



RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD FOUNDATION

30 July 2015

## PRESS RELEASE

### 2015 Ramon Magsaysay Awardees Announced

The Board of Trustees of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) today announced that this year five individuals from India, Laos, Myanmar, and the Philippines will receive Asia's premier prize, the Ramon Magsaysay Award.

The 2015 Magsaysay Awardees are:

**Kommaly Chanthavong, from Laos.** She is being recognized for *"her fearless, indomitable spirit to revive and develop the ancient Laotian art of silk weaving, creating livelihoods for thousands of poor, war-displaced Laotians, and thus preserving the dignity of women and her nation's priceless silken cultural treasure."*

**Ligaya Fernando-Amilbangsa, from the Philippines.** She is being recognized for *"her single-minded crusade in preserving the endangered artistic heritage of southern Philippines, and in creatively propagating a dance form that celebrates and deepens the sense of shared cultural identity among Asians."*

**Anshu Gupta, from India.** He is being recognized for *"his creative vision in transforming the culture of giving in India, his enterprising leadership in treating cloth as a sustainable development resource for the poor, and in reminding the world that true giving always respects and preserves human dignity."*

**Kyaw Thu, from Myanmar.** He is being recognized for *"his generous compassion in addressing the fundamental needs of both the living and the dead in Myanmar -- regardless of their class or religion -- and his channeling personal fame and privilege to mobilize many others toward serving the greater social good."*

**Sanjiv Chaturvedi, for Emergent Leadership, from India.** He is being recognized for *"his exemplary integrity, courage and tenacity in uncompromisingly exposing and painstakingly investigating corruption in public office, and his resolute crafting of program and system improvements to ensure that government honorably serves the people of India."*

Established in 1957, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is Asia's highest honor and is widely regarded as the region's equivalent of the Nobel Prize. It celebrates the memory and leadership example of the third Philippine president after whom the award is named, and is given every year to individuals or organizations in Asia who manifest the same selfless service and transformative influence that ruled the life of the late and beloved Filipino leader.

"The Magsaysay awardees of 2015," says RMAF President Carmencita Abella, "are truly *stoking fresh hopes for a better Asia*. Clearly, they are creating bold solutions to deeply-rooted social problems in their respective societies, problems which are most damaging to the lives of those trapped in poverty, ignorance, prejudice, and unjust systems. It is also clear that through their solutions each of these inspiring leaders is building more hopeful lives among their people -- one smart, impassioned, and persistent step at a time."

She adds, "While their respective social causes and leadership solutions are uniquely their own, there is one thing this year's Magsaysay laureates all share in common: a greatness of spirit that infuses their crusade for change. All are unafraid to take on large causes. All have refused to give up, despite meager resources, daunting adversity and strong opposition. Their approaches are all deeply anchored in a respect for human dignity, and a faith in the power of collective endeavor. We have much to learn from the 2015 Magsaysay awardees, and much to celebrate about their greatness of spirit."

The five 2015 Magsaysay awardees join the community of 307 other Magsaysay laureates who have received Asia's highest honor to date. **This year's Magsaysay Award winners will each receive a certificate, a medallion bearing the likeness of the late President, and a cash prize. They will be formally conferred the Magsaysay Award during formal Presentation Ceremonies to be held on Monday, 31 August 2015 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, to which the public is cordially invited.**

For more information, please contact:

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**SANJIV CHATURVEDI**

India

*2015 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee  
For Emergent Leadership*

## Citation for the 2015 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Emergent Leadership

### SANJIV CHATURVEDI

Corruption is a plague on nations. In rooting out corruption, the work of government in strengthening systems of transparency and accountability is crucial. But ultimately, success still depends on ethical public servants and a vigilant public. In India, forty-year-old government officer Sanjiv Chaturvedi is an inspirational example. Coming from a family of civil servants, Chaturvedi joined the Indian Forest Service (IFS) because he loves interacting with people in the field and working in government. Posted as a divisional forest officer in Haryana state, Northern India, he quickly came face to face with the corruption infesting government. A young, idealistic officer, he did not turn away from the irregularities that he saw but resolutely worked to correct them.

Boldly, he investigated and exposed cases of malfeasance even when these involved powerful officials in the state. In his six years in the state cadre, he exposed anomalies which included the illegal construction of a canal that threatened the critical Saraswati Wildlife Sanctuary; the use of public funds to develop an herbal park on private land owned by a high official; the underpayment of license fees; and the rigging of government auctions. In a foreign-funded afforestation program, Chaturvedi discovered that 90 percent of the plantations existed only on paper, and that funds had been embezzled through the faked signatures of allegedly participating self-help groups and nonexistent workers. Forty forest officers were suspended as a result of his investigation.

Under intense pressure from high state officials affected by his campaign, he was deputed to New Delhi as deputy secretary and chief vigilance officer at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, where he continued his anti-corruption campaign, exposing and filing cases involving irregularities in government procurement; contracts awarded to favored service providers; kickbacks in building construction; a scam in which government employees collected the pensions of dead pensioners; and the collusion between government officers and suppliers of fake medicines. Relentless, he did not waver even when cases involved high officials in state and central governments, well-connected businessmen, or members of his own staff. At great personal cost, he was harassed, suspended, demoted, hounded and humiliated with false charges, and put “in the freezer.” All these did not stop him.

Chaturvedi is not a circumstantial whistleblower, but one genuinely seeking to reform the system from within. He meticulously investigates cases, submits documented reports, and pursues criminal and administrative action to punish the guilty. Actions he has taken have bolstered government revenues, and resulted in the recovery of stolen public funds and the suspension or removal of erring officials. Still, Chaturvedi is not simply adversarial. He zealously performs his regular duties, carries out meaningful projects, and supports and protects honest employees. Within the sphere of his authority, he has initiated changes in operational systems to ensure transparency and accountability—whether these be better procedures in tracking public complaints or ensuring that wages and benefits of contractual employees actually go to them.

As a junior officer, Chaturvedi’s reach and powers are limited but his integrity and courage have received wide media attention, though he does not himself seek it. On several occasions India’s president and prime minister have intervened to support and protect him from unjust persecution. While his story remains unfinished, he has already become a role model in the bureaucracy and for a public often overwhelmed by inertia and powerlessness. Amazingly, despite what he has gone through, Chaturvedi has not yielded to disillusion. “Despite all the challenges, I have great optimism in the country, in our people,” he quietly asserts. “I have never entertained the thought of leaving the service. Never.”

In electing Sanjiv Chaturvedi to receive the 2015 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Emergent Leadership, the board of trustees recognizes his exemplary integrity, courage and tenacity in uncompromisingly exposing and painstakingly investigating corruption in public office, and his resolute crafting of program and system improvements to ensure that government honorably serves the people of India.

# SANJIV CHATURVEDI

2015 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee

Nationality : Indian  
Date of Birth : 21 December 1974  
Civil Status : Divorced



## Educational Background

1995 Bachelor of Engineering, Moti Lal Nehru Institute of Technology, India

## Employment/Professional Background

2012-Present Deputy Secretary, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, India  
2012-2014 Chief Vigilance Officer, AIIMS  
2005-2012 Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Haryana State Cadre, Indian Forest Service (IFS)

## Honors/Awards Received

2011 S.R. Jindal Prize for "Crusade Against Corruption," Sitaram Jindal Foundation, New Delhi, India  
2011 Award for Good Governance, Institute for Research and Documentation in Social Sciences (IRDS), Uttar Pradesh, India  
2010 Shashidhar Mishra Right to Information (RTI) Gallantry Award, National RTI Forum, Uttar Pradesh, India  
2009 Manjunath Shanmugam Integrity Award, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore, India  
2005 Gold Medal for "Biodiversity and Wildlife Management" and "People and Forest," Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA), Dehradun, India