

Prominent National Awards:

The Indian honor system is primarily recognized by Indian Central Government. The most recognized are Padma awards which are Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan and Bharat Ratna with increasing order of merit. They are awarded every year. However, the most coveted and highest civilian award Bharat Ratna may not necessarily be awarded every year. The Padma awards are civilian awards for a broad set of achievements in fields such as Education, Arts, Civil Service, or Social Service. Awards were also bestowed posthumously and they are also given for foreign citizens.



Bharat Ratna — Gem of India (Bharat), the present highest honor any Indian may bestow.

Bharat Ratna Awardees

| S.No. | Notable Person | Awarded Year | Notes and Contribution |
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| 1. | C. Rajagopalachari | 1954 | 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. |
| 2. | Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan | 1954 | Philosopher Radhakrishnan 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. |
| 3. | C. V. Raman | 1954 | 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 |

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| | | | electromagnetism and was presented Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930. |
| 4. | Bhagwan Das | 1955 | Independence activist, philosopher, and educationist, Das is a co-founder of Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith and worked with Madan Mohan Malaviya for the foundation of Banaras Hindu University. |
| 5. | M. Visvesvaraya | 1955 | Civil engineer, statesman, and Diwan of Mysore (1912–18), Visvesvaraya was a Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire. His birthday, 15 September, is observed as "Engineer's Day" in India. |
| 6. | Jawaharlal Nehru | 1955 | Independence activist and author, Nehru is the first and the longest-serving Prime Minister of India (1947–64). |
| 7. | Govind Ballabh Pant | 1957 | 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. |
| 8. | Dhondo Keshav Karve | 1958 | 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. |
| 9. | Bidhan Chandra Roy | 1961 | A physician, political leader, philanthropist, educationist, and social worker, Roy is often considered as "Maker of Modern West Bengal". He was |

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| | | | second Chief Minister of West Bengal (1948–62) and his birthday on 1 July is observed as National Doctors' Day in India. |
| 10. | Purushottam Das Tandon | 1961 | 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. |
| 11. | Rajendra Prasad | 1962 | 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). |
| 12. | Zakir Husain | 1963 | 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). |
| 13. | Pandurang Vaman Kane | 1963 | Indologist and Sanskrit scholar, Kane is best known for his five volume literary work, History of Dharmaśāstra: 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. |
| 14. | Lal Bahadur Shastri | 1966 | Known for his slogan "Jai Jawan Jai Kisan" ("Hail the Soldier, Hail the Farmer") Independence activist Shastri |

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| | | | served as second Prime Minister of India (1964–66) and led the country during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965. |
| 15. | Indira Gandhi | 1971 | 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. |
| 16. | V. V. Giri | 1975 | While studying at the University College Dublin, Giri was involved in the Irish Sinn Féin movement. Returning to India, he organized labour unions and brought them to take active participation in Indian freedom struggle. 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). |
| 17. | K. Kamaraj | 1976 | Independence activist and statesman Kamaraj was a Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for three terms; 1954–57, 1957–62, and 1962–63. |
| 18. | Mother Teresa | 1980 | "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. |

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| 19. | Vinoba Bhave | 1983 | 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. |
| 20. | Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan | 1987 | 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. |
| 21. | M. G. Ramachandran | 1988 | Actor turned politician Ramachandran served as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for three terms; 1977–80, 1980–84, 1985–87. |
| 22. | Dr. B. R. Ambedkar | 1990 | Social reformer and leader of the Dalits, 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. |
| 23. | Nelson Mandela | 1990 | 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 |

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| | | | Gandhian philosophy. In 1993, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. |
| 24. | Rajiv Gandhi | 1991 | Gandhi was the ninth Prime Minister of India serving from 1984 to 1989. |
| 25. | Vallabhbhai Patel | 1991 | 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. |
| 26. | Morarji Desai | 1991 | 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. |
| 27. | Abul Kalam Azad | 1992 | 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. |
| 28. | J. R. D. Tata | 1992 | 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. |
| 29. | Satyajit Ray | 1992 | Having debuted as a director with Pather Panchali (1955), film-maker Ray is |

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| | | | credited with bringing world recognition to Indian cinema. In 1984, Ray was awarded the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in cinema. |
| 30. | Gulzarilal Nanda | 1997 | Independence activist Nanda was two times interim Prime Minister of India (1964, 1966) and two times deputy chairman of the Planning Commission. |
| 31. | Aruna Asaf Ali | 1997 | 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. |
| 32. | A. P. J. Abdul Kalam | 1997 | Aerospace and defense 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 until 2007. |
| 33. | M. S. Subbulakshmi | 1998 | Carnatic classical vocalist Subbulakshmi, often hailed as "Queen of songs", is the first Indian musician to receive the Ramon Magsaysay award. |

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| 34. | Chidambaram Subramaniam | 1998 | 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. |
| 35. | Jayaprakash Narayan | 1999 | 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". |
| 36. | Amartya Sen | 1999 | 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. |
| 37. | Gopinath Bordoloi | 1999 | 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. |
| 38. | Ravi Shankar | 1999 | Winner of four Grammy Awards and often considered "the world's best-known exponent of Hindustani classical music", sitar player Shankar is known for |

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| | | | his collaborative work with Western musicians including Yehudi Menuhin and George Harrison. |
| 39. | Lata Mangeshkar | 2001 | 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. |
| 40. | Bismillah Khan | 2001 | 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. |
| 41. | Bhimsen Joshi | 2008 | 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". |
| 42. | C. N. R. Rao | 2014 | 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. |
| 43. | Sachin Tendulkar | 2014 | Having debuted in 1989, Tendulkar 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 |

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| | | | 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. |
| 44. | Madan Mohan Malaviya | 2015 | 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 until 1938. He was the President of Indian National Congress for four terms and was the Chairman of Hindustan Times from 1924 to 1946. |
| 45. | Atal Bihari Vajpayee | 2015 | 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. |
| 46. | Pranab Mukherjee | 2019 | Mukherjee is an Indian politician who served as the 13th President of India from 2012 until 2017. In a political career spanning five decades, Mukherjee has been a senior leader in the Indian National Congress and has occupied several ministerial portfolios in the Government of India. Prior to his election as President, he was Union Finance Minister from 2009 to 2012. |
| 47. | Dr. Bhupen Hazarika | 2019 | Hazarika was an Indian playback singer, lyricist, musician, poet and film-maker from Assam, widely known as Sudhakantha. His songs, written and sung mainly in the Assamese language |

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| | | | by himself, are marked by humanity and universal brotherhood and have been translated and sung in many languages, most notably in Bengali and Hindi. |
| 48. | Nanaji Deshmukh | 2019 | Chandikadas Amritrao Deshmukh also known as Nanaji Deshmukh (11 October 1916 – 27 February 2010) was a social activist from India. He worked in the fields of education, health, and rural self-reliance. He was a leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh and also a member of the Rajya Sabha. |

Bharat Ratna living recipients

Indian recipients

- A. P. J. Abdul Kalam (1997)
- Ravi Shankar (1999)
- Amartya Sen (1999)
- Lata Mangeshkar (2001)

Foreign recipients

- Nelson Mandela (1990)

Controversies

Award to Subhas Chandra Bose

Indian freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was awarded Bharat Ratna posthumously in 1992.

The award was later withdrawn due to a legal technicality. This is the only case of an award being withdrawn. It was withdrawn in response to a Supreme Court of India directive following a Public Interest Litigation filed in the Court against the *posthumous* nature of the award. The Award Committee could not give conclusive evidence of Bose's death and thus it invalidated the *posthumous* award.

Careerdost

Award to Abul Kalam Azad

When the award was offered to freedom fighter and India's first Minister of Education, Abul Kalam Azad, he promptly declined it saying that it should not be given to those who have been on the selection committee. Later he was awarded posthumously in 1992.

Nobody was given country's highest civilian award – Bharat Ratna during the year 1956, 1959, 1960, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1989, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017 and 2018

Padma Vibhushan — The **Padma Vibhushan** is the second highest civilian award in the Republic of India. It consists of a medal and a citation and is awarded by the President of India. It was established on 2 January 1954. It ranks behind the Bharat Ratna and comes before the Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. It is awarded to recognize exceptional and distinguished service to the nation in any field, including government service. The first recipients of this award were Satyendra Nath Bose, Nand Lal Bose, Zakir Hussain, Balasaheb Gangadhar Kher, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, V. K. Krishna Menon in the year 1954.

Padma Bhushan — The **Padma Bhushan** is the third highest civilian award in the Republic of India, after the Bharat Ratna and the Padma Vibhushan, but comes before the Padma Shri. The award was established on 2 January 1954 by the President of India. It is awarded to recognize distinguished service of a high order to the nation, in any field

Padma Shri — Padma Shri (also Padmashree) is the fourth highest civilian award in the Republic of India, after the Bharat Ratna, the Padma Vibhushan and the Padma Bhushan. It is awarded to citizens of India to recognize their distinguished contribution in various spheres of activity including the Arts, Education, Industry, Literature, Science, Sports, Medicine, Social Service and Public Affairs.

However it has also been awarded to some distinguished individuals who were not citizens of India and who did contribute in various ways to India.

500,000/- The money has been increased from Rs. 500,000 to Rs. 750,000. The award was instituted in the year 1991–92 to supply the lack of a supreme national accolade in the field of sports. The Khel Ratna was devised to be an overarching honour, conferred for outstanding sporting performance, whether by an individual or a team, *across all sporting disciplines* in a given year.

Arjuna Award — Recognizes outstanding achievement in National sports. The **Arjuna Awards** were instituted in 1961 by the government of India to recognize outstanding achievement in National sports. The award carries a cash prize of 500,000, a bronze statuette of Arjuna and a scroll. Over the years the scope of the award has been expanded and a large number of sportspersons who belonged to the pre-Arjun Award era were also included in the list. Further, the number of disciplines for which the award is given was increased to include indigenous games and the physically handicapped category. The Government has recently revised the scheme for the Arjun Award. As per the revised guidelines, to be eligible for the Award, a sportsperson should not only have had good performance consistently for the previous three years at the international level with excellence for the year for which the Award is recommended, but should also have shown qualities of leadership, sportsmanship and a sense of discipline. From the year 2001, the award is given only in disciplines falling under the following categories:

1. Olympic Games / Asian Games / Commonwealth Games / World Cup / World Championship Disciplines and Cricket
2. Indigenous Games
3. Sports for the Physically Challenged

Dronacharya award - an award presented by the government of India for excellence in sports coaching. The award comprises a bronze statuette of Dronacharya, a scroll of honor and a cash component of Rs.500,000. The award was instituted in 1985.

Dhyan Chand Award - India's highest award for lifetime achievement in sports and games. The award is named after the legendary Indian hockey player Dhyan Chand. The award was initiated in 2002. The award carries a cash prize of INR 5 lakh, a statuette, ceremonial dress and a scroll of honor.

Vir Chakra Valour awards

Param Vir Chakra — The **Param Vir Chakra (PVC)** is India's highest military decoration awarded for the highest degree of valour or self-sacrifice in the presence of the enemy. It can be, and often has been, awarded posthumously. The PVC was established on 26 January 1950 (the date of India becoming a republic), by the President of India, with effect from 15 August 1947 (the date of Indian independence). It can be awarded to officers or enlisted personnel from all branches of the Indian military. It is the second highest award of the government of

India after Bharat Ratna (amendment in the statute on 26 January 1980 resulted in this order of wearing). It replaced the former British colonial Victoria Cross (VC).

Maha Vir Chakra - The Maha Vir Chakra (MVC) is the second highest military decoration in India and is awarded for acts of conspicuous gallantry in the presence of the enemy, whether on land, at sea or in the air.

Vir Chakra - is an Indian gallantry award presented for acts of bravery in the battlefield. Award of the decoration carried with it the right to use Vr.C. as a post nominal abbreviation. It is third in precedence in the war time gallantry awards and comes after the Param Vir Chakra and Maha Vir Chakra.

Peacetime gallantry awards

Ashok Chakra Award - is an Indian military decoration awarded for valor, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the battlefield. It is the peace time equivalent of the Param Vir Chakra, and is awarded for the "most conspicuous bravery or some daring or pre-eminent valor or self-sacrifice" other than in the face of the enemy. The decoration may be awarded either to military or civilian personnel and may be awarded posthumously.

Kirti Chakra - The **Kirti Chakra** is an Indian military decoration awarded for valor, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the field of battle. It may be awarded to civilians as well as military personnel, including posthumous awards. It is the *peacetime equivalent* of the Maha Vir Chakra. It is second in order of precedence of peacetime gallantry awards; it comes after Ashoka Chakra and before Shaurya Chakra. Before 1967, the award was known as the *Ashoka Chakra, Class II*.

Shaurya Chakra - is an Indian military decoration awarded for valor, courageous action or self-sacrifice while not engaged in direct action with the enemy. It may be awarded to civilians as well as military personnel, sometimes posthumously. It is the peacetime equivalent of the Vir Chakra. It is generally awarded for Counter-Insurgency operations and actions against the enemy during peacetime.

It is third in order of precedence of peacetime gallantry awards and comes after the Ashoka Chakra and the Kirti Chakra. It precedes the Sena Medal. Before 1967, the award was known as the *Ashoka Chakra, Class III*.

Other National Awards

India Science Award The Government of India instituted this award in 2004. It is awarded to a noted scientist.

Vyas Samman The award is given to an outstanding Hindi Literary work, authored by an Indian. It is given by K.K. Birla Foundation.

Shanti Swarup These awards are given to Scientists and Engineers for their research and development work

Dada Saheb Phalke Instituted in 1970, the award is given to a person in Award recognition for his contribution to Indian Cinema.

Dewang Mehta Award The award instituted by department of information technology in memory of Mr. Dewang Mehta, former chief of NASSCOM.

GD Birla Award for Scientific Research

This award is given to an Indian scientist living and working in India, for the high calibre scientific research undertaken by him.

Kalinga Award Kalinga award was constituted by Mr. Biju Patnaik, the founder of the Kalinga Foundation Trust in Orissa in 1952.

The award is given for popularization of science by the United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

It is awarded biannually.

Nehru Award for International understanding

This award was instituted by the Government of India in honor of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who passed away in 1964.

The award is given annually for outstanding contribution to the promotion of friendship among the people of world. The award was instituted in 1965. Prize money for this award is Rs. 15,00,000 and a citation.

Saraswati Samman This award was constituted in the year 1992 by K.K. Birla foundation.

This award is given for the outstanding contribution to literature in any language include in Eight Schedule. Dr. Harivansh Rai Bachchan was the first recipient of this award. It carries a cash award of Rs. 3 lakhs.

Bharatiya Jnanpith Award This award was constituted in 1965 by literary organization in India. It is India's highest literary Award. This award is given for the outstanding contribution in India literature. Prize money is 2.5 lakh.

G. Sankara Kurup was the first recipient of the award.

Jamna Lal Bajaj Award This award is given for the constructive work in society, emphasis on the use of science and technology for rural development, upliftment of women and social welfare and for spreading the Gandhian values outside India.

National Film Awards These are the most prominent film award ceremony in India, and the country's oldest alongside the Filmfare Awards. Established in 1954, these have been administered by the Indian government's Directorate of Film Festivals since 1973. Every year a national panel appointed by the government selects the winning entry, followed by the inauguration of the National Film Festival, where the award-winning films are screened for the public.

Declared for films produced in the previous year across the country, they hold the distinction of awarding merit to the best of Indian cinema overall, as well as presenting awards for the best films in each region and language of the country.

Prominent International Awards:

Nobel prize This award was set up in 1900 under the Will of Alfred Bernhard Nobel. Alfred Nobel was an unmarried Swedish scientist and chemical engineer who discovered Nitroglycerine and its use in the manufacture of dynamite in 1866. This award was instituted in 1901 and is given annually to those persons who have made outstanding contributions in literature, physics, chemistry, medicine, peace and economics.

Booker prize Instituted in 1968, it is the highest literary award conferred annually by the Booker Company and the British Publisher Association.

Templeton Award Instituted in 1972. It is conferred by the Templeton foundation for progress in religion.

Magsaysay Award It was instituted in the year 1957. It is named after Ramon Magsaysay, the former President of Philippines, It is conferred for outstanding contribution in the field of public service, journalism, literature, community leadership and international understanding.

Pulitzer Prize This prize was instituted in 1970 and named after the U.S. Publisher Joseph Pulitzer. It is conferred annually in the United States for accomplishments in journalism, literature and music

Oscar Award This awards was instituted in 1929 and is conferred annually by the Academy of Motion Pictures in the United States.

- Mahboob Khan's Mother India was the first Indian film to be nominated in the best foreign film category in 1958.
- The first Indian to share the Oscar was Bhanu Athaiya for the film Gandhi.

- Satyajee Ray was the first Indian who was awarded Oscar for lifetime achievement in cinema in the 1992.

Whitley Award

It is often called the Green Oscar. It is the UK's top conservation prize. The Whitley Awards were established in 1994 by Edward Whitley and are designed to support passionate individuals who are committed to precipitating long-lasting conservation benefits.



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