🏆 Nobel Prize in Literature 2025

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1. Introduction

- **Prize Announced by**: The **Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences** on **October 9, 2025**.
- **Laureate**: **László Krasznahorkai**, Hungarian novelist and essayist.
- **Citation**: Awarded *“for his compelling and visionary oeuvre that, in the midst of apocalyptic terror, reaffirms the power of art.”*
- **Prize Money**: 11 million Swedish kronor (≈ ₹10.3 crore).
- **Award Ceremony**: To be held on **December 10, 2025**, the anniversary of **Alfred Nobel’s death**.

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2. About the Laureate

a. Personal Background

- **Born**: 1954, in a small town near the **Romanian border** in **Hungary**.
- **Education**: Studied law and Hungarian literature.
- Known for his **dense, philosophical, and visionary prose style**.
- Described as a writer who **blends realism with metaphysical reflection**, often exploring the chaos and decay of modern civilisation.

b. Literary Breakthrough

- His **first novel**, *“Sátántangó”* (1985; English translation, *“Satantango”*, 2012), made him a **literary sensation in Hungary**.
- The novel was later adapted into a **7-hour film** by Hungarian director **Béla Tarr**, becoming a modern classic of world cinema.

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3. Major Works of László Krasznahorkai

Work	Year (Original)	English Translation / Year	Themes
Sátántangó	1985	*Satantango* (2012)	Depicts the collapse of a remote village community — a

Work	Year (Original)	English Translation / Year	Themes
			symbol of moral and social decay.
Seiobo járt odalent	2008	*Seiobo There Below* (2013)	Collection of 17 stories in **Fibonacci sequence** — explores beauty, art, and the divine in human creation.
Északról hegy, Délről tó, Nyugatról utak, Keletről folyó	2003	*A Mountain to the North, a Lake to the South, Paths to the West, a River to the East* (2022)	Meditative novel on spirituality, architecture, and artistic transcendence.
Herscht 07769	2025	—	Portrays **modern social unrest in Germany**, blending themes of **violence, art, and music**.

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4. About His 2025 Novel – “Herscht 07769”

- Set in a **small town in Thuringia, Germany**.
- Depicts **social anarchy, violence, murder, and arson**.
- Yet, it is deeply intertwined with **Johann Sebastian Bach’s musical legacy**, exploring how art survives amid chaos.
- Described by the Nobel Committee as:

  > “A book written in a single breath, about violence and beauty ‘impossibly’ conjoined.”

- Reflects **Europe’s modern anxieties** — loss of order, rise of extremism, and the enduring need for artistic creation.

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5. Literary Style and Philosophy

- Known for **long, uninterrupted sentences**, creating a **hypnotic, immersive narrative flow**.
- Combines **philosophical depth with apocalyptic imagery**.
- Explores **human despair, moral decay, and spiritual searching**.

- Frequently portrays:
    - The **collapse of civilisation**.
    - The **redemptive power of beauty and art**.
    - The **cyclical nature of human suffering and hope**.

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6. Interpretation of the Nobel Citation

> "For his compelling and visionary oeuvre that, in the midst of apocalyptic terror, reaffirms the power of art."

Meaning:

- *"Compelling and visionary oeuvre"* → His complete body of work challenges readers to confront existential and societal collapse.
- *"Amid apocalyptic terror"* → His fiction often depicts dystopian, chaotic societies.
- *"Reaffirms the power of art"* → Despite darkness, he shows that creativity and artistic expression are humanity's last refuge of meaning and hope.

Thus, the Nobel Committee honours **the role of literature in preserving human dignity** amid turmoil.

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7. Position in Global Literature

- Represents **Central European modernism**, continuing the legacy of **Franz Kafka, Imre Kertész**, and **Thomas Bernhard**.
- His works blur the line between **fiction and philosophy**, earning him comparisons with **James Joyce** and **Samuel Beckett**.
- Reflects **post-communist disillusionment**, **moral collapse**, and **universal questions of existence**.

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8. Nobel Prize Context (2025)

a. Nobel Announcement Week 2025

Date (2025)	Field	Laureates / Theme
Oct 6	Physiology or Medicine	—

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Date (2025)	Field	Laureates / Theme
Oct 7	Physics	*John Clarke, Michel Devoret, John Martinis* – for *macroscopic quantum tunnelling and energy quantisation in an electric circuit.*
Oct 8	Chemistry	*Susumu Kitagawa, Richard Robson, Omar Yaghi* – for *development of metal–organic frameworks (MOFs).*
Oct 9	Literature	*László Krasznahorkai (Hungary)* – for visionary literary work affirming art amid chaos.
Oct 10	Peace	*Maria Corina Machado (Venezuela)* – for democratic struggle for peace.
Oct 13	Economic Sciences	To be announced.

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b. Previous Year's Laureate

- **2024 Nobel in Literature**: *Han Kang (South Korea)* – known for *"The Vegetarian"* and *"Human Acts"*.
- Her work explored **memory, trauma, and humanity** — continuing the Nobel tradition of rewarding **moral and psychological depth**.

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9. About the Nobel Prize in Literature

a. Origin

- Established under the **will of Alfred Nobel (1833–1896)** — Swedish chemist, engineer, and inventor of dynamite.
- Nobel directed that his estate should fund **"prizes to those who, during the preceding year, have conferred the greatest benefit to humankind."**

b. Selection

- Administered by the **Swedish Academy** (Stockholm).
- Awarded annually since **1901**.
- Recognises **literary excellence, humanistic vision, and universal relevance**.

10. Significance of the Award

a. For Literature

- Reaffirms the **enduring role of art and literature** as moral and philosophical guidance in a world facing crisis.
- Encourages **readers and societies to seek beauty and reflection even amid turmoil.**

b. For Hungary and Central Europe

- Highlights the **rich intellectual and artistic tradition** of Central Europe.
- Puts Hungarian literature again on the global map (after **Imre Kertész**, Nobel 2002).

c. For the World

- Sends a message that **art remains a force of resistance** against nihilism, extremism, and cultural decay.
- Literature is not merely entertainment but **a tool for human survival and empathy**.

11. Key Quotes

> “A book written in a single breath, about violence and beauty ‘impossibly’ conjoined.” – *Nobel Committee*
> “In the midst of apocalyptic terror, art reaffirms meaning.” – *Interpretation of Nobel Citation*

12. Relevance for UPSC Aspirants

GS Paper I – Indian & World Literature

- Understanding **literary trends and world cultural movements.**

GS Paper II – International Relations

- Nobel Prizes as **soft power instruments** enhancing global prestige.

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Essay Paper

- Themes: *“Power of Art in Troubled Times,” “Human Spirit Amid Chaos,” “The Role of Culture in Peace and Progress.”*

Ethics (GS Paper IV)

- Values: *Resilience, Hope, Creativity, Human Dignity.*

Conclusion

László Krasznahorkai’s Nobel Prize in Literature 2025 celebrates a writer who captures the **collapse of the modern world** yet insists on **the redemptive power of art and beauty**.
His vision reminds humanity that **literature can illuminate even the darkest corners of existence** and that **art remains the last stronghold of peace, order, and hope.**

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