

## **3 maestros from region to get Sangeet Natak Awards**

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Three maestros of performing arts, including Pandit Yashpaul, Dr Atamjit and Ustad Harbhajan Singh, have been chosen for the prestigious Sangeet Natak Award for 2010 from the region. The awards carrying a citation, memento, shawl and a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh will be presented to each of them by the President of India at a national-level function to be held shortly. In all, 38 maestros will get the coveted awards for excellence in their respective realms of art besides two fellowships to classical vocalist Girija Devi and danseur Nataraj Ramakrishna. Here is the brief detail of awardees from Punjab and Chandigarh.

Pandit Yashpaul "Sagun Piya" will get the award for his contribution in the Hindustani classical music. He is an innovatory genius-performing artiste of International eminence since 1952. Holding allegiance to Agra Gharana, he had received training from acclaimed gurus, including late Ustad Vilayat Hussain Khan Saheb. A proponent of the guru-shishya tradition, artistic values, purity of the ragas and compositions, he emulates his mentors but with his individualistic aesthetic approach, insight and creative ability. Decorated with Sangeet Sumeru Award, Punjab State Award and the Punjab Sangeet Natak Academy Award, the former principal of MCM DAV College and chairman of Panjab University Music Department, Pandit Yashpaul is one of the finest vocalists of his generation propagating classical vocal music in the region.

Dr Atamjit will be awarded for his contribution to playwriting in Punjabi. An acclaimed academician, actor, playwright, author and theatre director, Dr Atamjit is a blend of many fine traits. Credit with quality work in performing arts, especially theatre, and authoring over 30 publications and editing 25 books

He has given new dimensions to Punjabi theatre. On invitation from Canada and other countries, he had staged his plays there grooming and training their actors. Recipient of many prestigious honours, including national honour of Sahitya Academy besides Punjab Sahit and Punjab Sangeet Natak Academy awards, Dr Atamjit feels recognition of his contribution has inspired him to scale new horizons of meaningful theatre and literature.

Ustad Harbhajan Singh Namdhari is being honoured for Gurbani kirtan. Recognising his exceptional talent, Sri Satguru Jagjit Singhji undertook the of training him in Gurbani sangeet. His talent was nurtured by prominent gurus and Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan. He has inspired Gurbani aspirants, taught kirtan, classical music and performed in Thailand, Kenya, Canada, the US and the UK. As the prominent exponents of Gurbani Kirtan parampara and the senior most among the Namdhari community, he stands tall among his contemporaries.

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