

Martin Ennals Award

June 7, 2022

In news– The Martin Ennals Foundation posthumously honoured Father Stan Swamy, an Indian Roman Catholic priest for his “many contributions to human rights”.

About the Award-

- Every year, the Martin Ennals Foundation, based in Geneva, Switzerland, gives out an award that is regarded as the Nobel Prize for human rights defenders.
- Three people were selected for the award this year.
- Diallo has been described as “a fearless activist who documents human rights abuses committed in the crossfires of Burkina Faso’s violent conflict”.
- Meanwhile, one of Vietnam’s top journalists, Trang has been a vociferous defender of freedom of expression, and Khawaja is a “champion of human rights and justice who has galvanised a new generation of activists in the Gulf region”.
- According to the Martin Ennals Foundation, the award “strives to provide human rights defenders with much needed protection, raising their public profile and gathering international support for their work”.
- More than 60 defenders from 34 countries are associated with the award at present.

Who was Martin Ennals?

- Ennals was a British activist who spent his life working to secure human rights across the world.
- He was Secretary-General of Amnesty International from 1968 to 1980.
- Ennals died in 1991 and, in his memory, the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders is given to “individuals and organisations that have shown exceptional commitment to defending and promoting human rights, despite the risks involved”.

Who is Father Stan?

- He was a tribal rights activist from Jharkhand who had been arrested in the Bhima Koregaon case and passed away in July 2021 at the age of 84.
- Swamy worked closely with Adivasi communities to safeguard their land, forest and labour rights.
- He is best known for taking legal action for the protection of young Adivasis who had been arrested and labelled “Naxals” by various intelligence agencies.
- According to the NIA, which had arrested Swamy with other activists such as lawyer Sudha Bharadwaj under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act in 2020, he was a part of the banned CPI (Maoist).