

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India**

Under an initiative by Government led by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, for first time Padma Awardees visit National War Memorial in New Delhi

March 22, 2022

The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind conferred two Padma Vibhushan, eight Padma Bhushan and 54 Padma Shri Awards for the year 2022, at the Civil Investiture Ceremony-I held at Rashtrapati Bhavan yesterday. The Civil Investiture Ceremony –II is scheduled to be held on March 28.

Under an initiative by the Government led by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi for the first time Padma Awardees who were honoured yesterday, were conducted on a visit to the National War Memorial today. The awardees went around the memorial and were moved to see the names of the personnel of the Defence Forces who over the years have made the supreme sacrifice and laid down their lives to protect the nation's borders. The awardees appreciated the initiative of the government to organize the visit and its efforts to popularize the memorial as a place for people and children to visit in the national capital. The awardees felt that a visit to the memorial will help in inculcating the values of patriotism, devotion to duty, courage and sacrifice and instill the feeling of nationalism.

The National War Memorial (NWM) was dedicated to the Nation by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on February 25, 2019. It stands testimony to the sacrifices made by the gallant soldiers since Independence. The monument houses the eternal flame which exemplifies the supreme sacrifice made by a soldier in the line of duty thus making him immortal. Since its inauguration, all homage ceremonies are conducted only at the NWM, including those on National Days. Every evening, Next-of-Kin (NoK) ceremony is held during which NoK of a fallen hero lays wreath at the Memorial, remembering the supreme sacrifice made by the soldier. Dignitaries from home and abroad visit the NWM as part of their schedule and pay homage to the country's brave hearts.

The Padma awardees who were conferred the awards yesterday reflect the changing profiles of the awardees, which is the result of a conscious decision taken by the Government to transform the entire process. The emphasis is on recognizing people who are giving selfless service to society. The use of technology and introduction of online nomination has made the process simple and accessible to the people at large and a record number of over 4.80 lakh nominations were received for the Padma Awards, 2022. The self-nomination, online nomination, selection of large number of unsung heroes and transparent selection process has transformed the Padma Awards into the "People's Padma".

To celebrate the achievement of the awardees, the Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah interacted with the awardees and their families yesterday at a programme in New Delhi, after the investiture ceremony. The interaction was followed by a dinner, hosted by the Union Home Minister in honour of the Padma Awardees.

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