

**14– 02 – 2024**

**News: Bharat Ratna**

- Recently, the government has announced that Veteran leader; Shri Lal Krishna Advani will be conferred with Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award of the nation.

## **Bharat Ratna**

- Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award of the country.
- It is awarded in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour.
- It is treated on a different footing from Padma Award. The recommendations for Bharat Ratna are made by the Prime Minister to the President of India.
- The number of Bharat Ratna Awards is restricted to a maximum of three in a particular year.

## **Padma Awards**

- The Padma Awards are announced annually on the Republic Day (26<sup>th</sup> January).
- Instituted in 1954, it is one of the highest civilian honours of India.

- The Padma Awards were briefly **suspended twice**, from **July 1977 to January 1980** and from **August 1992 to December 1995**. Some of the recipients have refused or returned their conferments.

## **Objective**

- The Award seeks to **recognize achievements in all fields of activities or disciplines where an element of public service is involved**.

The Awards are given in three categories:

- Padma Vibhushan (for exceptional and distinguished service),
- Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of higher-order) and
- Padma Shri (distinguished service).
- Padma Vibhushan is highest in the hierarchy of Padma Awards followed by Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

## **Disciplines**

- The Awards are given in **various disciplines/ fields of activities**, viz. - art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service etc.

- All persons without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex are eligible for these awards. However, Government servants including those working with PSUs, except doctors and scientists, are not eligible for these Awards.
- The award is normally not conferred posthumously. However, in highly deserving cases, the Government could consider giving an award posthumously.
- A higher category of Padma award can be conferred on a person only where a period of at least five years has elapsed since conferment of the earlier Padma award. However, in highly deserving cases, a relaxation can be made by the Awards Committee.

### **Selection Process**

- The Awards are conferred on the recommendations made by the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the Prime Minister every year.
- The Padma Awards Committee is headed by the Cabinet Secretary and includes Home Secretary, Secretary to the President and four to six eminent persons as members. The recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Prime Minister and the President of India for approval.
- The awards are presented by the President of India usually in the month of March/April every year.

- The **total number of awards** to be given in a year (excluding posthumous awards and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs) **should not be more than 120**.
- The award **does not amount to a title and cannot be used as a suffix or prefix** to the awardees' name.

### **Who nominates the awardees?**

- **Any citizen of India can nominate a potential recipient.**
- One can **even nominate one's own self**.
- **All nominations are to be done online** where a form is to be filled along with details of the person or the organization being nominated.
- An **800-word essay detailing the work done by the potential awardee** is also to be submitted for the nomination to be considered.