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## **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Awards**

**Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna**, officially known as **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in Sports and Games**, is the highest sporting honour of the Republic of India.

The award is named after Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India who served the office from 1984 to 1989.

It is awarded annually by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The recipient(s) is/are selected by a committee constituted by the Ministry and is honoured for their "spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports over a period of four years" at international level. As of 2017, the award comprises a medallion, a certificate, and a cash prize of 7.5 lakh (US\$11,000).

Instituted in 1991–92, the award was given for the performance by a sportsperson in a year. Based on the suggestions provided by 2014 award selection committee, the Ministry revised the criteria in February 2015 to consider the performance over a period of four years.

The nominations for a given year are accepted till 30 April or last working day of April with not more than two sportspersons nominated for each sports discipline. A twelve-member committee evaluates the performances of a sportsperson at various International events like Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, Asian Games, and Commonwealth Games. The committee later submits their recommendations to the Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports for further approval.

The first recipient of the award was Chess Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand, who was honoured for the performance in the year 1991–92. In 2001, sport shooter Abhinav Bindra, then aged 18, became the youngest recipient of the award.

Usually conferred upon only one sportsperson in a year, a few exceptions have been made (1993–94, 2002, 2009, 2012, and 2016–17) when multiple recipients were awarded in a year. As of 2017, there have been thirty-four recipients from fourteen sport disciplines: Athletics, Badminton, Billiards, Boxing, Chess, Cricket, Field hockey, Gymnastics, Shooting, Snooker, Tennis, Wrestling, Weightlifting, and Yacht racing.



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The most recent recipients of the award are Para Athlete Javelin thrower Devendra Jhajharia and Hockey player Sardara Singh.

Player Name	Sport	Year	
1. Viswanathan Anand	Chess	1992	
2. Geet Sethi	Billiards	1993	
3. Homi de Motivala and PK Garg	Yachting	1995	
4. Karnam Malleswari	Weightlifting	1996	
5. Kunjurani Devi and Leander Paes	Weightlifting, Lawn Tennis	1997	
6. Sachin Tendulkar	Cricket	1998	
7. Jyotirmoyee Sikandar	Athletics	1999	
8. Dhanraj Pillai	Hockey	2000	
9. Pullela Gopichand	Badminton	2001	
10. Abhinav Bindra	Shooting	2002	
11. Anjali Bhagwat and K. M.	Shooting, Athletics	2003	
Binamol			
12. Anju Bobby George	Athletics	<mark>200</mark> 4	
13. Rajya Vardhan ,Singh Rathore	Shooting	2005	
14. Pankaj Advani	Billiards and Snooker	2006	
15. Manavjit Singh Sandhu	Shooting	2007	
16. Mahendra Singh Dhoni	Cricket	2008	
17. M.C. Marikom, Vijender Singh,	Boxing, Boxing, Wrestling	2009	
Sushil Kumar			
18. Saina Nehwal	Badminton	2010	
19. Gagan Narang	Shooting	2011	
20. Vijay Kumar, Yogeshwar Dutt	Shooting, Wrestling	2012	
21. Ranjan Sodhi	Shooting	2013	
22. Sania Mirza	Lawn Tennis	2015	
23. P. V. Sindhu, Deepa Kamikar,	Badminton, Gymnastics,	2016	
Sakshi Bhai and Jitu Rai	Wrestling, Shooting		
24. Devendra Jhajaria, Sardar Singh	Javelin throw, Hockey 2017		

#### Some interesting facts about Rajeev Gandhi Khel Ratna Award are:

- **1.** It is the highest sporting honour of the Republic of India.
- 2. It is awarded annually by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- **3.** This award was instituted in 1991-92.
- 4. Chess Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand was the first recipient of this award.
- 5. From 1992 to 2017, 34 sportsmen got this award.
- 6. It carries prize money of Rs.7.5 lac

#### First Sportspersons to be awarded Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

Sport

Sportsperson



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1.	First <b>person</b> and first <b>Chess</b> player to be awarded	Viswanathan Anand	1991-92
2.	First Billiards player to be awarded	Geet Sethi	1992-93
		Homi Motivala and	
3.	First <b>Yachting</b> sportsperson to be awarded	Pushpendra Kumar	1993-94
		Garg	
4.	First Weightlifter and also first Woman to be	Karnam Malleswari	1994-95
	awarded	Kumum Muneswum	1771 75
5.	First <b>Tennis</b> player to be awarded	Leander Paes	1996-97
6.	First Cricket player to be awarded	Sachin Tendulkar	1997-98
7.	First Athlete and also first Woman Athlete to be	Jyotirmoyee Sikdar	1998-99
1.	awarded	Jyounnoyee Sikuai	1998-99
8.	First Hockey player to be awarded	Dhanraj Pillay	1999-2000
9.	First Badminton player to be awarded	Pullela Gopichand	2000-01
10.	First Shooting sportsperson to be awarded	Abhinav Bindra	2001
11.	First Shooting sportswoman to be awarded	Anjali Bhagwat	2002
12.	First <b>Boxing</b> sportsperson to be awarded	Mary Kom	<b>20</b> 09
13.	First Wrestler to be awarded	Sushil Kumar	2009
14.	First <b>Gymnast</b> to be awarded	Dipa Karmakar	2016
15.	First Woman Wrestler to be awarded	Sakshi Malik	2016
16.	First <b>Para-athlete</b> to be awarded	Devendra Jhajharia	2017

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