

Arsha Kala Bhushanam Awards for 2009 announced

*Honour for M.S. Gopalakrishnan, N. Ramani, Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman,
A.K.C. Natarajan and T.V. Sankaranarayanan*

CHENNAI: 'Arsha Kala Bhushanam Awards 2009,' instituted by the Arsha Kalarangam in Coimbatore for excellence in Carnatic music, have been announced.

The recipients are, M.S. Gopalakrishnan (violin), N. Ramani (flute), Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman (mridangam), A.K.C. Natarajan (clarinet) and T.V. Sankaranarayanan (vocalist).

This year's awardees are all recipients of the prestigious Sangeetha Kala Nidhi title.

Addressing a press meet on Tuesday, Dayananda Saraswati, spiritual head of the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam and founder of the All India Movement for Seva, said apart from the core mission of teaching the Gita and Upanishads, the organisation also sought to honour stalwarts of classical music, which was integral to the culture of the land.

Future plans

Since 2007, the Arsha Kalarangam, cultural wing of the Gurukulam, had been honouring musicians for "embellishing the Arsha Kala (art of the rishis) and bringing it to the people through their music."

"The idea is to make people understand that music is also spiritual and connected to the Vedas," Swami Dayananda Saraswati said. For exponents, music serves as a means of self-growth and gaining spiritual wisdom.

The future plans of the organisation included hosting Hindustani concerts and honouring exponents outside the State.

Short list

Maharajapuram Ramachandran said the recipients were finalised by Swami Dayananda Saraswati from a short list of nominations by doyens in classical music.



Recognising excellence: Swami Dayananda Saraswati announcing the winners of 'Arsha Kala Bhushanam Awards 2009' in Chennai on Tuesday. Maharajapuram Ramachandran (second from left), Arsha Kalarangam committee members Srinivasan K. Swamy (left), M. Murali (second from right) and Sheela Balaji, are in the picture.

M. Murali, director, Sri Krishna Sweets, said by convention, the Arsha Kala awards were being given to exponents who had gained the stature of "yogis."

Highest honour

Dancer Padma Subramaniam said recognition by a spiritual institution was the highest honour for an artist.

Sheela Balaji from AIM for Seva said the organisation's activities reached out to an estimated 10 million people in 15 States.

The awards, carrying a cash prize of Rs.1 lakh and citation, will be presented on the opening day of the annual three-day music festival in Coimbatore on November 5, said Srinivasan K. Swamy, managing director, R.K. Swamy Associates

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