



Chief Guest and eminent scientist Dr. Raghunath Mashelkar, felicitates 44th Jamnalal Bajaj Award Winners

Mumbai, 8th December, 2022: The Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation honoured winners for their exemplary efforts in the field of humanitarian and social work at the 44th edition of the Jamnalal Bajaj Awards. The four awardees were felicitated today at the annual award function in the presence of the **Chief Guest and renowned scientist Dr. Raghunath Mashelkar, Shekhar Bajaj, Chairman and Board of Trustees of Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation, Members of the Council of Advisers of the Foundation and the august gathering.** Dr. R. A. Mashelkar, Former Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Chairman of National Innovation Foundation , Council of Advisers of the Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation.

Since the institution of these awards, the Foundation commemorates the birth anniversary of Shri Jamnalal Bajaj every year. As a tribute to the great man on this special occasion, the Foundation felicitated achievers in the field of humanitarian activities and Gandhian constructive programmes by presenting them with a Citation, a Trophy and a Prize amount of INR 10,00,000/- in each category. The Foundation continues to serve the ideals to which Shri Jamnalalji was dedicatedly been involved during his lifetime.

The details of the awards for this year (2022) are:

Award Category	Awardee Name and Title	State / Country
Award for outstanding contribution in the field of Constructive Work	Nilesh Desai	Madhya Pradesh
Award for Application of Science & Technology for Rural Development	Mansukhbhai Prajapati	Gujarat
Award for Development and Welfare of Women and Children (Instituted in memory of Padma Vibhushan Jankidevi Bajaj)	Sophia Shaik	Odisha
International Award for Promoting Gandhian Values Outside India	Dr. Ogarit Younan and Dr. Walid Slaybi	Lebanon

Shekhar Bajaj, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation addressing at the occasion said, “Every year we embark on a journey through Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation Awards to find out those unsung heroes and recognize them for their selfless work and services. The acknowledgement and encouragement of the efforts of these individuals is the sole purpose of the Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation. These unsung heroes have unwaveringly dedicated their entire existence in propagating and preserving the noble ethos and philosophy of Gandhian values. We congratulate all the winners and encourage many others to help the societies and communities for transforming them into a better place.”

About the 2022 Winners

NILESH DESAI

Recipient of the Award in the Field of Constructive Work

Nilesh Desai is Founder & Director, Sampark Samaj Sevi Sansthan, Madhya Pradesh.

Following is a brief description of activities undertaken by NILESH DESAI

- Works mainly for the upliftment of Bhil adivasi community through an integrated rural development program and community participatory process.
- His work is spread across 5 districts of Madhya Pradesh, 14 blocks covering 770 villages and over 2,00,000 families.
- Independence from the British, instead of ushering in Gram Swaraj as envisaged by Gandhiji, led to a near complete neglect of village self-rule and rural development resulting in the neglect of both agriculture and natural resources.



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- By the 1980s, rural areas and particularly Adivasi areas were devastated. One such deprived area is the Jhabua district in Madhya Pradesh where most of the population, ninety percent, is of the Bhil Adivasis.
- Such was their deprivation that they had to mostly migrate seasonally to work as daily labourers in neighbouring Gujarat, to make ends meet, as their farms were not enough to ensure survival
- Then Mr. Nilesh Desai, a modern social worker with the distinction that he was imbued with Gandhiji's motto of learning from practice, came on the scene.

MANSUKHBHAI PRAJAPATI

Recipient of the Award for Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development

Mansukhbhai Prajapati was born at Nichi Mandal, in Morbi District in Gujarat. Despite being discouraged by his father who was a potter, Mansukhbhai Prajapati with sheer passion and determination and with the support of a moneylender, started working on his dream project.

Following is a brief description of activities undertaken by MANSUKHBHAI PRAJAPATI

- Mansukhbhai Prajapati is renowned for his rural innovations and has been credited for his earthen clay-based functional, utility products like refrigerators, filters, tawa (pan) and cookers, among other items. He has brought back pottery into the mainstream with innovative techniques and a wide product range.
- In 1988, Mansukhbhai Prajapati made the first clay product – a tawa (pan) using a tile press, instead of a traditional potter's wheel.
- The innovative tawa making machine revolutionized the pottery industry. By using this machine, several rural families have established and engaged themselves into start-ups and have become entrepreneurs, which has, in turn provided them with better livelihood and better standard of living.
- Moving ahead, Mansukhbhai Prajapati scaled up his activity and started making highly efficient and eco-friendly clay products ranging from a small spoon to dinner set, bottles, cooker, water pots, filters to non-electric fridge, that are harmless to the environment and health. The product range that are marketed, carry the brand name Mitticool.
- Motto of learning from practice, came on the scene.

SOPHIA SHAIK

Recipient of the Award for Development and Welfare of Women and Children

Sophia Shaik started her career in social service at the age of 15 years, under the guidance of her father Sk. Abdus Salam (popular as Salambhai in the social service sector in Odisha).

Following is a brief description of activities undertaken by SOPHIA SHAIK

- She has been continuously taking guidance and inspiration from her father since then, in her endeavour to serve the poor, underprivileged and destitute sections in the society through her NGO named Society for Weaker Community (SWC) which was established by her father, in 1987.
- Till date over 50000 women and over 60000 children (boys and girls) have been benefitted with her work.
- A life-threatening attack on her father, when Sophia Shaik was hardly 14 years old, made her go on a hunger strike clamoring for the arrest of the culprits.
- Despite the grumbling of the older members of her community, she defied 'purdah' and they accused her of having become a 'kafir' (one who doesn't believe in God and conceals the truth). But nothing could break Sophia Shaik's iron will.
- She flouted all customs that tethered her inside the four walls of home and jumped over the threshold to put her father's attackers behind bars.

DR. OGARIT YOUNAN & DR. WALID SLAYBI

Recipient of the International Award for Promoting Gandhian Values Outside India

Dr. Ogarit Younan and Dr. Walid Slaybi are pioneers of non-violence in Lebanon and the Arab world.

Following is a brief description of activities undertaken by DR. OGARIT YOUNAN & DR. WALID SLAYBI

- Dr. Ogarit Younan, devoted early her life to humane commitment. She is a pioneer Arab woman for non-violence who is also the pioneer of Nonviolent Education in Lebanon and the Arab world.



- Ogarit Younan is known to be the first to have integrated the culture of nonviolence and the conflict resolution in the official curricula in Lebanon. She mainly is a prominent human rights activist on national and regional level.
- Dr. Walid Slaybi devoted early his life to social change. As an Arab thinker of non-violence, he is known to be an innovator of new concepts within the political economy for justice. He is also known as the main strategist of nonviolence, direct actions, and civil campaigns.
- Both Ogarit Younan and Walid Slaybi met in 1982 in the wake of the Lebanese war (1975-1990) and embarked on a joint journey of life and struggle, as partners seeking to build their dream day by day under exceptional circumstances.
- They chose to give human existential meaning to their life and career, away from a world of greed and fame. Ogarit Younan and Walid Slaybi both came to be known as the pioneers of re-building the civil society in Lebanon.

About The Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation Awards

Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation continues to work towards propagating Gandhian values and Jamnalal Bajaj's ideologies. The awards for outstanding contribution in the field of Constructive Work and Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development, instituted in 1978; and Development and Welfare of Women and Children, introduced in 1980 in the memory of Padma Vibhushan Jankidevi Bajaj, wife of Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, are given to Indian nationals. The International Award, instituted in 1988 in commemoration of the birth centennial of Jamnalal Bajaj is presented to an individual with foreign nationality for promoting Gandhian values outside India.

Nominations are invited for 2023 Jamnalal Bajaj Awards

Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation has commenced nominations for the 45th Jamnalal Bajaj Awards which will be held in 2023. If there is / are any individual/s you are aware of who have carried out exemplary work based on Gandhian values, in any of the above noted four categories, kindly apprise them about the Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation Awards.

For more information on the awards criteria and nomination format, **[Application forms and Online Submission of Nominations](http://jamnalalbajajawards.org/nomination-forms)** kindly visit <http://jamnalalbajajawards.org/nomination-forms>

To know more about the Foundation and Bajaj Group initiatives, log on to – www.jamnalalbajajawards.org, www.jamnalalbajajfoundation.org, www.bajajgroup.com

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