

CSIR Weekly Briefing: Cultural Connect

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ISKCON Rath Yatra processions abroad



On 27-28th June 2026, ISKCON organised grand Rath Yatra processions across several countries, reaffirming the universal message of devotion, harmony, and service associated with the Jagannath tradition. On 27th June, colourful chariot festivals were held in Milton, St. John's, and Newfoundland in Canada, as well as in Cologne, Germany. The celebrations continued on 28th June with Rath Yatra processions in Saranagati and Berkeley in North America, and Leicester, England. These events witnessed enthusiastic participation from members of the Bhartiya diaspora, local residents, devotees, and people from diverse cultural backgrounds, reflecting the ever-expanding global footprint of Bharatiya civilisation.

The overseas Rath Yatra celebrations showcased the rich spiritual heritage of Bharat through traditional chariot processions, congregational Harinam Sankirtan, devotional music, classical and folk cultural performances, scriptural discourses, and the distribution of Mahaprasad. Decorated chariots carrying the sacred deities of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra moved through prominent streets, drawing large gatherings of devotees and curious visitors alike. The festivals offered international audiences an opportunity to experience one of Bharat's most ancient and revered living traditions, fostering deeper appreciation for Bhartiya philosophy, spirituality, and cultural values. Volunteers from diverse communities contributed to the organisation of these events, reflecting the inclusive and participatory nature of the Jagannath tradition.

The celebrations embody the timeless ideals of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam-the world as one family by promoting devotion, compassion, social harmony, and selfless service. Through devotional music, traditional arts, cultural exhibitions, yoga, spiritual literature, and community outreach, these festivals create meaningful people-to-people connections and strengthen awareness of Bharatiya civilisational heritage among global audiences.

The festival serves as a bridge connecting Bharat with communities across continents through shared spiritual experiences and cultural engagement. As Bhartiya traditions continue to gain international recognition, Rath Yatra stands as a living symbol of the universal values embedded in Sanatana Dharma, inspiring peace, harmony, and mutual respect.

Source: Odisha TV

https://odishatv.in/odisha/iskcon-holds-fresh-rath-yatras-abroad-despite-ongoing-controversy-over-festival-dates-12121485

Snana Yatra of Lord Jagannath Celebrated in Chattogram, Bangladesh



The sacred Snana Yatra of Lord Jagannath was celebrated with great devotion on 29th June 2026 at ISKCON Nadankanan in Chattogram, Bangladesh, reaffirming the enduring presence of the Jagannath tradition beyond the borders of Bharat. Observed annually on the full moon (Purnima) of the month of Jyeshtha according to the traditional Jagannath temple calendar, Snana Yatra

commemorates the ceremonial bathing of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra with 108 pots of sanctified water, marking one of the most significant festivals in the Jagannath tradition and heralding the preparations for the annual Rath Yatra. The celebration at Chattogram witnessed enthusiastic participation from devotees, members of the local Hindu community, cultural organisations, and well-wishers, reflecting the continued vitality of Bharatiya spiritual traditions in Bangladesh and the deep-rooted reverence for Lord Jagannath among devotees across Southern part of Asia. The temple premises resonated with Vedic chants, *Harinam Sankirtan*, devotional bhajans, scriptural recitations, and traditional rituals as devotees gathered to witness the sacred Maha Snana ceremony and offer prayers to the deities.

The occasion provided an opportunity for the local community to participate collectively in one of Bharat's oldest living worship traditions, strengthening cultural continuity while preserving centuries-old ritual practices associated with the Jagannath tradition. The celebrations also highlighted the historical and civilisational links shared between Bharat and Bangladesh, where the worship of Lord Jagannath continues to flourish through temples, devotional institutions, and community organisations. Representatives of the *Bhartiya Sahayak Uchchayog* (Assistant High Commission of India) in Chittagong were present during the celebrations, and the mission, through its official communication, stated that it 'felt blessed to have joined the ceremonial bathing of Lord Jagannath,' acknowledging the spiritual significance of the occasion and the enduring cultural bonds between the two countries. The participation of the Bhartiya mission complemented a celebration that remained centred on the sacred observance itself and the devotional sentiments of the local community.
Source: *Bhartiya Sahayak Uchchayog* (Assistant High Commission of India), Chittagong
https://www.ahcichittagong.gov.in/

‘Living Heritage in Metal…’ exhibition



Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Kala Kendra (Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, IGNCA), host the exhibition 'Living Heritage in Metal, Bamboo, and Clay: Traditional Utensils of Northeast Bharat' at its Darshanam I & II Galleries, Janpath Building, New Delhi. The exhibition would be open to the public from 23rd June to 3rd July 2026, between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., providing visitors with an opportunity to explore the traditional material culture of Northeastern part of Bharat, through a carefully curated display of household utensils crafted from metal, bamboo, and clay. The exhibition formed part of IGNCA's continuing programme of documenting, preserving, and promoting Bharat's diverse artistic and material heritage through research-based public exhibitions and educational outreach.

The exhibition presented a comprehensive overview of the traditional utensils that have historically been an integral part of everyday life in the eight states in north eastern part of Bharat. The displayed artefacts illustrated the region's rich craftsmanship, local technologies, and sustainable use of locally available natural resources. Through traditional utensils fashioned from metal, bamboo, and clay, the exhibition highlighted the ingenuity of artisan communities and their deep relationship with the natural environment. The exhibits also reflected the cultural diversity of the region by demonstrating how household objects embody local customs, culinary traditions, social practices, and community identities that have evolved over generations.

According to IGNCA, the exhibition sought to showcase the folk life, traditional craftsmanship, and cultural traditions of north eastern parts of Bharat while drawing attention to the continuity of hand-crafted traditions despite rapid industrialisation and changing lifestyles. The initiative

underscored the importance of preserving traditional knowledge systems and artisanal practices that continue to survive through the skills of local communities. The exhibition was organised by the National Mission on Cultural Mapping, under the *Sanskriti Mantralay* (Ministry of Culture), in collaboration with the North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation Limited (NEHHDC), reflecting a collaborative effort to document and present the region's living heritage before a wider national audience.

The exhibition represented an important initiative in presenting the richness and diversity of Bharat's creative-productive culture through scholarly documentation and public engagement. By showcasing the living traditions of north eastern parts of Bharat alongside the craftsmanship and knowledge systems that continue to sustain them, the exhibition reinforced the idea of Bharat 's cultural diversity as an integral component of its civilisational heritage. Such initiatives strengthen public awareness of Bharat 's traditional arts and crafts, support the preservation of localknowledge, and contribute to projecting Bharat's cultural legacy as a living, dynamic, and inclusive heritage that continues to inspire contemporary society.

Source: *Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Kala Kendra* (Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, IGNCA)
https://ignca.gov.in/

The International Gita Mahotsav,Japan



The International Gita Mahotsav (IGM) 2026 was organised in Tokyo, Japan, from 19th to 23rd June 2026, marking another significant milestone in the global outreach of the Bhagavad Gita and Bharatiya civilisational heritage. Organised as the international edition of the annual International Gita Mahotsav of Kurukshetra, the five-day festival brought together scholars, spiritual leaders, diplomats, academicians, members of the Bharatiya diaspora, Japanese citizens, and cultural enthusiasts to celebrate the timeless teachings of the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*. The Mahotsav commenced with the presentation of copies of the Bhagavad Gita to members of Japan's National Parliament (Diet), prominent political leaders, scholars, and friends of Bharat -Japan relations, symbolising the universal relevance of the Gita's message beyond national and cultural boundaries. The international celebration formed part of the continuing efforts to promote the Bhagavad Gita as a source of ethical values, peace, and global harmony while strengthening the cultural partnership between Bharat and Japan.

The festival featured a diverse range of academic, spiritual, and cultural programmes at multiple venues in Tokyo. Among its major attractions were the Gita Exhibition, International Gita Seminar, Global Gita Chanting, Gita Yajna, Peace March, Gita Aarti, cultural performances, and interactive sessions highlighting the philosophical and contemporary relevance of the Bhagavad Gita. A major academic event was the International Gita Seminar held at the Ito International

Research Center, University of Tokyo, where scholars from Bharat and Japan deliberated on the universal teachings of the Gita and their application to contemporary global challenges, including mental well-being, ethical leadership, and international peace. The Mahotsav also recognised the contribution of Japanese scholars towards the study and dissemination of the Bhagavad Gita and Bharatiya philosophy, further strengthening intellectual and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

The International Gita Mahotsav in Japan represented an important platform for deepening civilisational ties between Bharat and Japan through shared philosophical dialogue, cultural exchange, and people-to-people engagement. By presenting the Bhagavad Gita through exhibitions, seminars, devotional activities, and cultural programmes, the festival projected Bharat's ancient wisdom traditions to an international audience while reinforcing the universal values of *dharma (*righteous conduct), peace, harmony, *nishkama-karma (*selfless action), and human welfare embodied in the Gita. Although the principal International Gita Mahotsav continues to be celebrated annually in Kurukshetra, Haryana, during November–December on the occasion of Gita Jayanti, its international editions have emerged as an important instruments of Bharat 's cultural outreach, extending the message of the Bhagavad Gita to audiences across the world and strengthening Bharat's image as a civilisation rooted in timeless knowledge, spiritual dialogue, and universal human values.

Source: International Gita Mahotsav

https://internationalgitamahotsav.in/

Sahitya Akademi Organises Nationwide Literary Programmes to Celebrate Bharat's Linguistic and Literary Heritage

During the week of 25–30th June 2026, the Sahitya Akademi, under the *Sanskriti Mantralay* (Ministry of Culture), conducted a series of literary programmes across Jharkhand, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Bihar, Maharashtra, and Kerala, reaffirming its commitment to preserving, promoting, and disseminating the rich linguistic and literary traditions of Bharat. Through literary forums, symposia, poetry readings, youth literary sessions, and author interactions, the Akademi brought together eminent writers, scholars, students, researchers, and literary enthusiasts representing diverse Bhartiya languages. The programmes reflected the Akademi's constitutional mandate of nurturing literature in the recognised languages of Bharat while encouraging dialogue, scholarship, and creative expression across regions and generations.

The literary initiatives commenced on 25th June 2026 at Chandil, Jharkhand, where the Akademi organised two *Santhali*-language programmes in collaboration with Singhbhum College and Juwan Onoliya. The first, ‘Literary Forum: Life and Works of Raghunath Tudu,’examined the

literary contribution of the distinguished Santhali writers, while the second programme, ‘Yuva Sahiti: Readings by Young Santhali Writers,’ provided an important platform for emerging voices in Santhali literature. On 26 June, the Akademi organised a Symposium on the Fundamental Constituents of Konkani Literature in collaboration with the Thomas Stephens Konknni Kendra, Porvorim, Goa, facilitating scholarly discussions on the evolution and distinctive features of Konkani literary traditions. On the same day, a Literary Forum titled 'Past Creative Luminaries of Karaikudi' was organised with the Department of Fine Arts, Alagappa University, Tamil Nadu, highlighting the contributions of eminent literary personalities associated with Karaikudi and the region's cultural heritage.

The literary outreach continued on 27th June 2026 with multiple programmes across different states. At Haldwani, Uttarakhand, the Akademi organised a one-day Hindi symposium devoted to the life and literary contributions of the distinguished Hindi author Usha Kiran Khan in collaboration with Uttarakhand Open University. In Rajkot, Gujarat, the Akademi hosted 'Kavisandhi,' where eminent Gujarati poet Urvish Vasavda presented readings from his poetry at Lang Library, Jubilee Baug, fostering interaction between poets and readers. Simultaneously, in Supaul, Bihar, the Akademi organised a 'Meet the Author' session featuring eminent Maithili writer Mahendra, followed by a symposium on 'Ramanugraha Jha: Personality and Creativity,' in collaboration with the Koshi Organisation, encouraging greater appreciation of Maithili literary heritage.

On 28th June 2026, the Akademi organised a Literary Forum: Readings by Marathi Writers at B. Raghunath College, Parbhani, Maharashtra, promoting contemporary Marathi literature through direct engagement between writers and audiences. On the same day, another Maithili symposium was held at Saharsa, Bihar, in collaboration with the Paramhans Lakshminath Gosain Chair, Post Graduate Centre, Bhupendra Narayan Mandal University, focusing on the literary contributions of Manoranjan Jha and Jayanand Jha. The week's literary activities concluded on 30th June 2026 with 'Gramalok: Gujarati Poetry Reading' organised at Government Arts and Commerce College, Barwala, Botad, Gujarat, celebrating rural literary expression in Gujarati. On the same day, the Akademi also organised a symposium commemorating the birth centenary of Malayalam writer Nileena Abraham in collaboration with the Department of Malayalam, Maharaja's College, Ernakulam, recognising her enduring contribution to Malayalam literature.
Source: Sahitya Akademi
https://sahitya-akademi.gov.in/Archive/events.jsp

30th Sindhu Darshan Festival Celebrates Bharat's Civilisational Heritage and Cultural Unity



The 30th Sindhu Darshan Festival, commemorated as the 'Pratham Sindhu Kumbh,' was celebrated at Sindhu Ghat, Leh, Ladakh, from 22nd to 27th June 2026, with its principal cultural programmes and concluding ceremonies taking place during the week. The festival, dedicated to the sacred *Sindhu* (Indus) River, marked three decades of celebrating one of the oldest symbols of Bharat's civilisation and cultural continuity. The Sindhu River occupies a unique place in Bharatiya history as one of the earliest cradles of civilisation and has, for centuries, symbolised the cultural, historical, and spiritual identity of Bharat. The 2026 edition brought together devotees, cultural practitioners, artists, scholars, visitors, and representatives from different parts of the country to pay homage to the river while celebrating the diversity and unity of Bharat's cultural traditions. Organised on the banks of Sindhu, the festival continued its long-standing objective of promoting the river as 'a representation of social harmony' and as a shared civilisational heritage connecting people across regions and communities.

The second day of the festival featured an extensive Cultural Exchange Programme, in which artists and cultural troupes from different states presented traditional folk dances, music, devotional performances, and local cultural traditions. The performances transformed Sindhu Ghat into a vibrant platform for showcasing the rich diversity of Bharat's performing arts while fostering interaction among participants from different cultural backgrounds. The concluding celebrations on 27th June 2026 included cultural performances, traditional music, dance

presentations, and a symbolic tribute to the Sindhu River, reflecting gratitude towards the river that has nurtured civilisation for millennia. Throughout the festival, devotional ceremonies, cultural presentations, and community participation highlighted the shared civilisational values associated with the Sindhu and reinforced the river's significance as a unifying cultural symbol.

The successful observance of the Pratham Sindhu Kumbh reaffirmed the enduring significance of the Sindhu River as a symbol of cultural continuity, shared heritage, and social harmony while showcasing the diversity of Bharat's artistic and spiritual traditions through music, dance, rituals, and cultural performances. The festival continues to serve as an important platform for preserving and promoting the civilisational legacy of the Sindhu River and for enhancing Bharat's cultural outreach through the celebration of its prolonged heritage.

Source: Sindhu Darshan Yatra Samiti

https://sindhudarshan.org.in/

First Vande Mataram Camp Concludes in Brainware University, Kolkata



The week-long Vande Mataram Camp 2026, organised by *Mera Yuva Bharat* (My Young Bharat, MY Bharat), West Bengal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands, under the aegis of the *Yuva evam Khel Mantralaya* (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports), concluded on 30th June at Brainware University, Barasat, Kolkata, West Bengal. Held from 24th to 30th June 2026, the camp

commemorated the 150th anniversary of the National Song ‘Vande Mataram’ and brought together 150 youth delegates from Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands to strengthen the spirit of national integration, cultural exchange and youth leadership.Throughout the seven-day camp, participants engaged in a wide range of sessions and activities focused on constitutional values, leadership development, civic responsibility and nation-building. Expert-led sessions on the Bhartiya Constitution, Directive Principles of State Policy, Government flagship initiatives and leadership development equipped participants with practical knowledge and skills, while interactive activities encouraged teamwork, critical thinking and collaborative learning.

The camp served as a vibrant platform for promoting the spirit of *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat*, with participants taking part in peer learning sessions, cultural exchanges and traditional art demonstrations that celebrated Bharat's rich cultural diversity. Delegates also showcased the customs, traditions and folk heritage of their partner States, fostering mutual understanding and national unity.

One of the highlights of the camp was the educational visit to the ancestral residence and museum of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, where participants explored the historical legacy of the National Song Vande Mataram and gained deeper insights into Bharat's freedom movement and cultural heritage.

In line with the vision of youth-led nation building, participants also undertook community service initiatives, including a cleanliness drive, a plantation drive and the Nasha Mukt Bharat Pledge, reaffirming their commitment towards environmental sustainability, social responsibility and a drug-free Bharat. The camp also encouraged innovation and entrepreneurship through group presentations, where participants proposed solutions addressing rural livelihoods, sustainable development and technology-driven social impact.

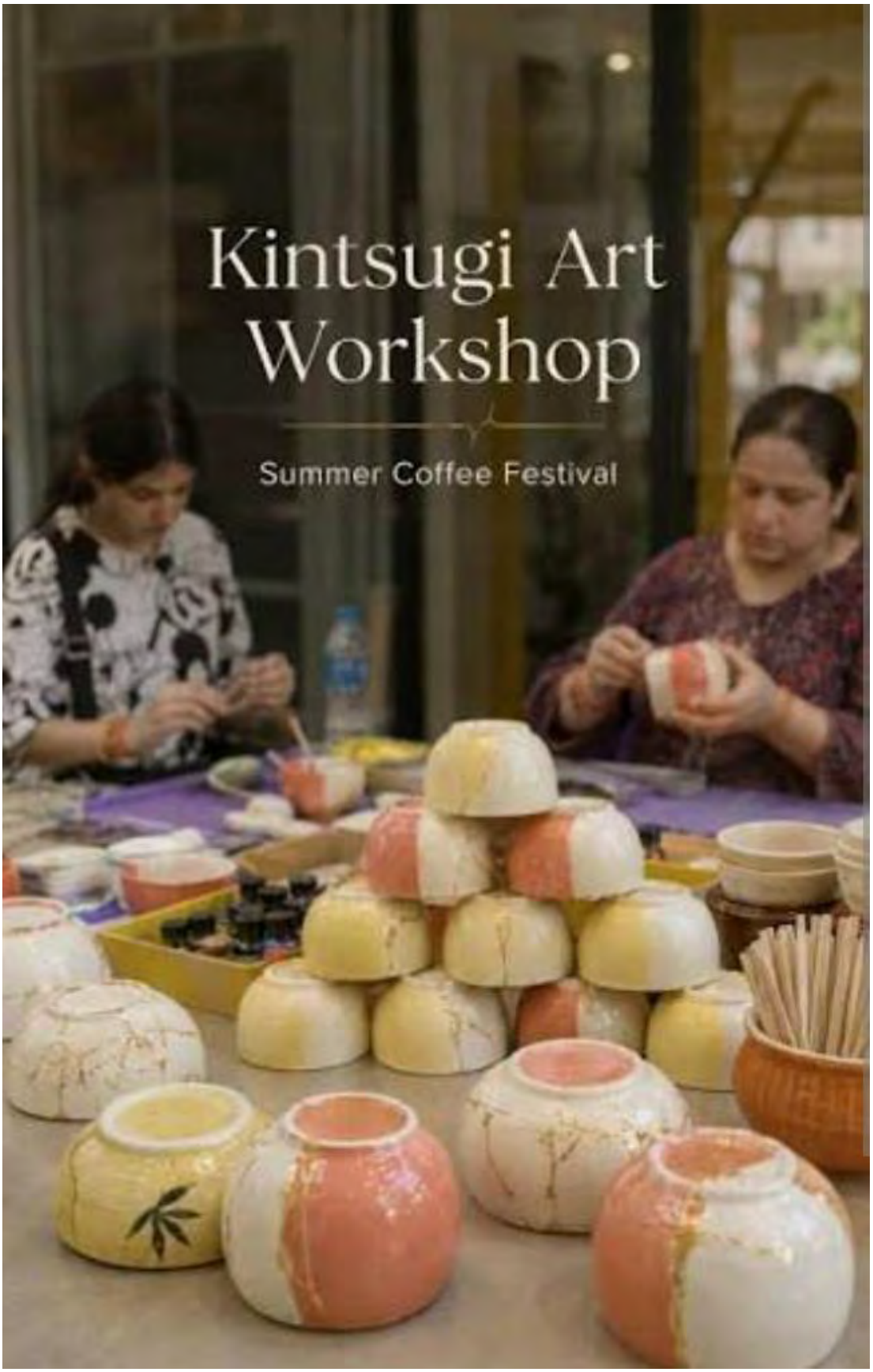
The valedictory session was graced by Shri Pijush Kanti Das, Director, Department of Youth Services and Sports, Government of West Bengal, along with senior officials of MY Bharat and Brainware University. The dignitaries appreciated the enthusiasm and active participation of the delegates throughout the camp and reiterated the importance of such initiatives in nurturing responsible, informed and patriotic young citizens.

The camp concluded with a collective rendition of the National Song 'Vande Mataram', symbolising unity, patriotism and the shared resolve of the young participants to contribute towards the vision of Viksit Bharat through service, leadership and active citizenary.

Source:PIB

https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2279844&reg=48&lang=2

Kintsugi Workshop in Bhagyanagar


Kintsugi Art
Workshop
Summer Coffee Festival

A Kintsugi Workshop was organised in Bhagyanagar on 28th June 2026, providing participants with an immersive introduction to one of Japan's most celebrated traditional craft practices. The workshop brought together artists, designers, students, ceramic enthusiasts, and members of the public to learn the philosophy and techniques of Kintsugi, the centuries-old Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with natural lacquer and gold or gold-toned powder. Rather than concealing cracks, Kintsugi treats them as an integral part of an object's history, transforming damaged ceramics into unique works of art. The workshop reflected the growing interest in international traditional arts among cultural enthusiasts in Bharat and served as a platform for meaningful artistic exchange between Bharat and Japan.

Believed to have originated in 15th-century Japan during the Muromachi period, Kintsugi developed from the traditional Japanese lacquer craft known as Urushi. According to historical accounts, the technique emerged after Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa sent a damaged tea bowl for repair, inspiring Japanese artisans to develop a more aesthetically pleasing method of restoration. Over time, Kintsugi became closely associated with the Japanese tea ceremony (Chanoyu) and the philosophy of wabi-sabi, which values simplicity, imperfection, transience, and the beauty found in natural ageing. The Bhagyanagar workshop introduced participants to these historical and philosophical foundations while demonstrating the practical stages of repairing ceramic objects, including joining broken fragments, filling cracks, finishing surfaces, and highlighting repaired lines with metallic powder. Through these sessions, participants gained insights into how restoration itself can become an artistic expression.

The workshop also emphasised the importance of sustainability and heritage conservation by encouraging the restoration and continued use of handcrafted objects rather than their disposal. Participants learned how traditional craftsmanship can extend the life of ceramics while preserving their cultural and emotional significance. Interactive demonstrations and guided practical sessions enabled attendees to experience the precision, patience, and artistic sensitivity required in Kintsugi, while discussions explored the broader role of traditional crafts in preserving cultural identity and promoting mindful consumption. Such programmes encourage appreciation of craftsmanship, handmade traditions, and the shared human values reflected in artistic practices across different civilisations.
Source: Times of India
https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/events/hyderabad/broken-mended-reimagined-inside-hyderabads-kintsugi-workshops/articleshow/130169659.cms#:~:text=%E2%80%9CWhen%20we%20first%20discovered%20it,a%20city%2Dbased%20event%20company.

Vice President Releases Book on Bhawaiya Folk Tradition, Highlighting Bharat's Living Cultural Heritage



The Vice President of Bharat, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan, released the book 'Sanskritir Ratna Bhandar: Bhaowaiyar Itibritto' (Bhawaiya: A Cultural Treasure and Its Historical Journey) on 25th June 2026 at Uprashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. Authored by Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), and Ms. Sangita Roy, and published by Katha-O-Kahini, the book documents the historical evolution, cultural significance, and civilisational journey of the Bhawaiya folk tradition and the heritage of the Koch Rajbanshi community. The publication traces the origins and development of Bhawaiya through folk traditions, agricultural practices, seasonal festivals, worship customs, and community life, presenting it as an authentic expression of the social and cultural experiences of the people of northern part of Bengal, Assam, and adjoining regions.

Speaking at the release, the Vice President observed that the languages, music, customs, and traditions of Bharat constitute a 'treasure-house of collective memory' and are living expressions of the nation's shared civilisational heritage. He noted that Bhawaiya has, for generations, reflected the emotions, aspirations, struggles, and wisdom of ordinary people, while preserving the cultural identity of the region through its rich oral traditions. He emphasised that the book provides valuable insights into the cultural history of northern parts of Bengal and the Koch Rajbanshi community and commended the authors for bringing this important folk tradition into the national discourse. He also appreciated the publisher's contribution towards documenting and preserving an important aspect of Bharat's cultural heritage.

The Vice President further highlighted the central place of music in Bhartiya civilisation, referring to the Samaveda, the concept of *Nada Brahma*, and the *Bhakti* traditions of devotional confluence, where music has long been regarded as a means of spiritual realisation and social cohesion. He remarked that long before the emergence of Western classical music, Bharata Muni's Natya Shastra had established music as a profound expression of human emotion and spiritual consciousness. Stressing the resilience of Bhawaiya despite rapid modernisation and urbanisation, he called upon the younger generation to harness technology for preserving languages, folk traditions, customs, and traditional knowledge systems. He underlined that cultural preservation must remain an integral part of the vision of *Viksit Bharat* 2047, observing that development acquires lasting meaning only when accompanied by cultural confidence and civilisational awareness.

Source: *Door Darshan Bharat* (DD INDIA)
https://ddindia.co.in/2026/06/vice-president-releases-book-on-bhawaiya-folk-tradition-stresses-cultural-preservation/

Prepared by: Pragya, Anubha, Triloki