

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1937

ANSWERED ON:17.12.2013

CRITERIA FOR BHARAT RATNA

Chakravarty Smt. Bijoya;Meghwal Shri Arjun Ram ;Meinya Dr. Thokchom;Shivanagouda Shri Shivaramagouda

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the criteria laid down for awarding various civil awards i.e. Bharat Ratna and Padma Awards in the country;
- (b) whether there are reports of favouritism in selection of names of the awardees for the said awards;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (d) the mechanism put in place by the Government to make the selection process transparent;
- (e) the names of the Hon'ble Prime Ministers of the country who have been awarded Bharat Ratna so far; and
- (f) whether the Government has received any proposal to award Bharat Ratna to any other ex-prime ministers, politicians and football players of the country and if so, the response of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN)

(a) to (d): 'Bharat Ratna', the highest civilian award of the country, is awarded in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour. The recommendations for Bharat Ratna are made by the Prime Minister to President. No formal recommendations for this are necessary. No correspondence alleging favouritism regarding the award of Bharat Ratna has been received. However, correspondence suggesting withdrawal of the Bharat Ratna Award to Dr. CNR Rao and Sh. Sachin Tendulkar has been received.

The Padma Awards are awarded for 'exceptional and distinguished service'(Padma Vibhushan), for 'distinguished service of a high order (Padma Bhushan) and for 'distinguished service'(Padma Shri), in any field of activity, including service rendered by Government servants. While there is no rigid criteria for selection of Padma Awards,the Awards Committee looks for life time achievement while making a selection. It should not be merely excellence in a particular field, but the criteria has to be excellence plus. It is not a fact that a lot of reports are received about favouritism in selection of names of the awardees of the Padma Awards.

(e): The names of the Hon'ble Prime Ministers of the country who have been awarded Bharat Ratna, so far, are

- (i)Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru,
- (ii)Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri (Posthumous),
- (iii) Smt. Indira Gandhi,

- (iv)Shri Rajiv Gandhi(Posthumous), and
- (v)Shri Morarji Ranchhodji Desai.

(f): Correspondence suggesting the award of Bharat Ratna to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Late Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Late Shri Babu Jagjivan Ram and Dr. M. Karunanidhi has been received. No correspondence in favour of any football player of the country has been received. The suggestions received in this regard are put up for the Prime Minister's consideration.