

Union Minister Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat: "In Kalidasa's works, woman is not merely a subject of beauty"

**'Kaho Kalidasa!', a novel by Yugul Joshi, on the poet's life
and works, launched at IGNCA, New Delhi**

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Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, **Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**, on Tuesday said that women in the works of the classical Sanskrit poet *Kalidasa* are not merely subjects of beauty, but are portrayed as embodiments of consciousness, dignity and love.

He was speaking as the Chief Guest at the launch and discussion of the book **'Kaho Kalidasa!'** authored by Shri Yugul Joshi and published by Manjul Publishing House, in the presence of other dignitaries from the fields of literature, culture and public life. The event, organized by the *Kala Nidhi* Division of the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)** at the Samvet Auditorium, IGNCA, New Delhi, was attended by a large gathering from diverse fields. The book explores various dimensions of *Kalidasa's* life and works, including love, separation, responsibility, nature and, in particular, his female characters, drawing on the emotions and subtle indications embedded in the poet's own writings.



The Minister said that imagination is an eternal aspect of human life and what makes human beings truly human. He described the occasion as more than a book launch, calling it an opportunity to give voice to the historical silence that has long surrounded *Kalidasa's* lesser-known personal and creative life. Since authentic biographical details about *Kalidasa* are limited, he noted, such literary explorations attempt to understand his life and sensibilities through his works.

He further said that creators of literature, art and culture inspire society through their creativity and contribute to building a cultural heritage for future generations, adding that the title '*Kaho Kalidasa!*' functions as an intimate call, establishing a dialogue with *Kalidasa* from the present day.



While history asks what happened, when and where, he said, literature seeks to understand what took place in the human mind, thereby offering an opportunity to explore the unexplored dimensions of history through sensitivity, imagination and narrative. He congratulated author Shri Yugul Joshi on the creative endeavour and expressed hope that the book would be widely read and discussed, enabling readers to understand *Kalidasa* from a new perspective.



Speaking about the content of the book, Shri Yugul Joshi referred to the celebrated writer Goethe's observation about *Kalidasa*, saying that if heaven and the human world can be seen together, it is possible only in *Kalidasa's Shakuntalam*. He further said that the people of Mithila consider *Kalidasa* to be their own, as do the people of Ujjain and Uttarakhand. People across different parts of the country claim him as their own, but *Kalidasa* belongs to the entire nation. A large number of people from the fields of literature, art, culture and academia attended the programme.

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