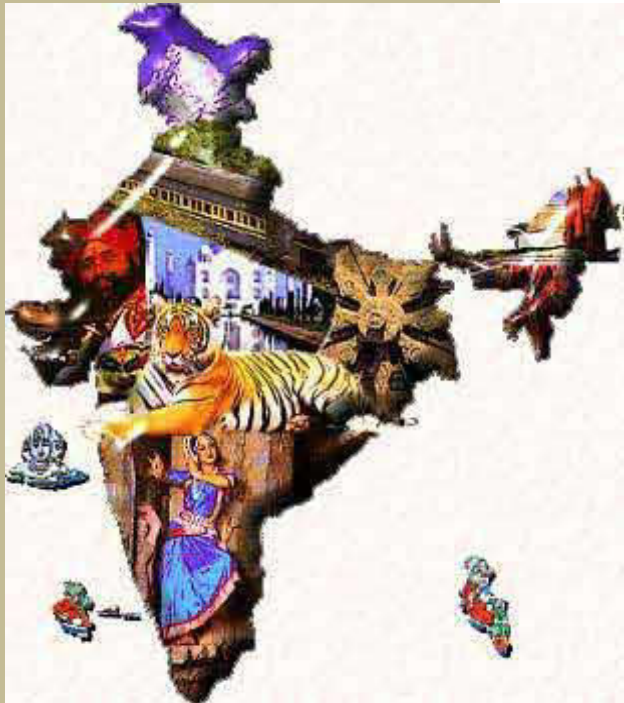


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Bharat Ratna

The highest civilian award of the republic of India is known as BHARAT RATNA. It came into existence on 2nd January 1954. The award was in recognition of extraordinary performance in the field of literature, science, public services and arts only. This award belongs to all people of India without any discrimination of sex, race and age. Previously award belonged to only limited criteria but in December 2011 the criteria was changed to include all fields of human endeavour.



Maximum 3 nominees may be awarded per year and recommendations for the same are specially made by PM to the President. A Sanad (certificate) signed by the President and a medallion in the shape of a peepal-leaf are the only two things being given to the recipients; no money is granted with the award.

In the Indian order of precedence, Bharat Ratna awardee comes at seventh position. But Bharat Ratna recipients are constitutionally prohibited to use award name as title as per Article 18 of the Constitution of India.

Since 1954, 44 distinguished individuals have been awarded with this prestigious and highest civilian award of the country; let's have a brief introduction of these extraordinary men and women. The provision of Bharat Ratna was introduced in 1954. The first ever Indian to receive this award was the famous scientist, Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman. Since then, many dignitaries, each a whiz in varied aspects of their career has received this coveted award.

In fact, our former President, Shri A. P. J Abdul Kalam is also a recipient of this esteemed honour (1997). There is no written provision that Bharat Ratna should be awarded to Indian citizens only. The award has been awarded to a naturalized Indian citizen, Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, better known as Mother Teresa (1980) and to two non-Indians - Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Nelson Mandela (1990). In 2009, the award was conferred on famous Indian vocalist Pandit Bhimsen Gururaj Joshi. Legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and eminent scientist Prof. C.N.R. Rao have received the Bharat Ratna from President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee on February 4, 2014, in New Delhi.

List of recipients

Year	Laureates	Brief Description
	C. Rajagopalachari	An Indian independence activist, statesman, and lawyer, Rajagopalachari was the only Indian and last Governor-General of independent India. He was Chief Minister of Madras Presidency (1937–39) and Madras State (1952–54); and founder of Indian political party Swatantra Party.
1954	Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan	He served as India's first Vice-President (1952–62) and second President (1962–67). Since 1962, his birthday on 5 September is observed as "Teachers' Day" in India.
	C. V. Raman	Widely known for his work on the scattering of light and the discovery of the effect, better known as "Raman scattering", Raman mainly worked in the field of atomic physics and electromagnetism and was presented Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.
	Bhagwan Das	Independence activist, philosopher, and educationist, and co-founder of Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapithand worked with Madan Mohan Malaviya for the foundation of Banaras Hindu University.
1955	M. Visvesvaraya	Civil engineer, statesman, and Diwan of Mysore (1912–18), was a Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire. His birthday, 15 September, is observed as "Engineer's Day" in India.
	Jawaharlal Nehru	Independence activist and author, Nehru is the first and the longest-serving Prime Minister of India (1947–64).
1957	Govind Ballabh Pant	Independence activist Pant was premier of United Provinces (1937–39, 1946–50) and first Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh (1950–54). He served as Union Home Minister from 1955–61.
1958	Dhondo Keshav Karve	Social reformer and educator, Karve is widely known for his works related to woman education and remarriage of Hindu widows. He established the Widow Marriage Association (1883), Hindu Widows Home (1896), and started Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University in 1916.

1961	Bidhan Chandra Roy	A physician, political leader, philanthropist, educationist, and social worker, Roy is often considered as "Maker of Modern West Bengal". He was second Chief Minister of West Bengal (1948–62) and his birthday on 1 July is observed as National Doctors' Day in India.
	Purushottam Das Tandon	Often titled as "Rajarshi", Tandon was an independence activist and served as speaker of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly (1937–50). He was actively involved in a campaign to get official language status to Hindi.
1962	Rajendra Prasad	Independence activist, lawyer, statesman, and scholar, Prasad was closely associated with Mahatma Gandhi in the non-cooperation movement for Indian independence. He was later elected as the first President of India (1950–62).
1963	Zakir Husain	Independence activist and education philosopher, Husain served as a Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University (1948–56) and the Governor of Bihar (1957–62). Later, he was elected as second Vice-President of India (1962–67) and went on to become the third President of India (1967–69).
	Pandurang Vaman Kane	Indologist and Sanskrit scholar, Kane is best known for his five volume literary work, History of Dharmasastra: Ancient and Medieval Religious and Civil Law in India; the "monumental" work that extends over nearly 6,500 pages and being published from 1930 to 1962.
1966	Lal Bahadur Shastri	Known for his slogan "Jai Jawan Jai Kisan" ("Hail the Soldier, Hail the Farmer"), Independence activist Shastri served as second Prime Minister of India (1964–66) and led the country during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965.
1971	Indira Gandhi	Known as the "Iron Lady of India", Gandhi was the Prime Minister of India during 1966–77 and 1980–84. During the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, her government supported Bangladesh Liberation War which led to the formation of a new country, Bangladesh.
1975	V. V. Giri	While studying at the University College Dublin, Giri was involved in the Irish Sinn Fein movement. Returning to India, he organized labour unions and brought them to take active participation in Indian freedom struggle. He was elected as the first President of All India Trade Union Congress in 1926. Post-independence, Giri held positions of Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Mysore and various other cabinet ministries. He became the first acting President and was eventually elected as the fourth President of India (1969–74).
1976	K. Kamaraj	Independence activist and statesman Kamaraj was a former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for three terms; 1954–57, 1957–62, and

1962–63.

1980	Mother Teresa	"Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta" was a catholic nun and the founder of the Missionaries of Charity. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her humanitarian work in 1979 and was beatified on 19 October 2003 by Pope John Paul II and canonised on 4 September 2016 by Pope Francis.
1983	Vinoba Bhave	Independence activist, social reformer, and a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, Bhave is best known for his Bhoodan movement, "Land-Gift Movement". He was given the honorific title "Acharya" ("teacher") and was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award (1958) for his humanitarian work.
1987	Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan	Widely known as "Frontier Gandhi", independence activist and Pashtun leader Khan was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. He joined Khilafat Movement in 1920 and founded Khudai Khidmatgar ("Red Shirt movement") in 1929.
1988	M. G. Ramachandran	Actor turned politician Ramachandran served as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for three terms; 1977–80, 1980–84, and 1985–87.
1990	B. R. Ambedkar	Social reformer and leader of the Dalits ("Untouchables"), Ambedkar was the Chief architect of the Indian Constitution and also served as the first Law Minister of India. Ambedkar predominantly campaigned against the social discrimination with Dalits, the Hindu varna system. He was associated with the Dalit Buddhist movement and accepted Buddhism as a religion along with his close to half a million followers on 14 October 1956.
	Nelson Mandela	Leader of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa, Mandela was the President of South Africa (1994–99). Often called as the "Gandhi of South Africa", Mandela's African National Congress movement was influenced by Gandhian philosophy. In 1993, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
	Rajiv Gandhi	Gandhi was the ninth Prime Minister of India serving from 1984 to 1989.
1991	Vallabhbhai Patel	Widely known as the "Iron Man of India", Patel was an independence activist and first Deputy Prime Minister of India (1947–50). Post-independence, "Sardar" ("Leader") Patel worked with V. P. Menon towards dissolving 555 princely states into the Indian union.
	Morarji Desai	Independence activist Desai was the sixth Prime Minister of India (1977–79). He is the only Indian national to be awarded the Nishan-e-Pakistan, highest civilian award given by the Government of Pakistan.
1992	Abul Kalam Azad	Independence activist Azad was India's first Minister of Education and worked towards free primary education. He was widely known

as "Maulana Azad" and his birthday on 11 November is observed as National Education Day in India.

J. R. D. Tata

Industrialist, philanthropist, and aviation pioneer, Tata founded India's first airline Air India. He is the founder of various institutes including Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Tata Memorial Hospital, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Tata Motors, TCS, National Institute of Advanced Studies, and National Centre for the Performing Arts.

Satyajit Ray

Having debuted as a director with Pather Panchali (1955), filmmaker Ray is credited with bringing world recognition to Indian cinema. In 1984, Ray was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in cinema.

Gulzarilal Nanda

Independence activist Nanda was two times interim Prime Minister of India (1964, 1966) and two times deputy chairman of the Planning Commission.

Aruna Asaf Ali

Independence activist Ali is better known for hoisting the Indian flag in Bombay during the Quit India Movement in 1942. Post-Independence, Ali was elected as Delhi's first mayor in 1958.

1997

A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

Aerospace and defence scientist, Kalam was involved in the development of India's first satellite launch vehicle SLV III and was the architect of Integrated Guided Missile Development Program. He worked for Indian National Committee for Space Research, Indian Space Research Organisation, Defence Research and Development Laboratory and was appointed as the Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister, Secretary to Department of Defence Research and Development and Director General of Defence Research and Development Organisation. Later, he served as the eleventh President of India from 2002 till 2007.

M. S. Subbulakshmi

Carnatic classical vocalist Subbulakshmi, often hailed as "Queen of songs", is the first Indian musician to receive the Ramon Magsaysay award.

1998

Chidambaram Subramaniam

Independence activist and former Minister of Agriculture of India (1964–66), Subramaniam is known for his contribution towards Green Revolution in India. During the late 1970s, he worked for International Rice Research Institute, Manila, and the International Maize and Wheat Research Institute, Mexico.

Jayaprakash Narayan

Independence activist, social reformer, and commonly referred as "Lok Nayak" ("People's Hero"), Narayan is better known for "Total Revolution Movement" or "JP Movement" initiated during the mid-1970s to "overthrow the corrupt and exploitative Congress government".

1999

Amartya Sen

Winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences (1998),

		Sen has done research over several topics including social choice theory, ethics and political philosophy, welfare economics, decision theory, development economics, public health, and gender studies.
	Gopinath Bordoloi	Independence activist Bordoloi is the first Chief Minister of Assam (1946–50). His efforts and association with the then Minister of Home Affairs Vallabhbhai Patel were widely acknowledged while keeping Assam united with India when parts of it were to merge with East Pakistan.
	Ravi Shankar	Winner of four Grammy Awards and often considered "the world's best-known exponent of Hindustani classical music", sitar player Shankar is known for his collaborative work with Western musicians including Yehudi Menuhin and George Harrison.
2001	Lata Mangeshkar	Widely credited as the "nightingale of India", playback singer Mangeshkar started her career in the 1940s and has sung songs in over 36 languages. In 1989, Mangeshkar was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in cinema.
	Bismillah Khan	Hindustani classical shehnai player, Khan played the instrument for more than eight decades and is credited to have brought the instrument to the centre stage of Indian music.
2009	Bhimsen Joshi	Hindustani classical vocalist, Joshi was a disciple of Kirana gharana, an Indian musical school. He is widely known for the Khyal genre of singing with a "mastery over rhythm and accurate notes".[
	C. N. R. Rao	The recipient of Honorary Doctorates from 63 Universities including Purdue, IIT Bombay, Oxford, chemist and professor Rao has worked prominently in the fields of Solid State and Materials Chemistry, Spectroscopy and Molecular Structure. He has authored around 1600 research papers and 48 books.
2014	Sachin Tendulkar	He played 664 international cricket matches in a career spanning over two decades. He holds various cricket records including the only player to have scored one hundred international centuries, the first batsman to score a double century in a One Day International and the only player to complete more than 30,000 runs in both ODI and Test cricket.
	Madan Mohan Malaviya	Scholar and educational reformer Malaviya is a founder of Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha (1906) and Banaras Hindu University and served as the university's vice-chancellor from 1919 till 1938. He was the President of Indian National Congress for four terms and was the Chairman of Hindustan Times from 1924 to 1946.
2015	Atal Bihari Vajpayee	Parliamentarian for over four decades, Vajpayee was elected nine times to the Lok Sabha, twice to the Rajya Sabha and served as the Prime Minister of India for three terms; 1996, 1998, 1999–2004. He was Minister of External Affairs during 1977–79 and was awarded

the "Best Parliamentarian" in 1994.

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