



■ French ambassador Alexandre Ziegler confers the award on Saroj Poddar (right).

SAMIR JANA/HT

Top French honour for Saroj K Poddar

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KOLKATA: A top French honour was conferred on renowned industrialist Saroj K Poddar on Friday at an event organised by the French Consulate General in Kolkata for Poddar's contributions in improving bilateral ties between the two countries.

"The insignia of *Commandeur de l'Ordre National du Mérite* (Commander in the National Order of Merit), alongside *Légion d'Honneur*, is among the two most prestigious awards in France. Conferring the honour on Poddar is proof that France never forgot him and his contributions," said Alexandre Ziegler, the French Ambassador in India. "The most important among his

The award, commonly known as National Order of Merit, is bestowed on French citizens as well as foreign nationals for distinguished civil or military achievements.

"He was accorded this recognition by the President of the French Republic for playing an important role in setting up French firms in India and enhancing the relations between the two countries in the economic field," a media statement issued by the French Consulate in Kolkata said.

Poddar, the chairman of Adventz Group of companies, has been working on Indo-French business ties for about 15 years. A member of the Indo-French CEO Forum, Poddar played an important role in bringing a number

of Alstom India and Areva T&D, besides being the president of FICCI and International Chamber of Commerce in India. Poddar has also been nominated by the government of India as a member of the Board of Trade, a top advisory body on external commerce.

After receiving the honour, Poddar said, "This prestigious award shall always hold a special place in my life because India and France have common fundamental values. I dedicate this honour to my friends, family and all of those who worked with me."

"It's a matter of pride for the entire Adventz family and more particularly for Texmaco. It's a matter of pride for me as well, as I'm considered the executive closest to him. In reality, I'm considered as a family member," said

contributions is his consistent role in improving bilateral ties," Ziegler added.

of renowned French brands to India. He had previously served as the chairman of

Ramesh Maheshwari, executive vice-chairman, Texmaco Rail & Engineering Ltd.