

Divya Prakriti Parva 2019

A report

-- Dr. Sushma Jatoo

The Nari Samvaad Prakalp (NSP) of the IGNCA organises a three days festival every year to commemorate the International Women's Day (8th March). On this occasion, a three days long festival 'Shakti Parva: celebrating the feminine energy' was organised last year and following the same tradition, the theme of this year's festival was 'Divya Prakriti: the Divine Nature', the association of feminine in preservation and conservation of ecology and environment. The festival held from 6th to 8th March, 2019 brought together highly accomplished women from the fields of social work, academics, puppeteering and performances. A host of thematic lectures, academic sessions, workshops, puppet shows, exhibition and cultural performances were held during these days on the above mentioned theme.

The festival was inaugurated by Padmashri Smt. Phool Basan Yadav, an eminent social reformer from Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh on the 6th of March, 2019. The theme of the festival was introduced by Dr. Sushma Jatoo, PD, NSP along with a brief introduction of the Chief Guest Padmashri Smt. Phool Basan Yadav. Although the theme of this year's festival was 'Divya Prakriti', the first day of the festival was dedicated to Ba and Bapu, and their life together and commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. In the first session of the Parva '*Anubhav-Kathan*', Smt. Phool Basan Yadav shared her personal journey by narrating experiences and encounters faced by her during the early years of her married life. Sharing her success story she very enthusiastically added that how powerful she feels today when she has a huge group of about two lacs women supporting her cause. These women have revolutionized this part of the country by being a self sufficient group, who fight social evils and issues on their own. She was joined by a group of seven ladies from her village, who also shared their experiences with the audiences and Dr. Kaynat Kazi, noted scholar and travel blogger moderated the session. Then, a symposium titled '*Gandhi Prakriti aur Nari*' was organized which was chaired by Dr. Varsha Das and in which Ms. Kusum Bora Mokashi, Dr. Nishtha Saxena, Dr. Ruchi Aggrawal and Dr. Kaynat Kazi participated and shared their views on the subject. In the afternoon, a Music therapy Workshop titled '*Divya Sangeet*' was organized, in which Ms. Sujata Singhi, a noted music therapist was invited. The Workshop was attended by about fifty people with great enthusiasm. In the evening, Ms. Binita Devi and her group from Guwahati staged a puppet show on the life of

'Mahatma Gandhi'. It was followed by a soulful choreography by Guru Shama Bhate and group titled *'Peed Parayi Jane Re'*, which was based on the life and struggle of Ba and Bapu.

The second day began with the session *'Yatra Kathan'* by Ms. Madhuri Sahasrabuddhe, in conversation with Dr. Jyoti Chauthaiwale. She shared her experiences regarding her journey from New Delhi to London -- *'Mothers on wheels: out to heal the World'*. It was followed by a symposium titled *'Divya Jal: Women and Ecology'*; which was chaired by Dr. Nasera Sharma, and wherein, Dr. Rajyalakshmi, Dr. Shatarupa Bhattacharya, and Dr. Ambalica Sood Jacob participated and made presentations on the subject. In the afternoon, an interesting workshop on *'Nutrition for Healthy Living'* was taken by Ms. Nidhi Shukla Pandey, a noted dietician from Bhopal. It was followed by a unique string puppet show by Ms. Renjini and group from Kerala. She depicted the entire story of the Ramayana through her puppets. A photo exhibition on *'Warli Paintings'* from the IGNCA archives was inaugurated by Dr. Kavita A. Sharma, President South Asian University, Delhi in presence of Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, MS, IGNCA and Dr. Ramesh Gaur, HoD (Kalanidhi). The second day concluded with choreography titled *'Chitrangada'* by Padmashri Guru Ranjana Gauhar and group.

On the third day morning, a session, *'Bhava Kathan'* was held in which Padmashri Ananda Shankar Jayant was in conversation with Dr. Swaran Anil. Ananda ji, a senior officer of the Indian Railway Traffic Service, currently posted in Secunderabad is an accomplished classical dancer, choreographer and dance scholar of India. She shared her life experiences and challenges in the session and towards the latter half of the conversation, she as well as Swaran ji related their personal stories of their brush with Cancer and how they defeated this dreaded malady through their inner zest and passion for life, respectively. This was followed by a symposium titled *'Divya Ksetra: Women and Ecology'*, in which Dr. Veenus Jain, Dr. Smita Sehgal, Dr. Snigdha, Ms. Anuradha Goyal participated and Ms. Pratyasha moderated the session. Another segment of the day saw some interesting presentations and performances by the students of Janaki Devi Memorial College.

The Valedictory session was chaired by Prof. Geeta Singh of CPDHE, Delhi University in presence of Dr. Ramesh Gaur, Dr. Sushma Jatoo, Prof. Eugina Vanina, Moscow University and Ms. Mane Mkrtychyan, an Armenian scholar, whose speech in impeccable Hindi was the highlight of this program. Later, Dr. Mallika Kandali and her disciples

performed the graceful Assamese Sattriya on the theme ‘Women and Preservation of Ecology’, based on Srimanta Sankaradeva’s poetry.

The three days Parva was hugely successful and was well received by the audiences. It also saw active participation of the faculty and students of the knowledge partners of the event, i. e., Bhagat Phool Singh University, Sonapat and Janaki Devi Memorial College, Delhi University.