

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EMBASSY OF INDIA
TOKYO**

Dated October 28, 2014

PRESS STATEMENT

FESTIVAL OF INDIA IN JAPAN 2014-15

The Festival of India in Japan was inaugurated by the Minister of State (Independent Charge) Shri Shripad Naik and Tourism Minister of Japan Mr. Akihiro Ohta in Tokyo on October 27, 2014. The year-long festival is being conducted by the Embassy of India, Tokyo in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

In her welcome address the Ambassador of India to Japan Smt. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa said that the Festival of India is being celebrated in Japan in pursuance of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's vision for enhanced people to people contact. She said that the year-long Festival would include dance festival, literary festival, food festival, film festival, an exhibition on Indian Buddhist Art, Buddhist Conferences, a Buddha Mahotsava comprising of Buddhist chanting and lama dances. The major institutions of Ministry of Culture namely the Kalakshetra Foundation Chennai, the Sangeet Natak Akademy New Delhi, the Jawaharlal Nehru Manipuri Dance Akademy Shillong, the Kuttiyattam Kendra Thiruvanthapuram, the Sahitya Akademy New Delhi, the Indian Museum Kolkata, the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting; and the International Buddhist Confederation New Delhi would be participating in the year-long events. Smt. Wadhwa also said that the dance festival would be conducted in 20 cities from October 4-31, 2014 and the Indian Museum Exhibition on Buddhist Art would be conducted at the prestigious National Museum, Tokyo from March-May 2015.

In his opening remarks Shri Shripad Naik said that the Festival of India in Japan represents India's major cultural foray into Japan on a large scale for the first time

since 1988, almost 26 years ago. The Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi in his joint statement with the Prime Minister of Japan had stated that a Festival of India in Japan would be conducted. In pursuance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision for enhanced people to people contact through the Festival of India, Ministry of Culture is conducting the Festival of India in Japan in collaboration with Embassy of India in Japan.

With events lined up in 20 cities and 4 months, the 2014 Festival of India in Japan represents one of the largest events India has conducted in Japan. Shri Naik said that the Festival of India in Japan is being conducted in two phases – the October phase-I comprises of a series of dance productions being presented in Japan, till date, the Kalakshetra Foundation, the Manipur Dance Academy and the Kuttiyattam Kendra have presented performances in Japan. The February 2015, phase-II will comprise of the Buddhist Art exhibition which will be presented in the Tokyo National Museum. The other events include, a Buddhist conference being conducted by the International Buddhist Council of India and Buddhist exhibitions by the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara. Plans are afoot to conduct the Film Festival and Food Festival during the Festival of India in Japan.

Shri Shripad Naik had comprehensive bilateral meetings with the senior Ministers in the Japanese Government namely Minister of Culture Mr Hakubun Shimomura and Minister of Tourism Mr. Akihiro Ohta during the visit. The cordial and constructive meetings created an environment for enhanced people to people contact in the coming months.

Shri Shripad Naik thanked the Government of Japan, the people of Japan and the Embassy of India in Tokyo for the successful inauguration of the Festival of India in Japan 2014.

In his opening remarks, Mr Akihiro Ohta conveyed the greetings and good wishes of the Prime Minister of Japan His Excellency Mr Shinzo Abe for the successful conduct of the Festival of India in Japan. He hoped that the Buddhist Exhibition and the Buddhist circuits being developed in India will result in larger Japanese Tourist flows to India and enhanced Japanese interest in Indian historical monuments. He also complimented Shri Shripad Naik for conducting such a large festival comprising of a number of cultural events in Japan covering 20 cities

which will lay the platform for enhanced people to people contacts between the two countries.

Shri Shripad Naik also visited the Edo-Tokyo National Museum, the Miraikan Science Museum, the National Diet Library and the National Archives of Japan during the visit. He explored areas of future collaboration with the Culture Minister of Japan through an actionable cultural exchange program and offered support for the Japanese request for recording of 19th century cultural history of Buddhist exchanges through Joint Collaboration.

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Opening statement of Minister of State (Independent Charge) Shri Shripad Naik at the Press Meet at the Embassy of India in Japan

Dated October 28, 2014

Distinguished Members of the Media,

I am on a 4 day visit to Japan on the invitation of the Minister of Tourism of Japan to inaugurate the Festival of India in Japan 2014. The Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi ji in his joint statement with the Prime Minister of Japan had stated that a Festival of India in Japan would be conducted. In pursuance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's vision for enhanced people to people contact through the Festival of India, Ministry of Culture is conducting the Festival of India in Japan in collaboration with Embassy of India in Japan.

The Festival of India in Japan 2014 represents India's largest cultural engagement with Japan in 26 years, with the last Festival of India in Japan being conducted in 1988. The Festival is being conducted in 20 cities and in two phases. The details of events have been separately circulated to you. I do believe that the rich array of classical dances, Buddhist Art Exhibitions, Food and Film Festivals and the Buddhist Conferences would be received in Japan.

The Festival of India in Japan is being conducted in two phases – the October phase I comprises of a series of dance productions being presented in Japan, till date, the Kalakshetra Foundation, the Manipur Dance Academy and the Kuttiyattam Kendra have presented performances in Japan. Today the Sangeet Natak Akademy presents the Mohiniattam dance recital. The February 2015, phase II will comprise of the Buddhist Art exhibition which will be presented in the Tokyo National Museum. The other events include, a Buddhist conference being conducted by the International Buddhist Council of India and Buddhist exhibitions by the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara. Plans are afoot to conduct the Film Festival and Food Festival during the Festival of India in Japan.

During my visit, I have had comprehensive bilateral meetings with the senior Ministers in the Japanese Government. I do believe that the cordial and

constructive meetings have created an environment for enhanced people to people contact in the coming months.

I would like to place on record my appreciation for the Ambassador of India to Japan Smt. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa and her team of dedicated officials who have made the inaugural event a success. Smt Wadhwa was personally involved with the design of the logo and planned the entire schedule of events in a manner that best ensures cultural dissemination.

Thank you

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