Air-pollution awareness short film starring Dindigul schoolgirl Mukizhanbu wins 3 international awards

Tamil Nadu · 3 November 2026 · https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/11/03



News

The short film 'Awake Before Another Pandemic', starring Mukizhanbu, a 7-year-old schoolgirl from near Dindigul, has won 3 international awards (Daily Thanthi, 3 Nov 2026). It explains air pollution and the steps needed to stop it from leading to a pandemic; it is directed by Mani Arputharaj. It won 2 awards at Kolkata's 'Tagore International Cinema Award' (250+ entries from around the world) and 1 at the 'Kalinga Cinema Festival', and was shortlisted for 3 more. Earlier it won first prize in the short-film contest of the Dindigul Book Festival.

Key facts

Film	'Awake Before Another Pandemic' – air-pollution awareness short film
Actor	Mukizhanbu (7-year-old schoolgirl), near Dindigul
Director	Mani Arputharaj
Awards	Tagore International Cinema Award, Kolkata – 2; Kalinga Cinema Festival – 1; shortlisted for 3 more
Local	First prize, Dindigul Book Festival short-film contest

Background

- Environment–health: the main components of air pollution are PM2.5 and PM10 particles, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone and carbon monoxide; they worsen respiratory diseases.
- Pandemic history: WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020. India's first COVID-19 case was found on 30 Jan 2020 at Thrissur, Kerala (a student back from Wuhan).
- Literature–history: Rabindranath Tagore, after whom the award is named, wrote two national anthems – India's 'Jana Gana Mana' and Bangladesh's 'Amar Shonar Bangla'. 'Kalinga' is the old name of present-day Odisha; Ashoka's change of heart after the Kalinga war (c. 261 BCE) is recorded in his Major Rock Edict XIII.

Tamil Nadu link: Dindigul is famous for its lock industry – the 'Dindigul Lock' received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag in Aug 2019 (along with Karaikudi's 'Kandangi' saree).

Shanmugam IAS Academy – your next step

- **Courses:** TNPSC Group 1, 2 / 2A (Prelims + Mains), Group 4, UPSC / IAS – Coimbatore · Madurai · Online – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/fees
- **Books (PDF):** TNPSC PYQ books, UPSC books – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/study-materials
- **Free quiz + daily PDFs:** https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/free-pdf-download · All news of this day: https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/11/03

Admissions – call / WhatsApp: 99941 46662 · 99944 27714 · www.shanmugamiasacademy.in