

THE V RAMACHANDRAN AWARDS FOR
**EXCELLENCE IN URBAN
DECENTRALISATION**

IN RECOGNITION OF GROUND-BREAKING WORK IN
DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA'S CITIES AND TOWNS

— INAUGURAL EDITION : 2016 —



JANAAGRAHA CENTRE FOR CITIZENSHIP & DEMOCRACY

BACKGROUND

Mr. V Ramachandran (1931-2015) was a distinguished member of the Indian Administrative Service and one of India's finest civil servants. He received the Padma Bhushan for meritorious civil service in 2008. After a distinguished career in Delhi and in his home state, Kerala, he retired as the Chief Secretary to the Government of Kerala in 1989.

Mr Ramachandran was one of India's most eminent advocates of decentralisation to local bodies, and played a seminal role as a Member of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission in pushing the envelope on administrative reforms in India, and especially on decentralisation to local bodies. He was also a Member of the Governing Board of Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy.

MISSION STATEMENT

This year will be the twenty fifth year since the Constitution (Seventy fourth) Amendment Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha. Decentralisation continues to be a crucial governance reform agenda in India. This is more so in the urban context given how Panchayati Raj has marched far ahead of Nagara Raj, and the rapid urbanisation that India is witnessing, with 50% of India's population expected to be in urban areas by 2050.

These Awards in the name of Mr V Ramachandran, a doyen of decentralisation, is being instituted in recognition of ground-breaking work in decentralisation in the urban context by both individuals and institutions, within and outside of government, and across levels of government.

The Awards seek to recognise outstanding work that either enables decentralisation in cities through laws, policies and institutions or operationalizes decentralisation in cities through execution and implementation. Rather than reward past achievements, it seeks to identify and honour present accomplishments that germinate far-reaching impact.

AWARDS NOMINATIONS

The Awards shall be called The V Ramachandran Awards for Excellence in Urban Decentralisation. They will be presented in two categories. There will be a National Award in the “Enabler” category and 4 Awards in the “Implementer” category. Depending on the number and nature of nominations received, an additional National Award in the “Implementer” category may be considered.

States will be classified into four categories based on degree of urbanisation and decentralisation and the 4 implementer Awards shall comprise one from each of these four categories of states. The basis for categorisation of states shall be decided by the Jury.

Nominations shall be invited for the Awards through notifications in leading national and regional dailies and through other channels of communication.

HIGH-LEVEL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

GENERAL

- Any individual citizen of India who has attained a minimum age of eighteen years shall be eligible to apply
- Any institution that is registered under applicable laws in India, except a political party or its affiliates, shall also be eligible to apply
- Nominations shall be accepted in combinations i.e. single application from one or more individuals or institutions, but not exceeding three nominees in total per application
- The decision of the Awards Jury shall be binding in all cases
- Detailed guidelines for applications and nominations shall be published in due course.

ENABLER

- Applicants shall be individuals or institutions that have contributed to the drafting, notification or legislation of laws, policies, institutional mechanisms or other elements of an enabling ecosystem that has tangibly fostered urban decentralisation.

IMPLEMENTER

- Applicants shall be individuals or institutions who have directly implemented or caused to be implemented laws or policies or schemes or other practices that have furthered urban decentralisation.

AWARDS JURY

An Awards Jury will be constituted for putting in place qualifying criteria for applications, ascertaining the four categories of states, laying down different criteria or standards for the four categories of states, outlining process for evaluation of applications and evaluating them, and for selecting the winners.

MEMBERS OF THE JURY:

1. Amitabh Kant IAS, *CEO, NITI Aayog*
2. Ashutosh Varshney, *Professor, Brown University and eminent political scientist, author*
3. K T Rama Rao, *Hon'ble Minister, IT & Industries, MA & UD, Telangana*
4. Niranjana Rajadhyaksha, *Managing Editor, Mint and Trustee, Takshashila Institution*
5. Padma Ramachandran IAS (retd.), *Former Chief Secretary, Kerala*
6. S K Das IAS (retd.), *Member, Governing Board, Janaagraha*

ABOUT MR. V RAMACHANDRAN



V. Ramachandran was born in Tamil Nadu on 21 March 1931 and obtained his master's degree in Arts (MA) and Sciences (MSc) from the University of Madras before securing a master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard University. He entered the Indian Administrative Service in 1954 to start a 35-year-long civil service which lasted till 1989, during which time he held several positions of note in the central and state administrations. After the initial postings, he served as a district collector, Finance Secretary and the chairman of such public sector undertakings as Kerala state Electricity Board, Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation, prior to his posting as the Chief Secretary of the state, a post he held till his retirement in 1989. In between, he also had two stints outside Kerala cadre; the first as a Joint Secretary at the Prime Minister's secretariat during the tenures of Indira Gandhi and Morarji Desai from 1972 to 1978, with the responsibility of science and technology and economic affairs and the second as the vice-chairman of the United Nations Committee on Right to Development from 1980 to 1984.

After his retirement from civil service, Ramachandran was again called to government service in 1991 as the Advisor to the Governor of Tamil Nadu under President's rule. Thereafter the Government of Kerala invited him to accept the position of the vice-chairman of Kerala State Planning Board, a post holding the rank of a cabinet minister; he had earlier served the Board as a member during his civil service years. He held the post for two non-concurrent five year terms. It was during this period, he drafted a report on democratic decentralisation which was reported to have earned him the moniker, father of democratic decentralisation in India. He chaired an Expert Group on Participatory Planning which deliberated on the concept of Panchayati Raj and proposed measures which were later taken up by the state as well as other regions in India. While serving as the vice-chair of the Planning Board during his first term, he also served as the director of Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (1992–1996) and as a member of its Task Force on Panchayati Raj.

Ramachandran was associated with several UN agencies which included United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Economic and Social Council and United Nations Development Programme. He was a member of the National Dairy Development Board and the Governing Board of Institute of Rural Management Anand and sat in the Central Water Commission and the second Administrative Reforms Commission of the Government of India, the last of which he chaired for a while when the Commission Chairman Veerappa Moily resigned from the post in 2009. He was a member of the governing board of the Centre for Development Studies and Sree Uthradam Thirunal Institute of Culture and served as the president of the Regional Cancer Association, Thiruvananthapuram and as the chairman of the Centre for Management Development, Thiruvananthapuram.

Ramachandran was a recipient of the third highest Indian civilian honor of the Padma Bhushan which he received in 2008. He was married to Padma Ramachandran, one of the first woman Indian Administrative Service officers and the first woman Chief Secretary of Kerala. Towards the later days of his life, the couple resided in Bengaluru and it was here, he died on 1 December 2015.

ABOUT JANA GROUP AND JANAAGRAHA

Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, a Bangalore based non-profit having the objective of transforming quality of life in India's cities and towns, is among India's best-known organisations working on urban transformation.

Janaagraha was founded in December 2001 as a platform for citizen participation in cities. Today, it works with citizens on catalysing active citizenship in neighbourhoods and with governments to institute reforms to city-systems.

Janaagraha is part of the Jana Group, and was co-Founded by Ramesh Ramanathan and Swati Ramanathan. Other entities in the group include:

- Janalakshmi, India's largest urban micro finance company (which has recently obtained a small finance bank licence) serving over 3 million households across India
- Janaadhar, an urban affordable housing company, and
- Jana Urban Space Foundation, a non-profit focussed on spatial planning and design, both policy and practice



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