



LET THERE BE LIGHT: Irshad Panjatan (pantomime) and Aparna Sindhoor light the lamp at the start of 'Theatre beyond words', at Yashwantrao Chavan Theatre, on Friday. Also seen are Sandhya Gokhale (left) and Vinapani

'Silent' theatre festival begins

Gathering pays tribute to Jaydev Hattangadi who passed away

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Pune: 'Theatre beyond words', the fifth annual theatre festival organised by Amol Palekar and Sandhya Gokhale, poignantly, began on a note of silence.

A two-minute silent tribute was paid to noted actor-director Jaydev Hattangadi, who passed away on Thursday.

"Just seven days back, my wife Sandhya and I went to meet him. To cheer him up from his deteriorating health, I insisted that he come to Pune for this theatre festival. I told him, 'Perform in Mohan Rakesh's Mad Delight, I'll also

play a part if you like...it will make you forget all your pain'. But he just smiled and said 'it doesn't look like I can make it,'" said a visibly emotional Palekar.

"He was a loved one for all of us," he continued, adding that in spite of this tragic event and in the sad backdrop of Mumbai terror attacks, "the show must go on."

And go on, it did. The first day of the three-day festival saw 77-year-old, internationally acclaimed pantomime artiste Irshad Panjatan performing on stage after 15 years to a packed audience's standing ovation. Thanking the discerning audi-

ence of the city, he described the city as a place which produced stalwarts like Bal-gandharva and PL Deshpande, from whom he learned a great deal, while he was in Delhi. Panjatan wowed the crowd with his moving performance 'Walk of Life', while Boston-based 'dance theatre' artiste Aparna Sindhoor later regaled the audience with a world-class performance through her piece 'A Story and A Song'. Amol Palekar delivered the welcome address, while noted theatre artistes Neelam Mansingh, Veenapani Chawla, Aparna Sindhoor, Irshad Panjatan and Arun Kumar lit the inaugural lamp.