

Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur

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In news- Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor will soon be conferred with France's highest civilian award Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.

About Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur-

- The Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur (**Knight of the National Order of the French Legion of Honour**) is the highest civilian award given by the French Republic for outstanding contribution to the recipient's field of expertise, regardless of their nationality.
- It was **instituted in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte**.
- The order's motto is *Honneur et Patrie* ("Honour and Fatherland"), and its seat is the Palais de la Légion d'Honneur next to the Musée d'Orsay, on the left bank of the Seine in Paris.
- **The Legion has five classes, listed in descending rank:**
 1. Grand cross (limited to 80 members).
 2. Grand officer (200).
 3. Commander (1,000).
 4. Officer (4,000), and
 5. Knight, or chevalier (unlimited).
- According to Britannica, the membership of the **Legion is remarkably egalitarian; both men and women, French citizens and foreigners, civilians and military personnel, irrespective of rank, birth, or religion, can be admitted to any of the classes of the Legion.**
- Admission into this order, which **can be conferred posthumously, requires 20 years of civil achievement in peacetime** or extraordinary military bravery and service in times of war.

Other Indians who received it-

- The **first Indian to be awarded** with the Legion of Honour was **Maharaja Pratap Singh of Idar in 1918**.
- Since then, more than **40 Indians have been honoured with the award**.
- The list of the recipients includes JRD Tata (1983), Satyajit Ray (1987), Pandit Ravi Shankar (2000), Zubin Mehta (2001), E Sreedharan (2005), Amitabh Bachchan (2007), Lata Mangeshkar (2007), Shah Rukh Khan (2014), Manish Arora (2016) Kamal Haasan (2016), Ratan Tata (2016), Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (2016), and Azim Premji (2018), among others.

About Shashi Tharoor-

- An author, politician, and former international civil servant, Shashi Tharoor straddles several worlds of experience.
- Born in London, UK, and raised in India, Tharoor worked across the world, graduating from St. Stephen's College, Delhi in 1975 and culminating his studies in 1978 with a doctorate in International Relations and Affairs from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. At the age of 22, he was the youngest person at the time to receive such an honour from the Fletcher School.
- Currently a third-term Lok Sabha MP representing the Thiruvananthapuram constituency and Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, he has previously served as Minister of State for Human Resource Development and Minister of State for External Affairs in the Government of India.
- During his nearly three-decade long prior career at the United Nations, he served as a peacekeeper, refugee worker, and administrator at the highest levels, serving as Under-Secretary General during Kofi Annan's leadership of the organisation. Dr. Tharoor is also an

award-winning author of works of both fiction as well as non-fiction, with his sixteenth book due for release in November 2016.