

# Katha Ek Kans Ki: A Timeless Tale Told Anew

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(April 22, 2025 – Brahmapur, Odisha | National Theatre Festival by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi)

In a special conversation at the NSD, Rohit Tripathi, senior theatre practitioner and founder of Upstage Art Group, spoke about his recently staged play 'Katha Ek Kans Ki'.

The play was presented on April 22, 2025, as part of the National Theatre Festival organized by the Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi at Biju Patnaik Cultural Auditorium in Brahmapur, Odisha. Written by Padma Shri Daya Prakash Sinha and directed by Rohit Tripathi, the play reimagines the

mythological character Kans in a contemporary socio-political context.

Padma Shri Daya Prakash Sinha has skillfully retained the essence of Kans while presenting his character with deep psychological layers—on one side, he appears as a ruthless, tyrannical ruler, and on the other, he emerges as a music lover, emotionally fragile, lonely, and vulnerable human being. This duality adds depth to the narrative, making the character complex and compelling. Through this mythological tale, the playwright reflects the contradictions, challenges, and dilemmas of our current times.

The role of Kans was portrayed with striking intensity by Sahil Singh Sethi, whose powerful stage presence left a lasting impression. The supporting cast—including Nitin Tyagi, Ujjwal Raj, Priya, Nikita Gupta, Abhishek, Arjun, Ritesh, Aryan, and Rajesh—also gave commendable performances. Backstage, Mukesh Jha contributed significantly to the smooth execution of the production.

During our conversation, Rohit Tripathi expressed that his commitment to theatre extends far beyond the stage. He shared that after the performance, when the return journey had to be arranged, none of the team had confirmed train tickets. In such a challenging situation, he personally arranged flight tickets for the entire cast and crew from his own funds. It is heartwarming to know that even today, there are directors who show such deep dedication not only to their art but also to their fellow artists.

Katha Ek Kans Ki is not just a mythological retelling—it is a relevant, thoughtful, and stirring theatrical creation that resonates deeply with the present.

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# Katharang Gracefully with Tagore's “Samapti”

## Concludes



### *A Poetic Finale to a Festival of Stories*

New Delhi | April 30, 2025 – The *Katharang* theatre series at the National School of Drama's Sammukh Auditorium concluded on a touching and emotionally rich note with the stage adaptation of Rabindranath Tagore's classic story “**Samapti**”. Presented by **Mailorang** and performed by the **Sambhav Theatre Group**, the production was directed by the eminent **Professor Devendra Raj Ankur**, who brought to the stage his trademark sensitivity and refined theatrical sensibility.

“*Samapti*” (The Completion) is a gentle yet powerful tale of emotional maturity and the freedom to grow into love. At the heart of the story is **Mrinmoyee**, a free-spirited village girl

who is unready for the responsibilities of marriage and dismisses romantic expectations with the careless abandon of youth. When **Apurva**, a kind-hearted law student from Kolkata, falls in love with her and marries her against his mother's wishes, Mrinmoyee struggles to accept the union. Apurva, instead of pressuring her, quietly returns to Kolkata. Left alone, Mrinmoyee begins to reflect, mature, and discover the true meaning of love. When she later visits him in Kolkata, their love story finds its quiet, heartfelt completion—not in dramatic reunion, but in the soft, mutual understanding that comes with time and growth.

The performances were deeply evocative and nuanced. **Amit Saxena** portrayed Apurva with admirable restraint and tenderness, embodying the patience and dignity of a man in love. **Gouri Dewal** brought youthful vibrance and infectious energy to the role of young Mrinmoyee, while **Hema Bisht**, portraying her matured counterpart, captured the inner transformation of the character with great poise and depth. **Durga Sharma**, as Apurva's conservative mother, delivered a layered performance filled with conviction and emotional tension, while **Amitabh Srivastava**, as Mrinmoyee's father, offered a sincere and grounded portrayal of a man caught between tradition and his daughter's spirited nature. The ensemble of **Prakash Jha**, **Nidhi Mishra**, **Tripti Jauhari**, and **Sahej Harjai** supported the narrative with subtle and committed performances that helped bring the world of the play vividly to life.

Aesthetically, the play was a visual and auditory delight. The lighting design by **Raghav Prakash Mishra** added emotional texture to every scene, blending poetic softness with narrative clarity. The carefully curated music by **Rajesh Singh**, operated live by **Unis Yadav**, underscored key moments with sensitivity and restraint, enhancing the atmosphere without overpowering the dialogue or mood.

“Samapti” proved to be the perfect culmination to *Katharang*,

bringing the series to a meaningful and emotionally satisfying close. Following the performance, a special segment took place on stage in which the **writers of the plays featured during the festival**—**Vijay Pandit** (writer of *Jogiya Raag*), **Priyadarshan** (*Betiyan Mannu Ki*), and **Umashanker Choudhary** (*Ayodhya Babu Sanak Gaye Hain*)—shared with the audience the inspirations behind their stories. Their reflections revealed not only their literary intentions but also the personal and cultural resonances that shaped their writing.

Adding a warm and personal touch to the evening, **artists Nidhi Mishra, Amit Saxena, and Gouri Dewal** came forward to share their experiences during the preparation of these productions. They spoke fondly about the collaborative process, the challenges of inhabiting complex characters, and the enriching journey of working under the mentorship of **Professor Devendra Raj Ankur**. Their heartfelt memories underscored the deep sense of community, artistic discipline, and emotional investment that fueled the spirit of *Katharang*.

As the curtains fell on this moving performance, it was clear that *Katharang* had concluded not just with a play, but with a celebration of storytelling, shared experiences, and the quiet power of theatre to transform hearts. “Samapti” lived up to its name—a beautiful completion, both of a love story and of a remarkable festival.

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## **Ayodhya Babu Sanak Gaye Hain— A Mirror to Modern Madness**



On April 29, 2025, the Sammukh auditorium of the National School of Drama, New Delhi, witnessed a deeply moving theatrical experience as part of the '**Katharang**' series. The play "**Ayodhya Babu Sanak Gaye Hain**", presented by Mailorang (Maithili Lok Rang) and staged by Sambhav Theatre Group, resonated profoundly with the audience. Based on a powerful short story of the same name by noted writer Umashankar Chaudhary, the production explored the contradictions and emotional fragmentation in contemporary society through an impactful dramatic interpretation.

Directed by Professor Devendra Raj Ankur, the play reflected a sharp eye for detail and a deep sense of social sensitivity. He intricately wove the essence of the original story into the dramatic structure, using characters as instruments to deliver a scathing commentary on present-day societal realities.

Amit Saxena delivered a layered and sensitive portrayal of the son. His internal conflict, the clash between duty and emotion, and the discomfort arising from Ayodhya Babu's

supposed madness were brought out with striking realism.

Hema Bisht, as the mother, left an unforgettable impression – especially in the final scene where her silent, broken presence on the deathbed conveyed volumes. Her performance evoked quiet grief and emotional depth.

Amitabh Srivastava brought the complex and multi-dimensional character of Ayodhya Babu alive on stage. His portrayal transcended mere eccentricity, revealing a soul tormented by truth and resistance against social hypocrisy. His ‘madness’ became a metaphor for the courage to speak truth in a world of convenient lies.

The lighting design by Raghav Prakash Mishra played a vital role in enhancing the emotional gravity of the scenes. Particularly in the strained moments between mother and son, the lighting subtly underlined the unspoken pain and tension.

With its naturalistic language, piercing dialogues, and emotionally resonant characters, the play captivated the audience from beginning to end. It was not merely a source of entertainment, but an invitation to introspect.

**“Ayodhya Babu Sanak Gaye Hain”** compels us to ask: who is truly mad – the one who dares to speak the truth, or the one who comfortably lives with lies? This remarkable production by Maithili Lok Rang and Sambhav Theatre Group stood out as a shining example of theatrical depth, creativity, and social commitment. By the final scene, the audience was not only emotionally moved but left with lingering questions and reflections.

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# ‘Katharang’: A Stirring Theatrical Tribute to the Inner Worlds of Women



On April 28, 2025, the **Sammukh Auditorium** of the **National School of Drama**, New Delhi, transformed into a space of introspection and intensity as part of the *Katharang* series presented by *Mailorang* (Maithili Lok Rang). The evening featured two poignant theatrical presentations—“**Ek Stree Ke Kaarname**” by Suryabala and “**Betiyaan Mannu Ki**”, based on selected short stories of Mannu Bhandari. Both productions were helmed by acclaimed theatre director **Prof. Devendra Raj Ankur**, known for his ability to breathe theatrical life into literary works with sharp insight and emotional precision.

## “Ek Stree Ke Kaarname” – A Satirical Soliloquy of the Self

The first play, “*Ek Stree Ke Kaarname*”, dived deep into the

psyche of a seemingly balanced and educated woman whose exterior composure masks an inner churning of suppressed emotions, quiet frustrations, and the desperate quest for identity. Suryabala's acerbic wit and psychological depth were beautifully translated on stage through a tight script and layered performances.

**Durga Sharma**, portraying the central character, delivered a finely tuned performance—her expressive control and emotional nuance navigating the character's journey from repression to quiet self-awareness. **Amitabh Srivastava** lent strength to the performance with his presence, bringing balance and rhythm to the narrative's unfolding. The interplay of speech, silence, and irony kept the audience deeply engaged, holding a mirror to the everyday contradictions of womanhood.

### **“Betiyaan Mannu Ki” – Fragments of Feminine Reality**

The second presentation, “*Betiyaan Mannu Ki*”, was an ensemble performance based on several short stories by **Mannu Bhandari**, one of Hindi literature's most powerful voices on gender and identity. The play explored multiple dimensions of womanhood across varied roles and stages of life, offering moments of tenderness, conflict, vulnerability, and resistance.

The cast—**Amit Saxena**, **Gauri Deval**, **Aditi**, and **Rachita Verma**—brought these diverse female experiences to life with empathy and skill. Each transition between characters and narratives was handled with clarity and emotional depth. Whether as daughters, lovers, mothers, or rebels, the female characters emerged with raw honesty, making the stories resonate deeply with the audience.

The production's lighting, designed by **Raghav Prakash Mishra**, subtly enhanced each scene's emotional tone without overpowering the narrative. His use of soft transitions, warm shadows, and isolated highlights helped build the psychological landscapes of both plays. The minimalist set and gentle pacing allowed the performances and text to breathe, focusing the audience's attention squarely on the characters.

and their journeys. The **music selection**, curated by **Rajesh Singh**, provided an evocative auditory backdrop, enhancing each emotional transition. **Sahaj Harjai** and **Unis Yadav** skillfully operated the music during the performances, ensuring smooth and expressive sonic flow that deepened audience immersion.

*Katharang's* theatrical evening was a thoughtful confluence of literature and performance—a celebration of women's stories told with dignity, irony, and emotional truth. Prof. **Devendra Raj Ankur** once again demonstrated his profound sensitivity as a director, translating literary narratives into stage experiences that speak directly to the conscience. The evening left the audience moved, provoked, and awakened reminding us that theatre, at its best, does more than entertain; it opens conversations and illuminates' silences.

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## **When Objects Spoke, and 'Gareeb Nawaz' Raised a Question: A Moving Theatrical Evening in Katharang**



On 27th April 2025, at the Sammukh Auditorium of the National School of Drama, Delhi, the theatrical evening under the “**Katharang**” program—organized by **Mailorang (Maithili Lok Rang), Delhi**—featured Sambhav’s evocative presentation “**Unke Hisse Ka Prem evam Gareeb Nawaz**”. The performance offered an experience that touched audiences at their very core.

The direction was helmed by senior theatre practitioner Prof. Devendra Raj Ankur, whose theatrical finesse was evident in every scene and every emotion of the presentation.

The first story viewed love from an unusual yet striking perspective—where inanimate objects, rather than humans, become witnesses. Set in an office, the hidden layers of a boss’s romantic entanglements are brought to life through the voices of his desk, chair, diary, mirror, and pen. While the concept sounds extraordinary, it was executed on stage with remarkable ease and believability. These lifeless symbols transformed into living characters before the audience’s eyes, each one addressing the viewers—sometimes with sarcasm, at other times with compassion. The director’s choice to turn

objects into “characters” was a daring experiment in theatre, and it proved to be a wholly rewarding one.

The second story depicted a contemporary conflict within society, rendered in a simple yet powerful form. The struggle between Vishwamohan—who returns from America to start a BPO—and Riyaz, who opens a modest “Gareeb Nawaz Chicken Shop” next door, is not merely a business rivalry. It becomes a clash of two worldviews. Beneath its humor and wit, the story makes a poignant commentary: in the blind race for development, how many truths are trampled, and how many “Gareeb Nawaz” figures are pushed to the margins?

On stage, Nidhi Mishra, Gauri Dewal, Rachita Verma, Amitabh Srivastava, Amit Saxena, Harikesh Maurya, Sahaj Harjai, and Prakash Jha brought their characters to life with such intensity and nuance that each scene appeared to unfold right before the audience’s eyes. Their performances added soul to the characters, going beyond mere dialogues. Behind the scenes, too, a dedicated creative team worked tirelessly.

Music selection was curated by Rajesh Singh, and technical operation during the performance managed by Unish Yadav and Sahaj Harjai, whose acoustic execution ensured precise alignment of sound with the emotional tone and rhythm of each scene.

Lighting was sensitively designed by Raghav Prakash Mishra, whose balance of light and shadow added both visual clarity and thematic depth. Every aspect of stage design, management, and visual aesthetics reflected a mature professional sensibility and deep theatrical insight, elevating the performance to a level of artistic completeness.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that this presentation offered more than just two stories—it offered two distinct philosophies of life. One, where love remains forever incomplete; and the other, where in the name of “success,”

human relationships and grounded realities are blurred. Prof. Devendra Raj Ankur's endeavor reaffirmed that theatre does not end at the stage—it becomes an extension of our consciousness.

Sambhav's performance reminded us that when acting, direction, and thought move in unison, theatre becomes more than performance—it becomes a dialogue that resonates deeply within the viewer, long after the lights have dimmed.

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**Sanskar Bharti Kala Sankul  
Once Again became the Witness  
of a Mesmerizing Journey of  
Art, Devotion, and Dialogue**



The monthly symposium began with a heartfelt tribute to the innocent civilians martyred in the recent terrorist attack in Pahalgam. All present members observed two minutes of silence, expressing their emotions in an unspeakable way. The entire atmosphere seemed to be immersed in a silent prayer.

On the auspicious occasion of the lighting of the lamp, all distinguished guests performed the lamp lighting ceremony, illuminating the stage.

Following this, a melodious stream of music began. The soulful singing by Mr. Vijay Rawal and Mr. Veer Mani Trivedi touched the hearts of everyone present. Their mastery of voice filled the atmosphere with unseen compassion and hope.

The main attraction of the symposium was the analytical discussion on the theatrical presentation '**Arey Gadbad Ho Gayi**', inspired by the Sanskrit play '**Bhagavadjukkam**' by Bodhayan, directed by Raj Upadhyay, and performed by Navras Group.

In this discussion, the depth of the story, authenticity of the acting, the liveliness of the stage arrangement, and the artistic features of the entire presentation were examined in detail. Critics appreciated the dedication and effort of the Navras Group artists, stating that the presentation not only entertained but also sparked deep contemplation.

The Navras Group artists were deeply moved after hearing such a heartfelt and in-depth review of their performance. They expressed that such analytical discussions inspired them to further deepen their theatrical practice. They also expressed their gratitude to Sanskar Bharti for providing such a valuable platform.

To elevate the dignity of the event, the presence of several distinguished guests was noteworthy. Dr. Prashant Upadhyay, Delhi Province Minister, Senior NSD theater artist Mr. Pradeep Mohanty, Mrs. Shashi Prabha Tiwari, educationist Dr. Ruchika,

and Mr. Manish Jha honored the event with their esteemed presence.

The success of the program was greatly aided by the contributions of Delhi Province's stage art coordinator Mr. Raj Upadhyay, senior theater artist Shyam Kumar, Shraboni Saha, Garima Rani, Vishwadeep, Sneha Mukherjee, Raman Kumar, Saurav Tripathi, Pradeep Pathak, Mrityunjay, Brijesh, Shivam, Sushank, and Sakshi.

The event was skillfully and warmly conducted by Bharti Dag, and Mrs. Shruti Sinha concluded the art-filled evening with a heartfelt vote of thanks.

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## **Jogiya Raag a Saga of Unwavering Faith and Silent Longing**



On 26th April 2025, at the Sammukh Auditorium of the National School of Drama, New Delhi, the play "**Jogiya Raag**" was presented under the theatre festival "**Katharang**", organized by

the cultural organization Mailorang. Written by Vijay Pandit and directed by Prof. Devendra Raj Ankur, this production transformed a seemingly simple story into an extraordinary emotional experience on stage.

“Katharang” commenced on the same day with the stage being graced by the presence of senior theatre artist Mr. Amitabh Srivastava, who conducted the inaugural ceremony, and renowned literary figure Mr. Ashok Vajpeyi, who attended as the Chief Guest.

The story revolves around Savitri, a woman abandoned by her husband immediately after marriage as he renounces worldly life to become a hermit. Years pass as Savitri patiently waits for him, unwavering in her faith despite societal pressures. Eventually, in an act of poignant resignation, she accepts an unknown ascetic as her lost husband, surrendering herself to her destiny.

Nidhi Mishra, portraying the role of Savitri, delivered a truly exceptional performance. Her command over body movements, dialogue delivery, and the subtle expression of inner turmoil kept the audience deeply engrossed throughout the play. With remarkable ease and depth, she captured the complex emotions of hope, struggle, and despair dwelling within Savitri.

Mukti Das portrayed the character of Bal Mukund with great seriousness and authenticity. His restrained expression of internal conflict and the pain of renunciation, without falling into melodrama, added credibility and depth to his character. His dialogue delivery was composed and truthful, making his presence compelling on stage.

With only two actors on stage, multiple characters were seamlessly brought to life through masterful variations in posture, movement, and voice modulation. This technical challenge was executed with impressive smoothness, making the

character transitions natural and believable.

The innovative use of a simple prop – a saree – deserves special mention. Throughout the play, the saree symbolically transformed – representing femininity, sorrow, or the complex dynamics of shifting relationships, enhancing the thematic layers of the production.

Selection of the music that was played in the play by Sneha Kumar, deepening its mood and emotional texture. Nitin Bharadwaj's lighting design and its careful execution effectively elevated the story's atmosphere, aligning each scene with its emotional tone."

"Jogiya Raag" offered a profoundly moving theatrical experience. The balanced synergy of storytelling, direction, acting, and technical finesse elevated the performance to great artistic heights. The sensitive and sincere efforts of the team ensured that the audience remained deeply connected to the story from beginning to end.

This play is not merely the tale of Savitri's endless waiting and loyalty; it is also a beautiful exploration of human emotions, faith, and the silent resilience embedded in life's most difficult journeys.

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## **Beyond Boundaries: The Artistic Splendor of Nritya Shikhar Mahotsav 2025**



The “Nritya Shikhar Mahotsav 2025,” held at Triveni Kala Sangam in New Delhi, emerged as a grand celebration of the dignity and tradition of Indian classical dance. Organized by the Urvashi Dance Music Art & Culture Society, the festival introduced art enthusiasts to various classical dance styles while elevating Indian cultural heritage to new heights.

On this occasion, Shri Prabhat Kumar, President of Sanskar Bharti Delhi, graced the event as the chief guest. The festival also honored esteemed personalities from the arts world. Pandit Vijay Shankar Mishra, Shri Ashok Jamanani, and Shri Ashok Jain were presented with the *Urvashi Kala Samman*. Distinguished guests such as Shri Ashok Tiwari (Secretary, Sanskar Bharti), Padma Shri awardee and renowned Odissi dancer Smt. Madhavi Mudgal, and Shri Pradeep Kumar Pathak (Secretary, Kala Chaitanya) added further prestige to the event with their presence.

The festival featured mesmerizing performances in various classical dance styles like Kathak, Odissi, and Chhau. Among them, a standout performance was delivered by the dynamic young Kathak dancer Vishwadeep from the Jaipur Gharana.

Vishwadeep’s performance was among the most powerful and talked-about presentations of the event. Trained in the Jaipur Gharana tradition, this young artist brought to life the

strength, emotion, and rhythmic excellence of Kathak. He began with *Chaturbhuj*, depicting the four-armed form of Lord Vishnu through expressive dance. His dynamic gestures, balanced movements, and fluid expressions made the performance truly memorable.

Following that, he presented a dance drama titled *Ravan*, which portrayed the complexities of Ravan's personality and his inner psychological turmoil. This unique choreography blended traditional Kathak elements with deep emotional storytelling. Directed and choreographed by the acclaimed Kathak guru Shama Bhate, the piece preserved the purity of the dance form while offering a fresh perspective.



Vishwadeep's performance was not limited to technical brilliance; through his expressions and body language, he powerfully conveyed the varied emotions within Ravan—pride, power, wisdom, and self-reflection. Especially gripping was his portrayal of Ravan's internal struggle, which left the audience spellbound.

His mastery over footwork, rhythmic patterns (*chakradhars* and *parans*), and emotional depth made the performance unforgettable. The audience greatly appreciated his energy, technical finesse, and expressive storytelling. His presentation was not just a classical dance recital, but a dramatic narrative that showcased Kathak as a potent medium for storytelling. When he embodied Ravan on stage, it felt as though the entire auditorium was witnessing a pivotal moment from an epic, with Ravan in deep introspection. Vishwadeep performed with such natural ease that it didn't feel like a traditional dance performance—it felt like a living, breathing theatrical experience.

The hall erupted in applause after his performance. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Vishwadeep's presentation made "Nritya Shikhar Mahotsav 2025" a cultural milestone that will be remembered for years to come.

Other notable performances included Pune's Ameera Patankar and Delhi's Shobha Bisht. Shobha's Odissi performance beautifully blended devotion, grace, and feminine dignity. The Chhau performance, directed by Guru Ajay Bhatt, was packed with energy and heroic expression (*veer rasa*).

The Kathak duet by Gaurav and Himani demonstrated the power of dialogue and harmony in dance. Their performance showcased a unique balance of creativity, technique, and synchronization.

Smt. Rekha Mehra, President of the Urvashi Dance Music Art & Culture Foundation, played a pivotal role in making the event a resounding success. Her dedication to dance and commitment

to culture imbued the festival with both dignity and artistic excellence.

“Nritya Shikhar Mahotsav 2025” was more than just a cultural event—it was a living celebration of tradition, showcasing the continuity and creativity of Indian classical dance. For both performers and audiences, it was an inspiring experience that will be cherished for a long time.

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## Cultural Extravaganza Marks Hindu New Year at Kala Sankul



New Delhi, March 30, 2025- The central office of Sanskar Bharati, ‘Kala Sankul,’ witnessed a grand celebration on the auspicious occasion of the Hindu New Year with its Monthly Art Symposium. The event showcased an exquisite array of Indian cultural performances, leaving the audience spellbound.

The program commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, followed by a mesmerizing Kathak performance by the

Alaknanda Cultural Group, which highlighted the grandeur of the Indian classical dance tradition. Subsequently, Kuleshwar Thakur and his group captivated the audience with an enthralling Chhau dance performance, characterized by its unique style and expressive gestures.



Renowned Odissi dancer Kavita Dwivedi, addressing the gathering, emphasized that the Indian New Year is not just a date but a significant representation of cultural identity, natural lifestyle, and deep-rooted traditions.

Vijay Kumar, North Zone Organization Minister of Sanskar Bharati, elaborated on the scientific significance of the Indian New Year, highlighting seasonal transitions, the commencement of new academic sessions, financial year changes, and the overall transformation in nature. He also underscored India's pioneering role in developing an artistic system of timekeeping, which has influenced the world. Additionally, he detailed the importance of the Indian calendar, lunar dates, and festivals.

The event saw an impressive turnout of artists, culture enthusiasts, and distinguished guests. Among the notable attendees were senior playwright J.P. Singh, theater artist Rohit Tripathi, Chandrakanta Tripathi, dancer Ritu Shree, art critic Shashi Prabha Tiwari, NSD Secretary Pradeep Mohanty, and Kathak dancer Raksha Singh DeWitt, along with several other prominent figures.

Promoting environmental conservation, Mr. Joginder distributed flower seeds and Tulsi saplings, urging attendees to plant them as a symbolic gesture for the New Year and contribute to ecological preservation.

The success of the program was attributed to the collective efforts of Delhi Province Stage Art Coordinator Raj Upadhyay, senior theater artists Shyam Kumar, Shraboni Saha, Garima, Sneha Mukherjee, Raman Kumar, Vishwadeep, Pradeep Pathak, Mrityunjay, Brijesh, Shivam, Sushank, Nandini, Kathak dancer Sakshi Sharma, Priyanka, and Sakshi. The event was expertly hosted by Bharti Dag, while symposium coordinator Shruti Sinha delivered the vote of thanks.

Sanskari Bharati's 'Kala Sankul' continues to host such events regularly, ensuring the preservation and promotion of Indian art, culture, and traditions.

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## **Natsamrat Theatre Festival: A Celebration of Dramatic Excellence**



### Play Scene

Delhi's renowned theatre group "Natsamrat" once again mesmerized audiences with the 22nd Natsamrat Theatre Festival. This grand theatrical event brought together a collection of eight remarkable plays, each offering a unique blend of humor, drama, and thought-provoking narratives. With powerful performances and engaging storytelling, the festival successfully captured the essence of theatre, leaving a lasting impression on spectators.

The festival commenced on March 15 at 6:15 PM with Anton Chekhov's "The Proposal." This classic farce, filled with witty dialogue and situational humor, kept the audience engaged. The actors skillfully portrayed the irony of a marriage proposal turning into a heated argument over land and a pet dog. Their impeccable timing and expressive performances made the play a delightful experience. Following this, at 7:30 PM, the satirical play "Kallu Nai MBBS" took the stage. This play blended comedy with social critique, addressing themes of domestic violence and gender dynamics. The protagonist, a drunken barber, finds himself in a bizarre situation where he must endure beatings to prove his worth as a doctor. The fast-

paced narrative and lively performances ensured continuous laughter while subtly conveying a deeper message.

On March 16, the audience witnessed “Chekhov Ka Sansar,” a dramatization of two of Chekhov’s iconic stories. The play beautifully combined humor and profound emotions, bringing out the essence of human relationships and social contradictions. The nuanced portrayal of characters and their inner conflicts made it an enriching theatrical experience. Later that evening, at 7:30 PM, “Kambakht Ishq” explored the theme of companionship in old age. The story of two elderly individuals navigating loneliness and seeking emotional support struck a chord with the audience. The actors delivered heartfelt performances, making the play both touching and thought-provoking.

The festival continued on March 22 with “Kuch Tum Kaho Kuch Hum Kahein” by Ashish Kotwal. The narrative revolved around an elderly doctor and a lively woman, Mansi, whose contrasting worlds collide unexpectedly. The interplay of their personalities created a compelling and engaging storyline. At 4:15 PM the same day, “Meri Biwi Ki Shaadi” by Ranbir Singh entertained audiences with its hilarious premise. The protagonist, a hypochondriac, believes he is nearing death and becomes obsessed with planning his wife’s future after his demise. His anxious attempts to arrange her remarriage lead to an unexpected twist, making the play both humorous and insightful.

On March 29 at 3:00 PM, the thought-provoking drama “Aadhi Raat Ke Baad” by Dr. Shankar Shesh was staged. The story followed a thief who, instead of stealing, breaks into a judge’s house to confess a crime he witnessed—a powerful businessman’s involvement in a journalist’s murder. Afraid for his life, he seeks imprisonment as his only refuge. The intense dialogues between the thief and the judge exposed the flaws in the judicial system, leaving a lasting impact on the audience. The festival concluded with “Kaisa Hai Yeh Paisa” by

Shyam Kumar at 4:15 PM. This emotional drama explored the complexities of family relationships and material greed. A devoted father, who spent his life caring for his children, is neglected in his old age. However, when the children discover he is about to receive a large fortune, their attitude takes a drastic turn. The play's gripping narrative and emotional depth made it a memorable finale to the festival.

The festival's success was driven by the stellar performances of actors Vishwajeet, Munmun, Shivangi, Aman Kumar, Raman Kumar, Dhananjay, Ansh Rathore, and Rajan K. Bhatheja. Their dynamic portrayals brought depth and realism to each character, making every play a remarkable experience. Behind the scenes, Sunil Rathore and Suraj Singh managed stage operations efficiently, assisted by Himanshu and Nisha. Raj Rani's makeup artistry enhanced the visual appeal of the characters, while Rohit Prasad and Rekha Devi contributed to costume design. Vansh Rathore handled the musical arrangements, enriching the dramatic atmosphere. Under the expert direction of Shyam Kumar, each play maintained a unique artistic essence. Hosted at LTG Auditorium, Mandi House, the festival witnessed enthusiastic participation, with audiences applauding every performance. The overwhelming response reaffirmed the timeless charm of theatre and the vital role of groups like Natsamrat in preserving and promoting this rich cultural tradition.