

## World celebrates 50 years of Musical Wonder by Kerala's famous son: Dr. K J Yesudas.

This year, world renowned musician legend Dr. KJ Yesudas celebrates 50 years in the music industry, Varnakairali pays tribute to the legend himself in this edition.

K. J. Yesudas was born in Cochin, on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1940 to Latin Catholic parents Augustine Joseph and Alice kutty.



Yesudas has recorded more than 50,000 songs in various languages including **Malayalam, Tamil, Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Bengali, Gujarati, Oriya, Marathi, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tulu, Malay, Russian, Arabic, Latin and English** during a career spanning five decades. He sings Indian classical, devotional, and pop music songs.

His singing prowess earned him the **India's National Award for the Best Male Playback Singer** seven times (the most by any Indian singer), and the State Award for the Best Playback Singer **43** times which comprises of awards by the State Governments of Kerala(**23**), Tamil Nadu(**8**), Andhra Pradesh(**6**), Karnataka(**5**), and West Bengal(**1**). He was awarded the **Padma Shri** in 1975, followed by the **Padma Bhushan** in 2002 by the Indian Government for his contributions towards the art. He was awarded **Swathi Sangeetha Puraskaram** in 2011, the highest music award given by the Kerala Government.

After winning the Kerala State Award for Best Playback singer on numerous occasions, he requested to be ruled out of contention to give his peers and newcomers a chance of winning the award. Despite his humble request, he was still given this award several times in the following years. He is the only singer who has been accorded the title **Asthana Gayakan** (official singer) of the Kerala State



In 2006, he created history when he sang 16 film songs in four South Indian languages on the same day in Chennai!

In 1965, he was invited by the Soviet Union government to perform at music concerts in various cities in the USSR and also sang a Russian song over Radio Kazakhstan. On November 14, 1999, Yesudas was presented with an honorary award by UNESCO for "Outstanding Achievements in Music and Peace".

He has introduced many young singers, notably popular playback singer Unni Menon, who got a break when Yesudas heard him sing, and introduced him to music director Shyam for film Kadathu.

Yesudas is married to Prabha and they have three sons, Vinod, Vijay and Vishal. The second son Vijay Yesudas is a budding musician who won the Kerala State Film Award for Best Male Playback Singer in 2007. The family is currently settled in Chennai and Trivandrum. He also has a home in Florida, USA.

***The SFTMA Central Committee and all members are very proud of this great Malayalee's achievement and congratulate him on his 50 years of active involvement in the music industry. We will all join in the celebrations and wish him & his family good health and a prosperous future.***