

LAKHIMI BARUAH

Mahila ki Lakshmi Ma

“**Social Worker** from Jorhat who established Assam's first **Women-run Cooperative Bank**”

- Set up **Assam's 1st women run Co-operative Bank - Konoklota Mahila** Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd
- Witnessed **illiterate women** getting turned away from the Bank where she worked, which **inspired** her to start her initiative
- **Struggled** for **8 years** to turn idea into a reality – after numerous **rejections**, before several **housewives came forward** to buy shares with their hard earned money
- Starting with 1 branch in 2002, expanded to **4 branches** handling **34,000 accounts** - aiming to open at least 1 branch in each of Assam's 33 districts
- Provided loans worth crores to thousands at **low interest** rate, with a high **recovery** rate - **70%** of her customers are **illiterate** & **80%** from **deprived** backgrounds



Padma Shri | Social Work (Women) | Assam | 71 Yrs

SUJIT CHATTOPADHYAY

Master Moshai

"77 yr **Village School** Teacher from Bardhaman - working for decades to spread education, especially amongst **tribals**"



- **Retired** school teacher, who since retirement has devoted his life to providing quality **education** to **tribal** students of **Ausgram** at a nominal fee of Rs 2
- Set up his school, **Sadai Fakirer Pathshala** (*eternal fakir's school*) to make education **accessible** in an area where proper **schooling** facilities are **unavailable**
- **80%** of his students are **girls** belonging to lower middle-class families
- Led campaigns on **socio-environmental issues** and raised funds for thalassemia patients for five years in a row



Padma Shri | Literature & Education (*Education*) | West Bengal | 77 Yrs

TSULTRIM CHONJOR

Zanskar's Selfless Sevak

"Selfless hero who single handedly constructed 38-km road - connecting Ramjak to Kargyak village in remote Zanskar region of Kargil"

- Retired state government employee from **Stongde** village in **Zanzkar**
- Constructed the road from **Ramjak**, an inhabited area to **Kargyak** village, the first properly inhabited village – an area neglected for decades by the administration
- Spent over Rs 50 lakhs from his **own pocket** after dipping into **life savings** and also selling his **ancestral property**
- Rented a **JCB machine** and 5 donkeys to build the road
- Constructing the road for over a **decade** at an average **altitude** of 11,500 feet also **deteriorated** his **health**

Padma Shri | Social Work (Service) | Ladakh | 76 Yrs



NARAYAN DEBNATH

Handa Bhona er Dada Debnath

“95 yr old Veteran **Cartoonist** from **Bengal** - most popular for his comic strips **Handa Bhonda**”

- **Flagbearer** of **Bengali pop** culture for over **6 decades**
- While his works have mainly been aimed at **children**, there has always been a note of **social** and **nationalistic idealism** behind his characters
- Apart from publishing comic artwork, he has also published in an array of **genres** including **detective**, **adventure** and **horror** in Bengali literature
- His characters '**Bantul** the Great', 'Nonte Fonte', '**Handa** Bhonda,' are characters that have permeated down **generations** and have remained favourite among children even decades later
- A familiar name in all Bengal's households, children there have grown up reading his comics



Padma Shri | Art (Cartoon Art) | West Bengal | 95 Yrs

DULARI DEVI

Madhubani ki Dulari

“Acclaimed **self-made Maithili** Painter from Madhubani - rose from being a **Dai** against all adversity”



- Despite coming from **fisherman** community usually not involved in the art-form, **picked it up** from her **employer** Karpoori Devi (an accomplished painter) to emerge as a nationally recognized artist today
- Overcame multiple adversities, from being **abandoned** by her **husband** at the age of 16, to losing her child, and working as a **housemaid** for **16 years** at a meagre pay
- Having faced harsh challenges, she spreads awareness on issues like **child marriage**, AIDS, foeticide through her paintings
- Made **10,000 paintings**, displayed in over 50 exhibitions
- **Trained** more than **1,000 students** through bodies like Mithila Art Institute and Seva Mithila Sansthan



Padma Shri | Art (Painting - Folk) | Bihar | 52 Yrs

PRAKASH KAUR

Mamata ki Prakashini

“**Social Worker** from Jalandhar taking care of **abandoned girls** for 3 decades - after being abandoned as a child”



- Started **Unique Home** for girls, through which she has rescued and rehabilitated **60 baby girls abandoned** by their families at the time of birth, over last **3 decades**
- Her own childhood of **abandonment** inspired her to dedicate her life to the cause of **protecting unwanted**, abandoned and orphaned **girls**
- Devoted to provide them a life worth looking forward to, when their own parents wished them death
- Cares for the girls like her own by providing for everything from education to marriage
- Planning to start a home for mentally challenged children

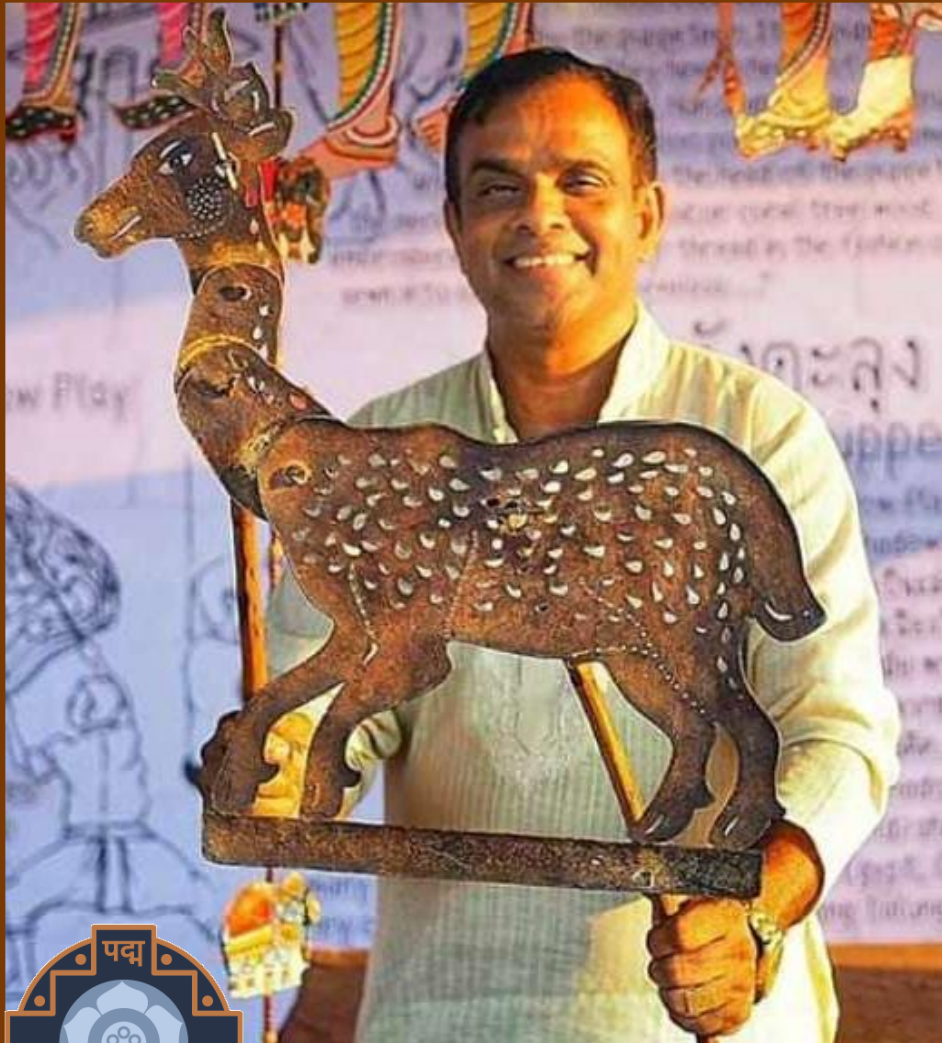


Padma Shri | Social Work (*Children*) | Punjab | 60 Yrs

K K RAMACHANDRA PULAVAR

Star of the Shadows

“11th Generation **Shadow Puppeteer** who has performed in 45+ countries on Indian culture and mythologies”



- From the sole family propagating the art, he is **reviving** and recreating age-old **Tolpavakoothu shadow puppetry**
- The original Tolpavakoothu performance lasts for **10 hours**, from dusk to dawn and is performed for **21 days** at temple festival in Koonathara, Shornur
- He took this art form **outside of temple premises** – incorporated ancient techniques in **contemporary** forms and performed in more than **45 countries**
- Apart from performing mythological stories of **Ramayana** and **Puranas** in over **40 temples**, also performed shows describing Mahatma **Gandhi's freedom** struggle and raised **awareness** on topics like women empowerment, road safety etc



Padma Shri | Art (Puppetry) | Kerala | 60 Yrs

BIRUBALA RABHA

Biru Baido



“Decades-old crusader against **Witch-hunting** from Goalpara - working across North East, at risk to her own life”

- Tribal lady who overcame being **accused of witchcraft** herself, to fight relentlessly and fearlessly against this social evil
- Initiated **Mission Birubala**, rescuing more than 50 women termed **witches**
- Faced tremendous opposition including **death threats** through sheer will and courage – inspiring over **500 volunteers**
- Instrumental in passing of **Prevention and Protection from Witch Hunting Act, 2015**, by the Government of **Assam**
- **Dropped out** of school after **Class 5** and was **married off early**
- Witch-hunting is a form of superstition wherein women are blamed for unfortunate occurrences and targeted by fellow villagers, at times even being killed



Padma Shri | Social Work (*Women*) | Assam | 61 Yrs

DHANANJAY DIWAKAR SAGDEO

Wayanad Vanvasi ke Vivekananda

“Hematologist dedicated to the **healthcare** and **empowerment** of **Tribals** for 4 decades

- Treated tribals in **Wayanad** since early 1970s for 4 decades - **First** to **detect** Sickle Cell Anemia in the community
- Set up **Hospital** treating more than 1 Lakh patients yearly (75% tribals), and **Mobile Medical unit** reaching remote areas
- Founded '**Swami Vivekananda Medical Mission**' with a 5 point holistic program for **Tribals** - **Shikshan** (education), **Swasthya** (healthcare), **Sanskar** (grooming), **Swavalamban** (self-reliance), **Samajik** (social work)
- What started as a small initiative has now blossomed into an umbrella of initiatives - a more importantly a place of **trust**
- Originally a native of Nagpur, made Wayanad his home in 1970s – serving selflessly ever since



Padma Shri | Medicine (*Healthcare*) | Kerala | 64 Yrs

Hanjabam Ongbi Radhe Sharmi

Child-bride to Bridalwear Queen

“88 yr **Potloi Setpi** Weaver from Manipur
- keeping the art of 'Potloi' alive”



- Defying her age, she is keeping the art of **Potlio** alive - a skirt that forms an important part of **Manipuri wedding attire**
- Working for over **6 decades**, she has dressed 1,000 brides with her self-designed outfits
- Married off at the age of 15, she now creates **awareness** on issues like **drug addiction** and **women employment**
- Apart from designing Potloi, she also makes costumes for **Khamba-Thoibi** dances
- 'Potloi' is a skirt that forms an important part of the Manipuri wedding attire and comprises of stiff cylindrical skirt, blouse, woven belt around the waist, & 'Innaphi', which is a delicate muslin shawl wrapped around the upper body



Padma Shri | Art (*Textiles - Potloi*) | Mizoram | 88 Yrs

KARTAR SINGH

Gurbani Kirtan ke Kartar

“One of the foremost **Gurbani** singers and scholars today”

- **Gurbani Kirtan legend** from Ludhiana, with an illustrious career in **performing** and **teaching** spanning 6 **decades**
- **Scholar** who has authored **multiple books** on Gurbani, selling thousands of copies
- Heading **Gurmat Sangeet Academy** at Sri Anandpur Sahib in Ropar, training a large number of students
- Many of his students are serving “**kirtan sewa**” with “tanti saazas” as “ragi jathas” and accompanying artists from prominent Gurudwaras in globally
- He was assigned to restart “Gurbani Kirtan” in prescribed ragas with traditional musical instruments in Golden Temple in 2006
- Even at the age of 92, feels as eager as ever to **learn** music



Padma Shri | Art (Vocals) | Punjab | 92 Yrs

KAMALI SOREN

Guru Maa Soren

“**Santhali** Social Worker from Maldah working for 3 decades for the betterment of **Tribals**”



- Contribution towards **tribal empowerment, value-education, healthcare**
- Through her **Ashram** in **Gazoli** village, she provides **primary treatment** to the tribals and also promotes **good health** practices
- Focused on **empowering tribal women and girls** through **awareness** and **education**
- Mentoring the **Santhal** community of **Maldah** and adjoining districts for the past 25 years



Padma Shri | Social Work (*Tribal*) | West Bengal | 50 Yrs

P SUBRAMANIAN

Shanthi Gear to Shanthi Seva



“**Gear Man** of Coimbatore, founder of **Shanthi Gears** - dedicated his wealth to the upliftment of **underprivileged**”

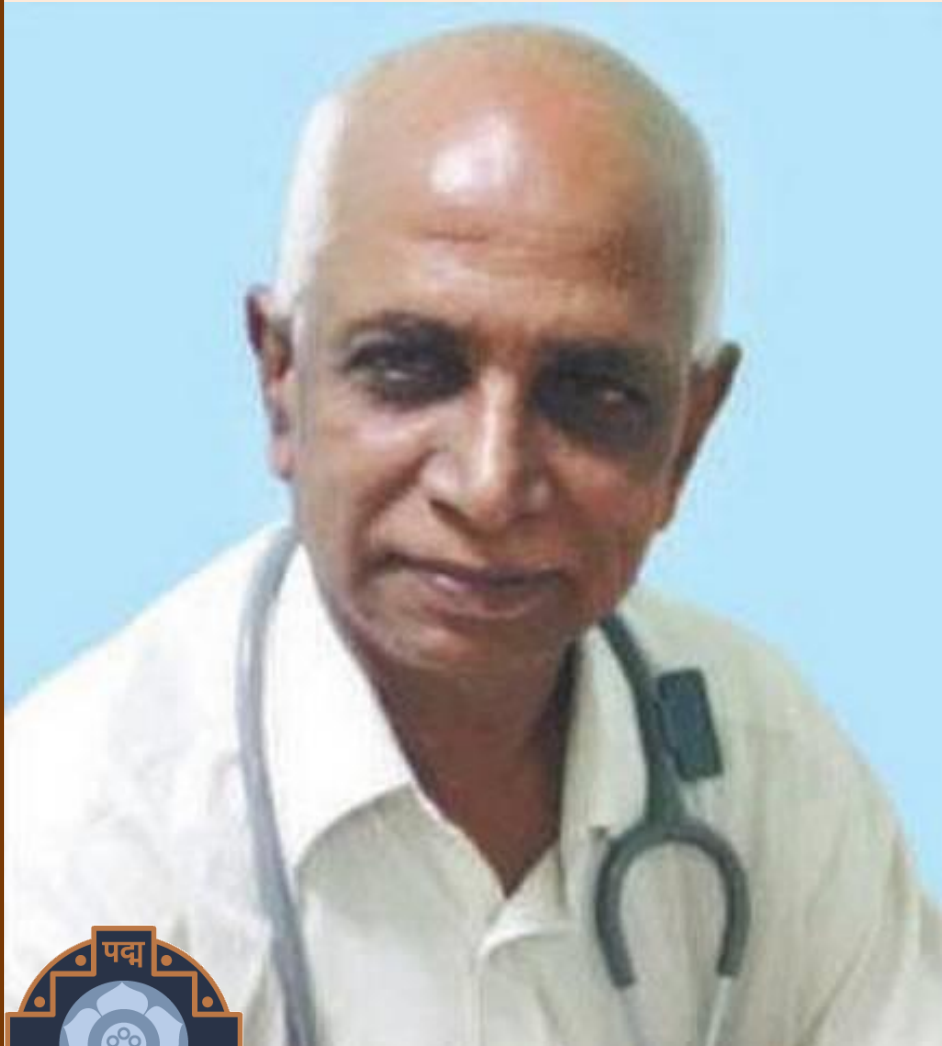
- As a **First Generation Entrepreneur** founded **Shanthi Gears** in 1972 - a gears **manufacturing** company in Coimbatore
- Company was listed on the stock exchange in 1986 and subsequently became the third largest gear manufacturer in India
- A devoted philanthropist, set up **Shanthi Social Service (SSS)**, in memory of his late wife – for undertaking **welfare** activities, construction of **roads** and **schools** in downtrodden areas and providing support to underprivileged **children**
- SSS runs a **hospital** and **pharmacy** known for extending medical services to the needy, and a **canteen** which serves free food to 300 senior citizens every day
- *Posthumous* (11 Dec 2020)



Padma Shri | Trade & Industry (*Manufacturing*) | Tamil Nadu | 78 Yrs

THIRUVENGADAM VEERARAGHAVAN

Vyasarapadi's Five Rupees Doctor



“Doctor from Chennai who dedicatedly **served** the **poor day** and **night** for **5 decades**”

- Started a clinic in 1973 in **Vyasarapadi** neighborhood of **Chennai**, attending to patients daily at nominal charge of Rs 2 to 5
- With growing pressure from other doctors in the area, suggested his patients to pay him back according to their **convenience**, even in kind
- Born into a **farmer** family, he lived his childhood aspiration to **serve** the poor and downtrodden to his **last breath**, being available through **day** and **night**
- Despite losing almost everything he owned during the 2015 **Chennai floods**, he continued to serve humanity to the best of his abilities
- *Posthumous* (16 Aug 2020)



Padma Shri | Medicine (*Healthcare*) | Tamil Nadu | 70 Yrs

K Y VENKATESH

India's Tallest Dwarf

"India's leading **Dwarf Para Athlete** - won record number of medals in World Dwarf Games"



- Born with **dwarfism**, at 4 feet 2 inches tall, he never let his short stature dishearten him from moving forward in life
- **Multi-sport** Para athlete who became the first athlete to represent India at **World Dwarf Games 2005**, bagging **6 medals**
- Has brought **laurels** to the country in **Badminton, Shot-put, Javelin, Discus** throw and many other athletic events
- Without letting **Dwarfism** become a **barrier**, he has become a **role model** for para-badminton athletes in the country who are now following his footsteps
- Continues to play a significant role in sports as Secretary of Karnataka Badminton Association for the Disabled

Padma Shri | Sports (*Divyang*) | Karnataka | 48 Yrs

