

## ICCR CONFERS BHARAT MITRA SAMMAN ON MS. MASAKO SATOU: A JOURNEY OF ART, CULTURE, AND FRIENDSHIP



Tokyo, Japan—8 November 2024: The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) celebrated its tradition of promoting global cultural engagement and people-to-people connections by honouring Ms. Masako Satou, an exceptional alumna, with the prestigious Bharat Mitra Samman—Distinguished Alumni award for 2022. The award ceremony, held at the Embassy of India in Tokyo, was graced by the Indian Ambassador to Japan, Mr. Sibi George, who presented this coveted recognition.

Ms. Masako Satou, a luminary in the world of Kathak dance, has captivated audiences worldwide with her artistry, becoming a true cultural ambassador of India. A disciple of the legendary Padma Vibhushan Pt. Birju Maharaj, Ms. Satou's artistic journey began with her ICCR scholarship, allowing her to pursue undergraduate and diploma studies at Kathak Kendra, New Delhi. She further honed her craft with a specialisation and stage presentation course at Kalashram, New Delhi, under the maestro's guidance.

Her unwavering passion for Kathak led her to establish the Miyabi Kathak Dance Academy in Tokyo, which has become a beacon for Indian classical dance in Japan. Through her teaching and performances, Ms. Satou has helped preserve the spirit of Indian culture and has inspired a deep appreciation for it in Japan, connecting the cultures of India and Japan.

Ms. Satou's journey reflects the core values of ICCR's mission—connecting cultures and building global friendships. By sharing the art of Kathak, she has become a symbol of the strong cultural relationship between India and Japan.

