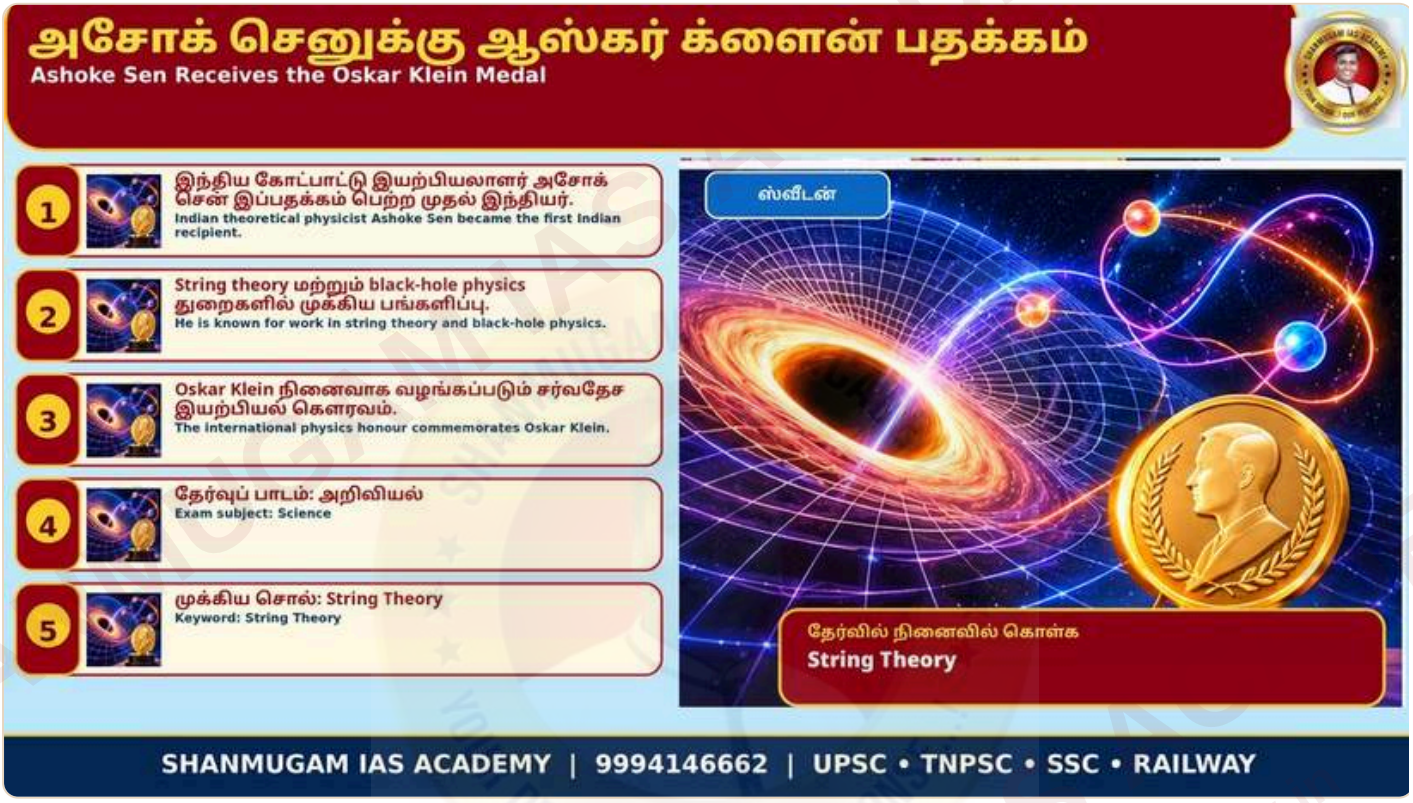
Physicist Ashoke Sen becomes the first Indian physicist to receive the Oskar Klein Medal (2026)

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News

String theorist Ashoke Sen received the 2026 Oskar Klein Medal in Stockholm on 22 Oct 2026 – the first Indian physicist to receive it. It recognises his pioneering contributions to string theory, black hole entropy and string field theory. The same day he delivered the Oskar Klein Memorial Lecture, 'Gravity from Strings and Strings from Gravity', at Stockholm University's AlbaNova Centre.

Key facts

Medal	Oskar Klein Medal – instituted 1988; annual
Awarded by	Stockholm University + Nobel Committee for Physics of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
Past recipients	Chen-Ning Yang, Steven Weinberg, Hans Bethe (Nobel laureates)
Present post	ICTS-Infosys Madhava Chair Professor, International Centre for Theoretical Sciences (ICTS-TIFR), Bengaluru
Research	S-duality, precise counting of black hole entropy, string field theory

Other awards	S.S. Bhatnagar Prize (1994), Padma Shri (2001), Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics (2012), Padma Bhushan (2013), Dirac Medal (2014); FRS (1998)

Background

- Oskar Klein (1894–1977): Swedish theoretical physicist; the 'Kaluza–Klein theory' (extra dimensions) and the 'Klein–Gordon equation' bear his name. His extra-dimension idea is one of the foundations of later string theory.
- Science: string theory treats elementary particles not as points but as tiny vibrating 'strings'; it attempts to unite gravity with quantum mechanics. Sen's S-duality work played a key role in the 'second superstring revolution' of the 1990s.
- Science awards: the Centre introduced the 'Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar' (first awards announced in 2024) in four categories – Vigyan Ratna, Vigyan Shri, Vigyan Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar (up to 45 years) and Vigyan Team.
- Indian Physics Nobels: C.V. Raman – 1930 (Raman effect; discovered 28 Feb 1928 – National Science Day); Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar – 1983 (structure and evolution of stars; 'Chandrasekhar limit' – the maximum mass of a white dwarf, about 1.4 solar masses). Chandrasekhar was the son of Raman's elder brother.

Tamil Nadu link: both Indians who won the Physics Nobel came from a Tamil family. C.V. Raman was born in Tiruchirappalli (Thiruvanaikaval) and graduated (B.A., 1904) from Presidency College, Madras, with gold medals in physics and English. His nephew S. Chandrasekhar (born Lahore, 1910) studied at the same Presidency College. Ashoke Sen himself has no direct Tamil Nadu link.

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