

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

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

— 2019-2020 —



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. He also 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**

More than two decades have passed since the enactment of the 74th Constitution Amendment Act, but 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, are being instituted in recognition of ground-breaking work in decentralisation in the urban context by State Governments, Municipalities (all categories of Urban Local Bodies), Civic Agencies, State Election Commissions and State Finance Commissions. 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**

The Awards shall be called 'The V Ramachandran Awards for Excellence in Urban Decentralisation'. They will be awarded in five categories – Best State, Best Municipality, Best Civic Agency, Best State Election Commission and Best State Finance Commission.

One winner and two runners-up will be awarded under each category.

The application window will be open from 1st November, 2018 to 30th April, 2019. Applications can be submitted online at - <http://www.janaagraha.org/vramachandranawards>

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

### **GENERAL**

1. Any State Government, Municipality (all categories of Urban Local Bodies), Civic Agency that provides services in urban areas, State Election Commissions and State Finance Commissions in India are eligible to apply.
2. The Application should provide evidence of ground breaking work in decentralisation in the urban context. It could cover areas such as decentralised planning, fiscal decentralisation, functional devolution, administrative devolution and practices, community participation or any other initiative that has furthered urban decentralisation.
3. Applications should be made only for initiatives undertaken post December 2010.
4. Applications submitted during V Ramachandran Awards inaugural edition are not eligible to apply for this edition.
5. The decision of the awards jury shall be binding.

## CRITERIA BY AWARD CATEGORIES

Award Category	Eligibility	Area of Work
Best State	Initiatives by State Government through departments such as Local Self Government / Urban Development / Directorate of Municipal Administration/ Finance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Enactment of laws, drafting of policies, setting up of institutional mechanisms to successfully foster urban decentralisation in the city / state.</li> <li>✔ Implementation of a policy / programme / scheme to successfully foster urban decentralisation in the city / state.</li> </ul>
Best Municipality	Initiatives by Urban Local Bodies (Municipal Corporation, Municipalities and Town Panchayats).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Drafting of policies, setting up of institutional mechanisms to successfully foster urban decentralisation in the city.</li> <li>✔ Implementation or facilitated implementation of initiatives (laws, policies, schemes, programmes) that have furthered urban decentralisation in the city.</li> </ul>
Best Civic Agency	Initiatives by Development Authority / Metro Rail Corporation/ Water Supply Board / any city civic agency excluding Urban Local Bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Implementation of project / scheme through demonstrable inter-agency / government coordination and decentralisation in practice.</li> </ul>
Best State Election Commission	Initiatives by State Election Commissions in India.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Drafting of policies and setting up of institutional mechanisms and processes and implementing such initiatives to successfully conduct elections to the Municipal Bodies such as improving voter participation, accuracy of electoral rolls, promoting candidate disclosures and using technology to improve election process management.</li> </ul>
Best State Finance Commission	Initiatives by State Finance commissions in India.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Setting up of institutional mechanisms to successfully foster urban decentralisation in the state. Initiatives could typically include steps that help improve financial management and transparency in Municipalities and role in improving decentralised governance in India.</li> </ul>

## AWARDS JURY



### **Amitabh Kant, IAS**

*CEO, NITI Aayog*

Mr Kant earlier served as Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion. He was also the Chairman of the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation and the National Productivity Council.



### **Arvind Bellad**

*Hon'ble Member of Legislative Assembly, Karnataka and member of Bhartiya Janata Party*

Mr Bellad is an MLA representing the Hubli-Dharwad West constituency. He was elected from Hubli-Dharwad West in May, 2013.



### **Ashutosh Varshney**

*Professor, Brown University and Eminent Political Scientist, Author*

Prof. Varshney is the Sol Goldman Professor of International Studies and the Social Sciences and Professor of Political Science at Brown University. He was the 2008 winner of the Guggenheim fellowship and the Carnegie Scholar award.



### **Niranjan Rajadhyaksha**

*Research Director and Senior Fellow, IDFC Institute*

Dr Rajadhyaksha is a recipient of the Society of Publishers in Asia Awards for excellence in opinion writing and the Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism.



### **Priyank M Kharge**

*Hon'ble Member of Legislative Assembly, Karnataka and Ex-Minister, Social Welfare Department, Govt. of Karnataka*

Mr Kharge, represents the Chittapur assembly constituency in Karnataka.



### **S K Das, IAS (retd.)**

*(Chair of the Jury)*  
*Former Secretary, Govt. of India*

Mr Das is a Member of the Governing Board of Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy. He retired from the IAS as Secretary to the Government of India.



### **Sanjeev Chopra, IAS (West Bengal 1985)**

*Director and Chairperson, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)*

Dr. Chopra is currently the Director of LBSNAA. He was also the Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of West Bengal, in charge of Industry, Commerce and Enterprises Department.



### **Yamini Aiyar**

*President and Chief Executive, Centre for Policy Research (CPR)*

Ms Yamini founded the Accountability Initiative at CPR in 2008, which pioneered a new approach to tracking public expenditures for social policy programmes. Her research on social accountability, elementary education, decentralisation and administrative reforms has received both academic and popular recognition.

## ROLL OF HONOUR 2016-17



**WINNER**

### **Madhya Pradesh**

Capacity Development of Urban Local Bodies through Cadre Reforms



**WINNER**

### **Odisha**

Creation of Municipal Cadres



**WINNER**

### **Hyderabad**

Decentralisation through Constitution of Area Sabhas



**WINNER**

### **Rajasthan**

Implementing Accounting & Audit Reforms in Urban Local Bodies



**WINNER**

### **Delhi**

School Management Committees



**WINNER**

### **Ambikapur**

Swachh Ambikapur Mission



**Honourable Mention**

### **Jharkhand**

Decentralisation through Constitution of Ward Committees and Sub-Committees



**Honourable Mention**

### **14th Finance Commission**

Recommendations on Fiscal Decentralisation to Urban Local Bodies



**Honourable Mention**

### **Pune**

Participatory Budgeting



**Honourable Mention**

### **Uttar Pradesh**

E-nagarsewa, Web Based Application for Citizen Services

## ABOUT MR V RAMACHANDRAN



V Ramachandran was born in Tamil Nadu on 21 March 1931. He 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 posting, he served as a District Collector, Finance Secretary and the Chairman of public sector undertakings such 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 was also part of 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, 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 that, he died on 1 December 2015.

## ABOUT JANA GROUP AND JANAAGRAHA

Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (Janaagraha) is a Bengaluru based not-for-profit institution that is a part of the Jana Group. Janaagraha's mission is to transform quality of life in India's cities and towns. It defines quality of life as comprising quality of infrastructure and services and quality of citizenship. To achieve its mission, Janaagraha works with citizens to catalyse active citizenship in city neighbourhoods and with governments to institute reforms to City-Systems.

Jana Group was co-founded by Ramesh Ramanathan and Swati Ramanathan. Other entities in the group include:

- Jana Small Finance Bank, erstwhile Janalakshmi Financial Services which was established in 2008, went on to become the largest Micro Finance Institution (MFI) in India, and was recognized globally as one of the world's innovative financial institutions working on the problem of financial inclusion.
- Janaadhar, an urban affordable housing company, and
- Jana Urban Space, a Professional Services Social Enterprise (PSSE), delivering transformational, world-class work on the spatial dimension of India's cities.



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