

**13– 05 – 2022**

**News:** Gallantry Awards

- Recently, President of India conferred 13 Shaurya Chakras, including six posthumous, to the personnel of Armed Forces during Defence Investiture Ceremony (Phase-1).

## **Gallantry Awards**

- Gallantry Awards have been **instituted by the Government of India to honour the acts of bravery and sacrifice of the officers/personnel of the Armed Forces, other lawfully constituted Forces and civilians.**
- These gallantry awards are announced **twice in a year - first on the occasion of the Republic Day and then on the occasion of the Independence Day.**

Gallantry Awards are classified into two Categories:

- **Gallantry in the Face of Enemy** (Param Vir Chakra (PVC) Mahavir Chakra (MVC) and Vir Chakra).
- **Gallantry Other than in the Face of Enemy** (Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra).

- Various level of bravery is awarded with these awards.
- All the gallantry awards may be awarded posthumously.
- Ministry of Defence invites recommendations twice in a year from the Armed Forces and Union Ministry of Home Affairs for gallantry awards.
- Recommendations are invited normally in the month of August for the awards to be announced on the occasion of the Republic Day and in the month of March for the awards to be announced on the occasion of the Independence Day.
- In respect of the Armed Forces, a case for the gallantry award is initiated by the Unit and if found fit the same is forwarded to respective Services HQrs duly recommended by Commanders in chain, immediately after the act of gallantry is performed.
- Recommendations in respect of civilian citizens (other than Defence personnel) are received from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). MHA calls for recommendations (in respect of civilians) from all State/UT Governments, Central Ministries/ Departments, Central Armed Police Forces and Railway Protection Force etc.
- Recommendations received directly from private individuals, including VIP references are not accepted.

- In any case, the **time limit for considering gallantry awards should not be beyond two calendar years** from the date on which the act of gallantry is performed.
- Recommendations received from the Armed Forces and MHA are **considered by the Central Honours & Awards Committee (CH&AC) comprising of Raksha Mantri, three Service Chiefs & Defence Secretary**. Home Secretary is also member for the cases recommended by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Thereafter, **recommendations of the CH&AC are submitted for approval of the Prime Minister and the President**.
- After approval of the President, **awards are announced on the occasion** of the Republic Day and Independence Day.

## **Wartime Highest Gallantry Awards**

### **Param Vir Chakra**

- Param Vir Chakra is **India's highest military decoration** awarded for displaying distinguished acts of valour during wartime whether on land, at sea or in the air.

## **Maha Vir Chakra**

- Maha Vir Chakra is the **second highest gallantry award** for acts of conspicuous gallantry in the presence of the enemy whether on land, at sea or in the air.

## **Vir Chakra**

- Vir Chakra is the country's **third-highest wartime gallantry award** after Param Vir Chakra and Maha Vir Chakra.

## **Peacetime Highest Gallantry Awards**

### **Ashoka Chakra**

- Ashoka Chakra is the **highest military award during peace time** for valour, courageous action or sacrifice.
- It is awarded for most conspicuous bravery or some act of daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice otherwise than in the face of the enemy.

### **Kirti Chakra**

- Kirti Chakra is the **second highest peacetime gallantry award** and is awarded for valour, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the field of battle.

## **Shaurya Chakra**

- Shaurya Chakra is awarded to the personnel of the armed forces for instances of extraordinary gallantry.

## **Other Awards**

### **Sena Medal**

- Sena Medal is awarded for acts of exceptional devotion to duty or courage in the Army.

### **Nao Sena Medal**

- Nao Sena Medal is awarded for individual acts of exceptional devotion to duty or courage in the Navy.

### **Vayu Sena Medal**

- Vayu Sena Medal is awarded for individual acts of exceptional devotion to duty or courage in the Air Force.

**News:** Finland leaders in favour of seeking NATO membership

- Finland's leaders on Thursday came out in favour of applying to join NATO, and Sweden could do the same within days.

## **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)**

- North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is an **intergovernmental military alliance between 30 North American and European Countries.**
- North Macedonia became the 30<sup>th</sup> member in February 2019.
- NATO is established by **Washington Treaty that was signed in 4<sup>th</sup> April 1949.**
- NATO constitutes a **system of collective defence** whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by an external party.
- Its headquarters is in **Brussels, Belgium.**
- There are two **official languages of NATO, English and French.**
- Recently US Senate passed the National Defense Authorisation Act that brings India at par with NATO allies for increasing defence cooperation.
- Major non-NATO allies of US are Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Tunisia. NATO is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes.

- If **diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military power to undertake crisis-management operations.** These are carried out under the collective defence clause of NATO's founding treaty – Article 5 of the Washington Treaty or under a United Nations mandate, alone or in cooperation with other countries and international organisations.
- A NATO-led mission, called **Resolute Support, was launched in 2015 to provide further training, advice and assistance for the Afghan security forces and institutions.**