in 2010, which led to the launch of the Indian Super League (ISL).

## WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

16.03.2026 / MONDAY

- **National Vaccination Day 2026: 16<sup>th</sup> March**
- **Theme 2026: "Immunization for All is Humanly Possible"**
- **Ensuring universal vaccine access, regardless of geography or income.**