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Title: The Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment made a statement regarding Institution of National Award for outstanding fieldwork in eradicating untouchability and combating offences of atrocities against scheduled castes.

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): Sir, I am glad to inform this august House that the Government of India has decided to institute National Awards to be given to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or individual Human Rights Activists who have done outstanding fieldwork in the area of eradicating untouchability and in combating offences of atrocities under the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (PCR Act) and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (POA Act).

There shall be total four awards every year covering both the categories. Award to individual activist shall carry on amount of Rs. 2 lakhs and to an institution shall carry an amount of Rs. 5 lakhs. The Award will be given to outstanding NGOs or Human Rights Activists in each of the four regions of the country namely North, South, East and West for rendering yeomen services in the said fields. The award may be shared by more than one recipient or organization. The Award would be instituted in 2007 and would be given annually thereafter.

The Award is open to all Indian NGOs and Human Rights Activists without any distinction or discrimination on grounds of race, sex, caste or creed. A Screening Committee and finally the Selection Committee constituted for the purpose would consider the achievement of the NGOs and the Individual Human Rights Activists nominated/recommended for the Award by the prescribed authority.

*Placed in Library, See No. LT 5039/2006)

For the 2007 awards, the Screening Committee and the Selection Committee would consider nominations received upto 31st January, 2007.
