

Padma Bhushan a Great Honour: Gopichand

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LUCKNOW: Being selected for India's third highest Civilian Award - the [Padma Bhushan](#) - was a great honour, Chief National Badminton Coach [Pullela Gopichand](#) said on Saturday.

"It is a great honour. I would like to thank the entire Badminton fraternity. All my players, the coaches I have worked with, the Government, [Sports Authority of India](#) (SAI) and the Badminton Association of India (BAI) for their support. It is thanks to them that I have been selected for this award," the 40-year-old said.

"I am very happy to be selected. It is pleasing to know that our hard work is recognised. These awards motivate us sportspersons to do more for our country," the former All-England champion added.

The player-turned-coach has also been honoured with the Khel Ratna (2001), Arjuna Award (1999) and Padma Shri (2005). He got the Dronacharya Award in 2009 for excellence in coaching.

Gopichand, one of the finest Badminton players to have emerged from the country, is the second renowned sports personality to have been conferred with the Padma Bhushan honour this year.

Gopi, as he is fondly called in the Badminton circle, is only the second shuttler from India after Prakash Padukone to have won the prestigious All England Badminton Championships in 2001.

After quitting the game, Gopichand set up his own Academy named 'Gopichand Badminton Academy' in Hyderabad, which produced the current crop of Indian Badminton stars which include Saina Nehwal, Parupalli Kashyap, PV Sindhu, RMV Gurusai Datt among others.

Gopichand is also credited to have unearth Saina, the first Indian to win a medal in Badminton at the Olympics when she bagged the bronze in the 2012 London Games.
