

Asma among winners of UN HR award 2018

UNITED NATIONS: The UN General Assembly (UNGA) President, Maria Fernanda Espinosa, Thursday announced the winners of the prestigious United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights for 2018 that include Asma Jahangir, a leading Pakistani human rights lawyer who passed away in February this year.

Other winners are: Rebeca Gyumi, a Tanzanian activist for the rights of women and girls, Joenia Wapichana, a Brazilian activist for the rights of indigenous communities, and Front Line Defenders, an Irish organisation advocating and working for the protection of human rights.

Asma Jahangir, who was awarded posthumously, served as the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions from 1998 to 2004, and as the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief from 2004 to 2010.

The award is given to individuals and organisations in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Previous recipients have included Nelson Mandela, Amnesty International, Jimmy Carter, Eleanor Roosevelt, Reverend Dr Martin L King and Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan, wife of Pakistan's first Pakistani prime minister, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, former prime minister of Pakistan and leader of Pakistan People's Party, and Malala Yousafzai, a prominent Pakistani education activist.

The Human Rights Prize is awarded every five years, in accordance with a resolution of the General Assembly that was adopted in 1966. The prize was first awarded on December 10, 1968, the International Year for Human Rights and the 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The prize is awarded at a plenary meeting of the General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters in New York on Human Rights Day, December 10.