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Eminent Dance Scholar Sunil Kothari Passes Away

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Why in News

Recently, **eminent dance scholar and critic Sunil Kothari** passed away at the age of 87.

Key Points

- He was conferred with the **fourth highest civilian award, Padma Shri**, in **2001**.
- He **authored 20 books** on **Indian classical dances** and wrote **extensively on Bharatanatyam, Kathak and Manipuri** dance forms.
 - His scholarly work, “**Sattriya: Classical Dance of Assam**”, helped in creating a better understanding of the dance form in the national and global circuit.
 - His other notable contributions include **New Directions in Indian Dance** and **Kuchipudi Indian Classical Dance Art**.
- He was elected as a **Fellow of Sangeet Natak Akademi**.

Indian Classical Dances

- The Indian classical dances have **two basic aspects:**
 - Tandava** (movement and rhythm) and **Lasya** (grace, bhava and rasa).
- The **three main components** of them are:
 - **Natya:** the dramatic element of the dance i.e. the imitation of characters.
 - **Nritta:** the dance movements in their basic form.
 - **Nritya:** expressional component i.e. mudras or gestures.
- The **nine rasas** are: Love, Heroism, Pathos, Humour, Anger, Fear, Disgust, Wonder and Peace.
- The **Natya Shastra** written by **Bharat Muni** is the most prominent source for the Indian aestheticians for establishing the characteristics of the dances.

- There are **8 classical dances in India:**
 - Bharatnatyam (Tamil Nadu)
 - Kathak (North India)
 - Kathakali (Kerala)
 - Mohiniyattam (Kerala)
 - Kuchipudi (Andhra Pradesh)
 - Odissi (Odisha)
 - Sattriya (Assam)
 - Manipuri (Manipur)
- **Contemporary classical dance forms** have evolved out of the **musical play or sangeet-nataka performed** from the 12th century to the 19th century.

Sangeet Natak Akademi

- It is India's **national academy for music, dance and drama.**
- It was **created by a resolution of the Ministry of Education** (formerly the Ministry of Human Resource Development), Government of India, **in 1952** with **Dr P V Rajamannar** as its **first Chairman.**
- It is **presently an autonomous body of the Ministry of Culture** and is **fully funded by the Government** for implementation of its schemes and programmes.
- The Akademi **establishes and looks after institutions and projects of national importance** in the field of the performing arts. **Few important ones are:**
 - **National School of Drama**, New Delhi (set up in 1959).
 - **Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy**, Imphal (set up in 1954).
 - **Kathak Kendra** (National Institute of Kathak Dance), New Delhi (set up in 1964).
 - **National Projects of Support to Kutiyattam** (Sanskrit theatre of Kerala), Chhau dances of eastern India, **Sattriya** traditions of Assam, etc.

Source: TH