

Seven Gujaratis to receive Padma accolades this year

Ratna Sundar Maharaj, VG Patel, Vishnu Pandya, Purshottam Upadhyaya, Dr Subroto Das, Dr Devendra Dayabhai Patel, and Genabhai Patel will receive the honour for distinguished service

Team DNA

Ahmedabad: The Centre on Wednesday announced Padma awards to citizens in recognition of their distinguished contribution in various spheres. This year the President of India has approved conferment of Padma awards to 89 persons. Seven from Gujarat have been selected for the awards.

Award: Padma Bhushan

Awardee: Ratna Sundar Maharaj

For: Spiritualism



Ratna Sundar Maharaj is a spiritual leader who has worked for the social upliftment of people and is the only one from Gujarat to be given a Padma

Bhushan in 2017.

Born in Depla near Palitana, the Maharaj is also the author of 304 books, all written in Gujarati. Like all Jain monks, Maharaj has travelled the length of breadth of the country and holds the record for the maximum books authored by an individual. His books have been translated into several Indian and foreign languages.

However, it is his lectures that Maharaj is most popularly known for. He is known for asking believers and listeners to develop a personality that is based on morality and spirituality. dna could not reach him for a comment.

Award: Padma Shri

Awardee: VG Patel

For: Literature & education



"I am happy on receiving this recognition as I have been nominated twice in the past," Patel, founder of city-based Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), said.

Talking further, he said, "Though I have been categorised under literature and education, my pioneering work has been in developing entrepreneurs."

Award: Padma Shri

Awardee: Dr Devendra Patel

For: Medicine



Considered a pioneer in cancer treatment, the 85-year-old oncologist is popular for setting up the MP Shah Cancer Hospital in Asarwa. "I started working on cancer treatment in 1966. While studying in the United Kingdom, I saw a lot of work happening with cancer care and decided to replicate the same in Ahmedabad. That is how I started the MP Shah Cancer Hospital," said Dr Patel.

Award: Padma Shri

Awardee: Vishnu Pandya

For: Literature & education - journalism



Noted journalist, columnist, historian, author and political analyst Vishnu Pandya is among the seven from the state to be awarded the Padma awards by the Centre. Pandya has been conferred the Padma Shri for his contribution to the field of literature and education, particularly in the field of journalism.

Award: Padma Shri

Awardee: Genabhai Patel

For: Agriculture



Genabhai Patel, a farmer of Sarkari Gulia village of Lakhani taluka in Banaskantha, is the local pioneer in producing pomegranates. Persons in the know of local topography say that soil here is sandy and as such not suitable for such fruits. In spite of this bottleneck, Genabhai took the risk, which turned out to be a success. Now, many farmers in the area follow his foot steps to reap rich dividends.

Award: Padma Shri, **Awardee:**

Dr Subroto Das, **For:** Medicine



In 1999, Dr Subroto Das and his wife Sushmita crashed their car into a tree by the Ahmedabad-Vadodara highway. Unfortunately for them, it was a rainy night and help came only after a seven-hour long wait. The accident resulted in Dr Das starting the Lifeline Foundation, which has a trained team that rushes to accident spots within an hour of the accident, also known as the golden hour.

Award: Padma Shri

Awardee: Purushottam Upadhyay

For: Art-Music



A powerhouse of music, Purushottam Upadhyay is known to be the 'Bhishma Pitamah' of Sugam Sangeet. Speaking on his accolade, Upadhyay said, "I received a call from Delhi that informed me of my selection." The 83-year-old, who has performed at a stunning over 10,000 shows in 17 years, cherishes the days when singer Lata Mangeshkar sang the first ever Gujarati Sugam Sangeet which he composed.