From Gita to Natyashastra: Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi Illuminates India's Cultural Legacy

New Delhi – The monthly symposium held at *Kala Sankul*, the central office of Sanskar Bharati, became a resplendent celebration of Indian classical heritage and cultural contemplation. Designed to merge the profound legacy of India's traditional arts with contemporary discourse, the event stood as a testament to the enduring relevance of our civilizational ethos.

At the core of the symposium was an enchanting performance of *Sattriya*—the classical dance form rooted in the 15th-century Vaishnavite devotional movement of Assam, pioneered by the great saint Srimanta Sankardev through his *Ankiya Naat*. In a performance that stirred both the senses and the spirit,

dancers Sukanya Barua and Sumanya Kashyap brought the divine art form to life. Their presentation, steeped in rigorous training, aesthetic sensitivity, and rhythmic precision, unveiled the spiritual depth and narrative beauty intrinsic to Sattriya.

Complementing the artistic experience was an intellectually enriching keynote address by **Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi**, Member Secretary of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Delhi. In his address, he eloquently advocated for the inclusion of the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Natyashastra* in UNESCO's World Heritage List. "The Gita is not merely a religious scripture," he emphasized, "but a timeless philosophy of life; and the Natyashastra, the scientific foundation of Indian artistic consciousness." His words resonated deeply, drawing attention to the unfortunate irony that many of India's priceless spiritual texts remain better preserved abroad than within our own institutions.

Shri Joshi also raised a critical concern regarding the preservation of India's manuscript wealth—while India houses the largest number of ancient manuscripts globally, the number of scholars actively studying and interpreting them remains alarmingly low. His reflections served not just as commentary, but as a call to action—urging institutions, artists, and scholars toward research and revival.

The symposium saw the gracious presence of distinguished personalities from the cultural and academic domains. Among them were **Dr. Vinod Narayan Indurkar**, Chairman of CCRT; **Sh. Rahul Kumar**, Deputy Director, CCRT; renowned Odissi exponent **Kasturi Patnaik**; **Sh. Jitendra Kumar**, Convenor of the Visual Arts Department, Sanskar Bharati Delhi; **Shri Raj Upadhyay**, Performing Arts Convenor; playwright **Sh. Alok Shukla**; art critic **Shashi Prabha Tiwari**, along with many other senior artists, scholars, and cultural connoisseurs.

A large team of dedicated volunteers played an integral role

in the successful execution of the event. Key contributors included Convenor **Garima Rani**, Co-convenor **Vishwadeep**, **Sneha Mukherjee**, Eminent Theatre Director **Shyam Kumar**, **Shraboni Saha**, **Saurabh Triathi**, **Harshit Goyal**, **Pradeep Pathak**, **Muskan**, **Khushi**, **Kriti**, **Sakshi Sharma**, and **Tarushi**, whose behind-the-scenes efforts were deeply appreciated.

The proceedings were elegantly compered by senior anchor **Bharati Dang**, whose poise and eloquence added grace to the evening. The formal vote of thanks was delivered by **Sh. Kuldeep Sharma**, convenor of the theatrical wing, and the event concluded on a tranquil note with the chanting of the *Shanti Mantra*.

More than just a cultural evening, this symposium served as a meaningful reminder of India’s vast artistic and philosophical legacy. It illustrated how, even in an age of rapid modernization, there remains a deep well of tradition from which we continue to draw inspiration. It reaffirmed that tradition and progress are not opposing forces—but vital companions on the journey of cultural continuity.