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# Inauguration of Namaste France Festival in Paris

September 17, 2016

Embassy of India, Paris with the support of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi is organising Namaste France cultural festival from 15 September to 30 November 2016. Namaste France festival is being organised as per the Indo-French Joint Statement issued on the occasion of visit of Hon'ble President of the French Republic Mr. Francois Hollande to India in January 2016 during which he was the Chief Guest of India's Republic Day celebrations on 26 January 2016.

Namaste France festival was inaugurated by His Excellency Dr. Mohan Kumar, Ambassador of India to France, in the prestigious venue La Villette in Paris. Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan with his sons Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash and Kathak exponent Kumudini Lakhia and her troupe enthralled a crowd capacity of 2000 people in the inaugural ceremony. Prof. Sunaina Singh, Vice President of ICCR, representatives of French Government, Senators, Deputies, eminent personalities from public life and other friends of India attended the grand opening concert.

During the festival, 70 events representing India's rich civilizational and cultural heritage will be organised in various major cities of France including Paris, Strasbourg, Nice, Nantes, Marseilles, Lyon, Aix-en-Provence, Saint-Tropez, Tourcoing etc and in the French overseas territories like Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Martin and the Reunion Island. These events will showcase Indian culture in the fields of music, dance, theatre, cinema, art exhibitions, cuisine, spirituality, yoga and Ayurveda etc. reflecting the Indian ethos that are deep rooted in its traditions. The events and the scale of the festival will reflect the rapid transformations taking place in India which has seen rapid modernisation in recent years while not losing its cultural roots. Namaste France festival will act as platform for the people of France to view and understand India's historically rich cultural traditions.

These cultural events will be organised in prestigious venues including La Villette, Opera Bastille, Hotel de Ville, Petit Palais, Musee Guimet, Philharmonie, Palais du Tokyo, Theatre du Soleil, Cinematheque Francais in Paris as well as at important places like Cite de la musique in Marseilles, Musee des Arts Asiatiques in Nice, Maison Folie Hospice d' Havre in Tourcoing etc. Internationally renowned Indian artists like Santoor virtuoso Pandit Bhajan Sopori, Sitar maestro Pandit Kushal Das, noted contemporary Indian dance choreographer Astad Deboo, fashion designer Rahul Mishra, painter Anju Chaudhuri, Kuttilyattam artists from Kerala Kalamandalam and Michelin Star Chef Vineet Bhatia will be presenting their art at the festival. In addition, several French artists trained by ICCR in India are also participating in the festival. The website [www.namaste-france.org](http://www.namaste-france.org) gives detailed information on various events of the festival.

The festival will close with the performance of Violin maestro L. Subramaniam and legendary Kuchipudi dancer couple Raja and Radha Reddy in Philharmonie in Paris on 30 November 2016.

New Delhi

September 17, 2016

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