

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS



Majuli College
Kamalabari, Majuli, Assam

Majuli College is the first college in the river island Majuli, now a district. Majuli is well-known primarily for two reasons. The first is, Majuli is one of the largest river islands in the world. The second one is, it is the heart of *Satriya* tradition and culture. Sankardeva, the great Vaishnavite saint of Assam during the 15th and 16th centuries founded the unique institution called *satra* to practice and propagate culture, tradition and religion. There are around 33 *satras* in Majuli at present which immensely contribute to Assamese society and culture in different ways.

Majuli College, being the first institution of its kind in Majuli, has been trying to adhere to some of the key elements of *satriya* culture and preserve and disseminate these in academic and intellectual fields. A significant part of the *satriya* culture includes *satriya* dance, song and music. Majuli College has been offering a certificate course on **Performing Arts** to students not only to make them familiar with the nuances of *satriya* culture, but also to carry forward the glorious legacy to the future generation. Another aspect that carries the seeds of the great tradition is mask-making. Sankardeva used masks made with bamboo, cow dung and indigenous colour in the *bhawnas*. Majuli College offers a certificate course on **Mask-Making**. Several students who successfully completed this course now prepare masks through which they contribute to the cultural practices and also they earn a decent amount as this skill of mask-making has tremendous professional value.



The *satras* also boast of having numerous ancient manuscripts written in *sanchipat*. But written in several centuries ago and with no use of scientific method for preservation, such manuscripts are now in verge of collapse. Keeping a noble aspiration to preserve the ancient manuscripts digitally, Majuli College has started a self-funded project for digitization of the manuscripts. And so far, around 700 rare manuscripts have been digitized under this project. These digitized texts have been now preserved in the central library of the college. The manuscripts which otherwise had no access to students, can be now studied in the college library.



Apart from these practices, the College always tries to connect with the age-old practices of the *satra* institution. The college organizes seminars, webinars, workshops on the *satra* institution and its dimensions at different intervals. Further, IQAC organizes one memorial lecture each year in the memory of late Narayan Chandra Goswami, a Sahitya Akademi awardee, who was the Satradhikar of Sri Sri Kamalabari Satra, Majuli. The college also has a **Heritage Corner** which mainly reflects the various cultural practices nourished and maintained in the *satras*.



Another aspect of the connectivity between the College and the *satra* institution is that the stakeholders of the college actively participate in the events organized in the *satras*. Some teachers work as editors/members in the books/journals published from the *satras*. Several students and teachers get involved in cultural events such as *Raas*, *Palnam*, *Bhawna* celebrated there. The college inspires and permits them to participate in such occasions as a collaborative gesture and respect to the glorious tradition.



