Symposium on “Bharatmuni’s Natya Shastra – Tradition and Experimentation” with Professor Bharat Gupt

New Delhi, July 28, 2024: The “Bharatmuni’s Natya Shastra – Tradition and Experimentation” symposium, hosted by Sanskar Bharati’s ‘Kala Sankul,’ was graced by the presence of renowned classical artist and theater theorist Professor

Bharat Gupt. His insights on the significance and deep aspects of ancient Indian theater added great value to the event.

In his address, Professor Gupt highlighted the crucial elements of ancient Indian theater. He remarked that while the British sought to revive Indian drama through European theatre during the Islamic period in India, Indian historians have not done justice to the native dramatic traditions. He also expressed concern that successive governments since independence have largely ignored the importance of drama.

Professor Gupt questioned why, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, there is no memorial for Bharatmuni, the father of Indian theatre, despite India having one of the oldest theater traditions in the world. He praised the linguistic integration in ancient Indian dramas as a unique example of Indian tradition and lamented the lack of due respect due to conflicting historical narratives among scholars.

He stressed the need to unify the two streams of Indian tradition—ancient and urban—and underscored the significance of linguistic integration in theatre. The symposium saw participation from students, professors, playwrights, and

theatre practitioners who discussed the necessity of innovation in drama.

Sanskar Bharati ‘Kala Sankul’ organizes monthly symposia on various subjects like music, dance, folk dance, literature, and visual arts on the last Sunday of each month. These symposia, held at the Kala Sankul on Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, review and discuss the challenges and integration of Indian art perspectives.

The event was attended by notable artists such as Padma Shri Ram Sutar, Padma Shri Ranjana Gauhar, Bharatanatyam dancer Rama Vaidyanathan, Flutist Pandit Chetan Joshi, Jayaprabha Menon, Abhay Sopori, Meenu Thakur, and Professor Chandan Chaubey.

The success of the symposium was attributed to the efforts of the organizing team, including Coordinator Kuldeep Sharma, Advisor Raj Upadhyay & Shyam Kumar, Assistant Coordinator Raman Kumar, Anjali Kumari, Sujata Kumari, Saurabh Kumar, Shruti Sinha, Vishwadeep, Sakshi Sharma, and Dr. Prashant Upadhyay, Brajesh Bhatt, Dr. Shailesh Srivastava, Brijesh, Shivam, Vijendra and Mani Kumar.

Prominent theatre artists, playwrights, directors such as Professor Chandan Chaubey, Delhi University theater critic Lokendra Trivedi, Senior Social Worker Khulna Sahni, theater director Rohit Tripathi, J. P. Singh and Chandrakanta Tripathi were also present. The symposium was successfully conducted by Garima Rani.