

# Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in Sports and Games is officially known as the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award. It is India's highest sporting honour. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports confers it annually. The honoree(s) is/are recognized for their spectacular and most exceptional accomplishment in the sphere of the sport over a time period of 4 years internationally by a committee appointed by the Ministry. The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award will consist of a certificate, a medallion, and a cash payment of Rs. 25 lakh as of 2020. The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award, which was established in 1991–1992, was granted for a sportsperson's performance over a year. The Ministry amended the standards in February 2015 to take achievements over 4 years into account based on the recommendations made by the Khel Ratna award selection committee in 2014. Nominations for a particular year are taken until April 30, or the final business day of April, with a maximum of two athletes per athletic discipline.

The performances of a sportsperson at numerous international competitions, such as the Paralympic Games, Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, and Asian Games, are evaluated by a 12-member committee. Later, the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award committee presents its suggestions for final approval to the Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports. The honor, which was given from 1991 to 2021, bore Rajiv Gandhi's name, a former Indian prime minister.

Since August 6, 2021, the prize has been titled in honor of Major Dhyan Chand (1905–79), an Indian hockey player who is recognized as one of the game's all-time greats and amassed more than 1,000 goals during a career that lasted more than 20 years from 1926 to 1948.

Chess Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand was the first winner of the honor, recognized for his efforts in 1991–1992. Shooter Abhinav Bindra, who was 18 at the time, received the honor in 2001. There have been a few exceptions to the rule that only one sportsperson can receive the prize each year (1993-1994, 2002, 2009, 2012, and 2016-2021).

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award winners list includes the names of the outstanding players from the following fifteen sports as of 2021: Athletics, Billiards, Badminton, Boxing, Cricket, Chess, Gymnastics, Field hockey, Para Athletics, Para Shooting, Para-Badminton, Snooker, Shooting, Tennis, Table Tennis, Weightlifting, Wrestling, and Yacht racing. There have also been 57 recipients from the Paralympics in each of these sports.

## Eligibility for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

The eligibility criteria for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award have been listed below;

- Incredible performance throughout the course of the last four years in international competitions that are similar to the Olympics, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, World Games, Championships, and World Cup.
- The accomplishments of the athletes in these events and other competitions up until the end of the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, or Asian Games may be taken into consideration during the years when these competitions are held.

- The sportspersons against whom the inquiry is ongoing/pending for the use of banned substances and drugs are not eligible to be part of the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award winners list.

## Objectives of Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award is one of the biggest sporting awards in the country. It was introduced for the following reasons:

- The award's purpose is to honour the athlete who has put on the most stunning and excellent performance in their sport.
- Consideration is given to the achievements over the 4 years prior to the year the prize is to be granted.
- Achievements of athletes up until the completion of the Olympic, Commonwealth, and Asian Games are also taken into consideration during the years in which these events are contested.

## Selection Process for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

All nominations for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award are forwarded to the National Anti-Doping Agency and SAI, who will check them against the purported accomplishments and doping certification, respectively. Any athlete who is being fined or under investigation for using drugs or compounds that have been prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency is ineligible for the Khel Ratna award prize.

- The nominations are verified and validated by a committee made up of the Joint Secretary, the Secretary, the Director/Deputy Secretary of the Department of Sports, and the Executive Director/Director (TEAMS) of SAI.
- The government-appointed selection committee for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award is presented with legitimate nominations. This 12-member committee is made up of a Chairperson chosen by the Ministry, three sports journalists, experts, and commentators, four Olympians or previous Khel Ratna or Arjuna Award winners, one parasports-related athlete, expert, or administrator, one sports manager, the Director General of SAI, and the Joint Secretary of the Department of Sports.
- The committee may not have more than one athlete from a single discipline. The award was granted for a sportsperson's performance during 12 months when it was first established in 1991-1992.
- The Ministry updated the parameters for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award winners in February 2015 to take performance over a 4 year period into consideration based on the recommendations made by the 2014 award selection committee, which was led by Kapil Dev.
- Medals gained at international competitions, including the Asian Games, the Commonwealth Games, and the Winter and Summer Paralympic and Olympic Games, are given 80% of the value.
- The nature and level of the events are given the remainder 20% of the value. The achievement of a sportsperson is taken into account for any other sports like cricket or indigenous games that are not part of the Olympic, Asian, or Commonwealth Games. The athlete who earns the most points receives 80 points.
- The remaining athletes receive grades based on their maximum point total. For team competitions, points are awarded based on the team's strength.

## Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award Nominations

The procedure for the nominations of the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award is as follows:

- The Sports Authority of India (SAI), the Indian Olympic Association, the Sports Promotion, and Control Boards, the state and UTs governments, and all government-recognized national sports federations submit nominees for the Major Dhyan Chand award, with a maximum of two qualified athletes per sports discipline.
- In the context of cricket, the nominations come from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), and SAI is empowered to make the nominations on account of all the National Sports Federations that have been suspended or denied recognition.
- The past prize winners of the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award may also suggest one athlete for the sport for which they were recognized. In meritorious situations in which no recommendations have been submitted from the nominating agencies, the Government may nominate up to two athletes.
- The deadline for submissions for a given year is April 30, which is the last working day of April.

## Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award 2022 Winners List

Check the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award winners list of the last few years starting from 1991 below. It will be updated when the new list will be released for the current year.

Name of the Sportsperson	Discipline
Neeraj Chopra	Athletics
Ravi Kumar	Wrestling
Sreejesh P.R	Hockey
Lovlina Borgohain	Boxing
Avani Lekhara	Para Shooting
Pramod Bhagat	Para Badminton
Sumit Antil	Para Athletics
Manish Narwal	Para Shooting
Krishna Nagar	Para Badminton

Mithali Raj	Cricket
Manpreet Singh	Hockey
Sunil Chhetri	Football

### Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award Winners List (1992-2020)

List of Khel Ratna Award Winners		
Name	Sport	Years
Viswanathan Anand	Chess	1991–1992
Geet Sethi	Billiards	1992–1993
Homi Motivala	Yachting (Team event)	1993–1994
Pushpendra Kumar Garg	Yachting (Team event)	1993–1994
Karnam Malleswari	Weightlifting	1994–1995
Nameirakpam Kunjarani	Weightlifting	1995–1996
Leander Paes	Tennis	1996–1997
Sachin Tendulkar	Cricket	1997–1998
Jyotirmoyee Sikdar	Athletics	1998–1999
Dhanraj Pillay	Hockey	1999–2000
Pullela Gopichand	Badminton	2000–2001
Abhinav Bindra	Shooting	2001
K. M. Beenamol	Athletics	2002
Anjali Bhagwat	Shooting	2002
Anju Bobby George	Athletics	2003
Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore	Shooting	2004
Pankaj Advani	Billiards and Snooker	2005
Manavjit Singh Sandhu	Shooting	2006
Mahendra Singh Dhoni	Cricket	2007
No award		2008
Mary Kom	Boxing	2009

Vijender Singh	Boxing	
Sushil Kumar	Freestyle wrestling	
Saina Nehwal	Badminton	2010
Gagan Narang	Shooting	2011
Vijay Kumar	Shooting	2012
Yogeshwar Dutt	Freestyle wrestling	
Ronjan Sodhi	Shooting	2013
No award		2014
Sania Mirza	Tennis	2015
P. V. Sindhu	Badminton	2016
Dipa Karmakar	Gymnastics	
Jitu Rai	Shooting	
Sakshi Malik	Freestyle wrestling	
Devendra Jhajharia	Paralympic javelin	2017
Sardara Singh	Hockey	
Saikhom Mirabai Chanu	Weightlifting	2018
Virat Kohli	Cricket	
Deepa Malik	Paralympic (shot put, javelin, others)	2019
Bajrang Punia	Freestyle wrestling	
Rohit Sharma	Cricket	2020
Mariyappan Thangavelu	Paralympic high jump	
Manika Batra	Table tennis	
Vinesh Phogat	Freestyle wrestling	
Rani Rampal	Hockey	