

## Report on National Seminar on Katha Keerthana in Memory of Sant Bhadragegi Achyutdas

Date: Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2016

Venue: KRJ Hall, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru

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The art of Katha Keerthana came to life on 23-10-2016 at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, where a unique day long national seminar was held. Katha Keerthana, also called Harikatha or Kathakalakshepam, is a pristine art form in which music, literature, storytelling and to some extent dance converge to create a divine experience. The seminar was jointly organized by the Vanamala Center for Art and Culture, and the Shadja Kala Kendra Trust in association with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts Southern Regional Centre. The seminar was conducted in honour of the great Harikatha exponent Santa Bhadragegi Achyutdas. The goal of the seminar was to sow the seeds of revival of this divine but diminishing art form.

Shri Keerthanacharya Lakshmandas Velankar was the first presenter. Clad in the traditional Harikatha attire, Lakshmandasji's presence illuminated the stage with a divine glow. He gave a very nice overview of the contribution of the Haridasa Keerthankars. Vocal rendition Harikeshnallur Dr. Muttaiah Bhagavatar's Katha Keerthana compositions by Dr. Meera accompanied by her disciples added glory to the seminar.

Powada (Maharashtrian form of Harikatha) by Pandith Prabhakar Pandav from Poona and Harikathe (similar form in Kannada) by Surmani Dattatrya Velankar was well received by audience.

