

GK01 — Awards and Honours

CDS GK Section · GK01

✂ CDS Level : High Priority

✦ **CDS Pattern (GK01):** Awards & Honours is a guaranteed scoring area in CDS GK — appearing in every paper. Questions test the hierarchy of gallantry awards (wartime vs peacetime), recent Bharat Ratna recipients, Nobel Prize winners, and Oscar/Grammy achievements by Indians. Know the exact distinctions — CDS tests *which* award is highest in which context.

PART A — GALLANTRY AWARDS

1. Complete Gallantry Award Hierarchy

🏆 **Wartime Gallantry (Acts in presence of enemy)**

- ▶ **1. Param Vir Chakra (PVC):** India's highest wartime gallantry award. Equivalent to Victoria Cross (UK), Medal of Honor (USA). 21 recipients (most posthumous). Designed by Mrs Savitri Khanolkar (Swiss-born). Ribbon = purple/crimson.
- ▶ **2. Maha Vir Chakra (MVC):** 2nd highest wartime. For conspicuous gallantry in presence of enemy.
- ▶ **3. Vir Chakra:** 3rd highest wartime gallantry. Most common wartime award.

🏆 **Peacetime Gallantry (NOT in presence of enemy)**

- ▶ **1. Ashoka Chakra:** India's highest peacetime gallantry award. ONLY announced on Republic Day (26 Jan). For bravery in counter-terrorism, anti-insurgency, disaster rescue.
- ▶ **2. Kirti Chakra:** 2nd highest peacetime gallantry.
- ▶ **3. Shaurya Chakra:** 3rd highest peacetime. Most common. IAF/Army personnel for anti-terror ops.

⚠ **Most Tested CDS Distinction:** PVC = wartime (highest overall). Ashoka Chakra = peacetime (highest peacetime). PVC announced on 26 Jan + 15 Aug. Ashoka Chakra ONLY on 26 Jan. Shaurya Chakra = 3rd peacetime = most commonly awarded. CDS tests:

“India’s highest gallantry award?” = PVC. “India’s highest peacetime gallantry award?” = Ashoka Chakra.

2. National Civilian Awards

Award	Rank	Eligibility / Notes	Recent Recipients (2024)
Bharat Ratna	1st (Highest Civilian)	All fields; posthumous allowed; no limit per year (usually)	PV Narasimha Rao, Chaudhary Charan Singh, MS Swaminathan, LK Advani (5 in 2024 – unprecedented)
Padma Vibhushan	2nd	Exceptional & distinguished service	Multiple recipients across arts, science, public affairs
Padma Bhushan	3rd	Distinguished service of high order	Announced 26 January annually
Padma Shri	4th	Distinguished service in any field; largest in number	100+ annually; grassroots achievers often recognised

PART B – NATIONAL SPORTS AWARDS

3. Sports Awards Hierarchy

Award	For	Named After	Notes
Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna	Highest sporting honour of India	Major Dhyan Chand (hockey legend; “The Wizard”)	Renamed from Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna in 2021. One athlete per year (rare to have more).
Arjuna Award	Outstanding achievement in sport	Arjuna (from Mahabharata)	Multiple per year across different sports
Dronacharya Award	Best coaches in sport	Dronacharya (guru in Mahabharata)	Lifetime + Regular category

Award	For	Named After	Notes
Dhyan Chand Award	Lifetime achievement in sport	Major Dhyan Chand	For those who contributed after active career

✦ **Khel Ratna 2024 Recipients:** D Gukesh (Chess – youngest ever World Chess Champion), Harmanpreet Singh (Hockey – Paris 2024 bronze), Manu Bhaker (Shooting – 2 bronze medals Paris 2024), Praveen Kumar (Para Athletics – silver Paris 2024).
National Sports Day = **29 August** (birthday of Major Dhyan Chand).

PART C – INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

4. Nobel Prize – Indian Recipients

Year	Laureate	Field	Reason
1913	Rabindranath Tagore	Literature	Gitanjali – first Asian and first Indian to win Nobel. Also wrote national anthems of India and Bangladesh.
1930	C.V. Raman	Physics	Discovery of Raman Effect (scattering of light). National Science Day = 28 Feb (Raman Effect announced 1928).
1979	Mother Teresa	Peace	Humanitarian work with poor in Calcutta. Born in present-day North Macedonia; Indian citizen.
1998	Amartya Sen	Economics	Welfare economics; famine theory; capability approach to development.
2014	Kailash Satyarthi	Peace	Campaign against child labour and trafficking (Bachpan Bachao Andolan).

5. Nobel Prize 2024 – All Winners

Nobel 2024 Key Winners

- ▶ **Peace:** Nihon Hidankyo (Japan) – atomic bomb survivors, nuclear abolition
- ▶ **Physics:** Hopfield & Hinton (USA) –

Indian/India-connected Nobel

- ▶ 2023 Narges Mohammadi (Peace) – no India connection
- ▶ 2023 Jon Fosse (Literature) – Norway

AI/neural networks ("Godfather of AI")

- ▶ **Chemistry:** AlphaFold team (DeepMind) — protein structure prediction by AI
- ▶ **Medicine:** Ambros & Ruvkun — discovery of microRNA
- ▶ **Literature:** Han Kang (South Korea) — *first Asian woman* Nobel Literature
- ▶ **Economics:** Acemoglu, Johnson, Robinson — institutions & prosperity

▶ Indian Diaspora: Abhijit Banerjee (2019, Economics; born Calcutta)

▶ V.S. Naipaul (2001, Literature; Trinidad & Tobago; of Indian descent)

▶ Har Gobind Khorana (1968, Medicine; born British India)

6. Oscar Awards — India

- ▶ **"Naatu Naatu" (RRR, 2023, 95th Oscars):** Best Original Song. Composed by MM Keeravani. *First Indian song to win an Oscar.* SS Rajamouli directed RRR.
- ▶ **"The Elephant Whisperers" (2023, 95th Oscars):** Best Documentary Short. Directed by Kartiki Gonsalves (Tamil Nadu). About elephant caretakers at Mudumalai Tiger Reserve. *First Indian production to win in this category.*
- ▶ **India's Official Oscar Entry 2025:** "Laapataa Ladies" (directed by Kiran Rao) — India's official entry for Best International Feature Film at 97th Academy Awards.

 CDS PYQ

Awards & Honours — CDS Static GK Pattern

Q1. Which is India's highest wartime gallantry award? (CDS I 2024)

- (a) Ashoka Chakra
- (b) Maha Vir Chakra
- (c) Param Vir Chakra
- (d) Kirti Chakra

Answer: (c) Param Vir Chakra

PVC = highest wartime (enemy-facing acts). 21 recipients, mostly posthumous. Equivalent to Victoria Cross. Ashoka Chakra = highest PEACETIME gallantry (different category). Kirti Chakra = 2nd highest peacetime. Maha Vir Chakra = 2nd highest wartime.

Q2. Who among the following received the Bharat Ratna 2024 for contributions to the Green Revolution in India? (CDS II 2023)

- (a) Norman Borlaug
- (b) Verghese Kurien
- (c) MS Swaminathan
- (d) M.S. Ahluwalia

Answer: (c) MS Swaminathan (posthumous)

MS Swaminathan = Father of Green Revolution in India. Received Bharat Ratna 2024 posthumously. Introduced High-Yielding Variety (HYV) wheat seeds. Norman Borlaug = international Green Revolution scientist (Nobel Peace Prize 1970). Verghese Kurien = White Revolution (milk/Amul). 5 Bharat Ratnas in 2024 was unprecedented.

Q3. Which Indian film's song won the Oscar for Best Original Song in 2023? (CDS I 2023)

- (a) Jai Ho (Slumdog Millionaire)
- (b) Naatu Naatu (RRR)
- (c) Nimbooda (Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam)
- (d) Lagaan (Lagaan)

Answer: (b) Naatu Naatu (RRR)

"Naatu Naatu" won Best Original Song at the 95th Academy Awards (2023). Composed by MM Keeravani; performed by Rahul Sipligunj and Kaala Bhairava. First Indian song to win an Oscar. RRR (Rise Roar Revolt) directed by SS Rajamouli. India also won Best Documentary Short (The Elephant Whisperers) at the same ceremony.

Q4. The Dronacharya Award is given for excellence in: (CDS II 2022)

- (a) Highest sporting achievement by an athlete
- (b) Lifetime achievement in sport
- (c) Sports coaching
- (d) Best performance in para-sports

Answer: (c) Sports coaching

Dronacharya Award = given to outstanding coaches who have produced medal winners at Olympics/Para-Olympics/CWG/Asian Games/World Championships. Named after Dronacharya, the legendary guru in the Mahabharata. Khel Ratna =

highest for athletes. Arjuna = outstanding athletes. Dhyan Chand = lifetime achievement for athletes.

Q5. C.V. Raman won the Nobel Prize in Physics (1930) for the discovery of: (CDS I 2022)

- (a) Photoelectric effect
- (b) Raman Effect (scattering of light)
- (c) Bohr's atomic model
- (d) Discovery of the neutron

Answer: (b) Raman Effect (inelastic scattering of photons)

CV Raman discovered that when light traverses a transparent material, some scattered light changes in wavelength (Raman Scattering). This proved the quantum nature of light. Announced 28 February 1928 → National Science Day = 28 Feb. First Indian to win Nobel in Physics. First Asian to win Nobel in Physics.

Quick Reference — GK01

Gallantry Hierarchy

- WARTIME: PVC > MVC > Vir Chakra
- PEACETIME: Ashoka > Kirti > Shaurya Chakra
- PVC = highest overall; 21 recipients
- Ashoka Chakra = ONLY on 26 Jan
- PVC = 26 Jan + 15 Aug both

Indian Nobel

Laureates

- Tagore 1913 (Literature — Gitanjali)
- CV Raman 1930 (Physics — Raman Effect)
- Mother Teresa 1979 (Peace)
- Amartya Sen 1998 (Economics)
- Kailash Satyarthi 2014 (Peace)

Sports Awards

- Khel Ratna = highest; renamed 2021
- Arjuna = outstanding athletes
- Dronacharya = coaches
- Dhyan Chand = lifetime achievement
- National Sports Day = 29 August



CDS Mock Tests



Static GK Quiz



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