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## **Press Release**

**Date:19-07-2023**

### **Gandhi Mandela Award 2020 Conferred to Nobel Peace Prize laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum**

#### **Mexico City, Mexico**

In honor of the 106th birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela, the prestigious Gandhi Mandela Award 2020 was conferred upon Rigoberta Menchú Tum on 18th July 2024 at a grand ceremony in Mexico City, Mexico. The award was presented in the presence of GMF Secretary General Shri Nandan Kumar Jha, Dr. Manuel Granados Covarrubias, National GMF President of Mexico and Executive President of Grupo por un País Mejor and CEO of Pharmacy Similar, and Victor González Torres "Dr. Simi," a renowned politician and businessman. This prestigious accolade, dedicated to global peacekeeping and promotion efforts, was first awarded to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2019.

#### **Rigoberta Menchú Tum: A Lifelong Advocate for Indigenous Rights**

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, a K'iche' Guatemalan human rights activist, feminist, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, has devoted her life to advocating for the rights of Guatemala's Indigenous peoples and promoting Indigenous rights internationally. Born on January 9, 1959, to a poor Indian peasant family in the Quiche branch of the Maya culture, Rigoberta's early life was marked by hardship and resilience. From a young age, she helped with family farm work and later became involved in social reform activities through the Catholic Church. As a teenager, she emerged as a prominent figure in the women's rights movement, despite facing significant opposition from influential circles.

Rigoberta's family suffered immense personal loss during the Guatemalan Civil War, with her brother, father, and mother becoming victims of military oppression. In 1979, she joined the Committee of the Peasant Union (CUC) and became increasingly active in advocating for better conditions for farm workers and educating the Indian peasant population. Her activism forced her into hiding and eventual exile in Mexico in 1981. From abroad, Rigoberta continued her fight, co-founding the United Representation of the Guatemalan Opposition (RUOG) in 1982 and narrating the powerful film "When the Mountains Tremble" in 1987. Her autobiography, "I, Rigoberta Menchú," published in 1983, garnered international attention and highlighted her life and struggles.

### **Gandhi Mandela Foundation (A Govt of India Recognized 80G, 12A, 8A Trust)**

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## **A Journey Marked by International Recognition**

Rigoberta Menchú's tireless advocacy for Indian rights and ethno-cultural reconciliation has earned her numerous international accolades, including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 and the Princess of Asturias Award in 1998. Her work continues to inspire and lead the fight for Indigenous rights globally.

## **Gandhi Mandela Foundation: Promoting Global Peace and Harmony**

The Gandhi Mandela Foundation (GMF) is a government-recognized trust established to promote the values, ideals, and principles of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. The foundation's headquarters is in New Delhi, India, with a global presence in the USA, Latin America, Russia, South Africa, China, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Norway, the UK, and Australia. The GMF has organized various international events in association with the United Nations and embassies/high commissions of different countries, earning praise from top news agencies worldwide, including Time Magazine.

## **The Prestigious Gandhi Mandela Award**

The Gandhi Mandela Foundation, a Government of India registered trust, is a non-profit organization, formed with the motive to promote Mahatma Gandhi's and the former President of South Africa Nelson Mandela's values of non-violence. Gandhi Mandela Foundation instituted the award on the 150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, MK Gandhi. The Gandhi Mandela Award is given to personalities who have carried forward the legacies of Gandhi and Mandela by making significant contributions in the fields of social welfare, peace, environment, culture, education, healthcare, sports, and innovation.

The award includes one of the most expensive gold medals, crafted by the India Government Mint, a unit of the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited. The medal, made of less than 6-carat gold, weighs 350 grams, comprising 85.75 grams of gold and 264.25 grams of copper, with a diameter of 100 mm. It is presented in a pine wood box with a white ribbon and accompanied by the first-ever certificate signed by a jury consisting of five former Chief Justices and former Supreme Court Judges from India, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

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### **A Distinguished Jury of Gandhi Mandela Award**

The jury for the Gandhi Mandela Award is the world's most empowered, comprising esteemed individuals with significant judicial backgrounds:

- Hon'ble Justice K.G. Balakrishnan: Former Chief Justice of India & Former Chairman NHRC India
- Vice Chairman Hon'ble Justice Gyan Sudha Misra: Former Judge Supreme Court of India
- Hon'ble Justice Dipak Misra: Former Chief Justice of India
- Hon'ble Justice Kedarnath Upadhyay: Former Chief Justice of Nepal & Former Chairman, NHRC, Nepal
- Hon'ble Justice Tafazzul Islam: Former Chief Justice of Bangladesh

As we celebrated the 106th birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela, the conferment of the Gandhi Mandela Award 2020 to Rigoberta Menchú Tum is a testament to her relentless pursuit of justice and equality. Her life's work exemplifies the principles of Gandhi and Mandela, and this recognition highlights the importance of continuing their legacies in today's turbulent world.

RSVP: Gautam Rishi

Mob: 7065391565

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