Mahesh Kakde wins the 2026 Ramanujan Prize

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News

Prof. Mahesh Kakde of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, has been named winner of the 2026 ICTP Ramanujan Prize for his work in algebraic number theory – especially non-commutative Iwasawa theory and the Gross–Stark and Brumer–Stark conjectures, which bear on Hilbert's 12th problem.

Key facts

Prize	ICTP Ramanujan Prize 2026 – US$10,000
Given by	ICTP (Trieste, Italy) + International Mathematical Union; funded by India's DST
Eligibility	Mathematicians under 45 working in developing countries
Education	ISI Bengaluru (B.Math); Cambridge PhD (2008)
Career	Princeton, UCL, King's College London; IISc since 2019
Earlier honours	Infosys Prize (2022); ICM speaker (2022)

Background

- Srinivasa Ramanujan: born 22 Dec 1887 at Erode; grew up in Kumbakonam; wrote to G.H. Hardy in 1913; went to Cambridge in 1914; elected FRS in 1918; died on 26 Apr 1920, aged 32.

- 1729 is the 'Hardy–Ramanujan number' (smallest number expressible as a sum of two cubes in two ways). National Mathematics Day is 22 Dec (announced at Chennai in Dec 2011; 2012 was National Mathematics Year).
- ICTP (Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics) was founded in 1964 at Trieste, Italy; the Ramanujan Prize has been given since 2005.
- Hilbert's 23 problems were posed by David Hilbert at the 1900 International Congress of Mathematicians in Paris.
- Maths honours: the SASTRA Ramanujan Prize (2005, for those aged 32 or under – Ramanujan's age at death); Manjul Bhargava (2014) and Akshay Venkatesh (2018) won the Fields Medal.

Tamil Nadu link: Ramanujan was born at Erode, studied at Kumbakonam and worked as a clerk at the Madras Port Trust. SASTRA University, Kumbakonam, gives the SASTRA Ramanujan Prize. Chennai-born S.R.S. Varadhan won the Abel Prize in 2007.

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