

**Mann Ki Baat' has become the Voice of the People".
– Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi**

IGNCA's Conservation and Cultural Archives Division Marks Foundation Day with Focus on Heritage Preservation

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The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Ministry of Culture, Government of India, marked the Foundation Day of its Conservation and Cultural Archives Division on 17th September 2025, coinciding with Vishwakarma Jayanti. The celebrations were attended by Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNCA, as Chief Guest, Shri Ajay Bhatnagar, Senior IPS Officer, as Guest of Honour, along with colleagues, students, and invited guests. In a separate event, held in continuation of the 'Mann Ki Baat' Painting Exhibition at IGNCA, a discussion on the book 'Igniting Collective Goodness', based on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's popular radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat', was conducted. The event was graced by Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi and Dr. Priyanka Mishra, Director (Administration) IGNCA and other officials of the Centre.



Dr. Joshi remarked, “A programme like Mann Ki Baat is perhaps unique in the world. Through this initiative, the Prime Minister connects directly with the people of the country, inspiring citizens and fostering community engagement.” He further noted that the first 100 episodes of the programme have been heard by over 100 crore people and praised and praised for its shared community spirit, as citizens often gather to listen together. Highlighting the impact of the programme, he added that even children today are teaching others about cleanliness, reflecting the Prime Minister's Gandhian inspiration.



Dr. Joshi noted that through Mann Ki Baat, Prime Minister Modi connects directly with the people, choosing radio as an easily accessible medium. The programme is not a one-way dialogue; it features stories from across the country, with active participation from citizens, making it the voice of the people. Launched on Vijayadashami in 2014, over 100 episodes have since been broadcasted. Dr. Joshi added that radio's auditory medium creates a unique impact, while each episode highlights special events or achievements nationwide, inspiring others. Initiatives like cleanliness demonstrate the programme's effect, with even young children teaching family and community members, reflecting the Prime Minister's Gandhian inspiration. During the discussion on 'Igniting Collective Goodness', Dr. Priyanka Mishra, Director (Administration) of the Arts Centre, spoke on the book alongside five volumes of the Prime Minister's speeches, highlighting Dr. Joshi's key role in editing the compilation.

Speaking on the occasion of Conservation Division foundation day Celebrations, Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNCA, noted that the Conservation Division has emerged as a force of over 150 conservators, advancing landmark projects from Ladakh to Wardha, including the initiative at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Rural Industries and the installation of the world's largest Nataraja at Bharat Mandapam. With exemplary capacity-building efforts such as the all-women team in Ladakh, the Division has combined scale with inclusivity. He emphasised that the team's tireless dedication—working day and night with the zeal of an armed force—has set new benchmarks of commitment. Recalling the Gyan Bharatam conference, he said, "The Prime Minister lauded the efforts of conservators and encouraged the youth to take up this noble profession for safeguarding heritage." Dr. Joshi further underlined that the Division today stands recognised both nationally and internationally, and its enduring work will continue to benefit generations to come. He congratulated Prof. Achal Pandya, his team, and the students preparing to become proficient conservators for their outstanding contribution to preserving India's invaluable cultural heritage.

Prof. Achal Pandya, Head of the Division, highlighted the remarkable journey of the Conservation and Cultural Archives Division and its growing national and international presence. He asserted the importance of conservation through the Division's large-scale projects, including the preservation of cultural treasures at Orchha, Vadodara, Lalbagh (Indore), Patna Museum, Albert Hall Museum (Jaipur), Bharatpur, Ladakh, and the Supreme Court of India. With over 150 conservators engaged, the Division balances hands-on

conservation with capacity building, exemplified by initiatives like the all-women team in Ladakh. Prof. Pandya also recognised the Division's role in landmark projects such as the installation of the world's largest Nataraja at Bharat Mandapam, praising the team's dedication, discipline, and exemplary efficiency, reflecting the critical role of conservation in safeguarding India's cultural heritage.

Shri Ajay Bhatnagar commended the Division's sustained efforts in preserving India's cultural assets and stressed the broader significance of conservation awareness. Adding a cultural dimension to the celebrations, a demonstration of Ikebana—the Japanese art of flower arrangement—was presented by Master Takaho Asonuma of the Kuwahara Senke School, accompanied by her team, captivating the audience with its harmony and grace.

The event concluded with congratulations extended to Prof. Achal Pandya, his team, and the students preparing to become skilled conservators, acknowledging their tireless contribution to safeguarding India's invaluable cultural heritage.

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