

National Sports Awards

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

The **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna (RGKR)** is India's highest honour given for achievement in sports, given by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, government of India. The words 'Khel Ratna' literally mean 'sports gem' in Hindi. The award is named after the late Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India. It carries a medal, a scroll of honour and a substantial cash component.

The award was instituted in the year 1991–92 as a supreme national accolade in the field of sports. Predating this award, the Arjuna awards that have always been given to outstanding sportspersons in *each* of many sporting disciplines every year. 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.

The first recipient of this award was Vishwanathan Anand (Chess) in 1992, and the latest recipient of this award is Sania Mirza (Tennis) in 2015.



Dronacharya Award

The **Dronacharya Award** is an award presented by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, government of India for excellence in sports coaching. The award comprises a bronze statuette of the legendary Guru Dronacharya, a scroll of honour and a handsome cash component. The award was instituted in 1985.

As the best sportsperson award is named Arjuna Award, it is appropriate that the coaching award is named after Dronacharya, as he was the teacher of Arjuna. B.I. Fernandez (Boxing) is the first foreign coach to be awarded Dronacharya Award.



Arjuna Awards

The **Arjuna Awards** are given by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, government of India to recognize outstanding achievement in National sports. Instituted in 1961, the award carries a handsome cash prize and a bronze statuette of Arjuna and a scroll.

Over the years the scope of this award has been expanded to include a large number of sports persons who belonged to the pre-Arjun Award era. Further, the number of sporting disciplines for which this award is given has been increased to include various indigenous games as well as, sporting disciplines for the physically challenged.

In order to be eligible for this 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.

The recent recipients of the Arjuna Award are V. Diju (Badminton) and Anirban Lahiri (Golf) in 2014.



Dhyan Chand Award

The **Dhyan Chand Award** is India's highest award for lifetime achievement in sports and games, given by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. The award is named after the legendary Indian hockey player Dhyan Chand. The award was initiated in 2002. The award carries a substantial cash prize, a plaque and a scroll of honour.

In August 2014, 3 individuals were awarded the Dhyan Chand Award – Gurmail Singh (Hockey), K P Thakkar (Swimming – Diving) and Zeeshan Ali (Tennis).

