

A society that lacks reverence for its gurus cannot progress – Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi

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On the sacred occasion of Guru Purnima, the Kalakosa Division of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) celebrated its Foundation Day with great fervour. The event took place at the Centre's Samvet Auditorium. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Prof. Shashiprabha Kumar, Chairperson of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS), Shimla, while the Special Guest of Honour was Prof. Gopal Prasad Sharma, former Head of the Department of Vedas at Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University. The programme was presided over by Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNCA. Following the main ceremony, the guests inaugurated a unique exhibition titled 'Nabakalebara of Lord Jagannath', based on the deity's sacred transformation ritual. The exhibition, organised by IGNCA's Division of Greater India and Regional Studies, will remain open to the public until 22 July.



The programme began with Prof. Sudhir Lall, Head of the Kalakosa Division, presenting the Annual Report for 2024–25, highlighting the division's key activities and achievements. On this occasion, several important publications were also released, including the biannual research journal Kalakalpa, the eighth volume in the Kalamoolatattva series, titles from the Bharatgatha and Bharatkatha series, along with other scholarly works.

Delivering the keynote address, Prof. Shashiprabha Kumar said that the word festival (parva) itself signifies a 'joint'- like a node in a sugarcane stalk where the sweetness gathers. In the same way, when life becomes monotonous, a festival arrives and brings joy and inspiration. Festivals not only offer spiritual and emotional rejuvenation but also guide us towards growth and excellence. India, she noted, is a knowledge-driven civilisation. She added, "The one who leads us from falsehood to truth, from darkness to light, and from mortality to immortality is the true Guru."

Prof. Gopal Sharma, in his address, remarked that Guru Purnima holds deep significance in the Indian knowledge tradition. It is also celebrated as Vyas Purnima, in honour of Bhagavan Vedavyasa, whose vast contributions defy easy articulation. While in the Satya, Treta, and Dvapara Yugas the Vedas existed as one, in the Kaliyuga it was Vedavyasa who divided them into four parts. Our knowledge tradition, he emphasised, is transmitted through the Guru. The hymns dedicated to the Guru in Indian scripture primarily refer to the initiating Guru (Diksha Guru). He elaborated on the difference between the teaching Guru and the initiating Guru, noting that if education aligns with initiation, it facilitates the pursuit of the 'Supreme Truth'. He also referenced the 24 gurus of Dattatreya, explaining the diverse forms and significance of the Guru across Indian traditions. Each Gurukula, he said, has its own customs, verses, and belief systems-preserving this tradition is a collective yet challenging responsibility.

In his presidential address, Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi congratulated the Kalakosa Division for publishing 16 books in a single year, remarking that these are not ordinary texts but valuable reference works in India's knowledge tradition. He shared that with the publication of over 500 scholarly volumes; IGNCA continues to make a vital contribution to the Indian intellectual tradition. Dr. Joshi urged everyone to not only remember their Guru on Guru Purnima but also to honour their mother, who gives birth, imparts initial lessons, and offers spiritual initiation. "No society can truly evolve or prosper if it lacks reverence for its gurus," he remarked.

The programme was gracefully conducted by Dr. Yogesh Sharma, Associate Professor, Kalakosa Division, and the vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Arvind Sharma. The event was attended by numerous scholars, researchers, cultural practitioners, and art lovers. Held on the deeply symbolic occasion of Guru Purnima, the celebration served as a reminder of India's Guru-Shishya tradition and its enduring knowledge legacy, making it a true expression of cultural awareness.

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