

Ambassador's Remarks at the "Divine India" Presentation, National Art Gallery, Astana (April 3, 2015)

Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you all to 'Divine India'- a presentation of Indian classical music and dance today evening as part of the Namaste India Festival being organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the Embassy.

As part of the Festival, we are organizing two performances-first –the performance that you would be watching today and second- a presentation of Manipuri Classical and Folk Dances by a 12-member troupe from the Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy, tomorrow at the same venue at 6.30 PM. These two groups will hold in total five performances in Kazakhstan, three in Astana, one in Almaty and one in Temirtau, Karaganda.

The cultural performance by the two groups would give you a glimpse of the vast kaleidoscope of Indian culture. The performance today would showcase Hindustani music, one of the two main forms of Indian classical music, and Kathak, one of the eight major forms of Indian classical dance. The Indian classical music and dance have its roots that go back over 2000 years ago.

Today's performance led by Pandit Prateek Chaudhuri will feature solo sitar recitals, solo Katak dance performance and a fusion of Indian classical and light melodies with duet of sitar and Kathak. Pandit Prateek Chaudhuri is a highly acclaimed sitar maestro in India, renowned for his aesthetic and technical finesse. The Kathak recital would be performed by Ms. Anupriya Mukherjee, who is a rising star in her field.

Tomorrow's performance would showcase the classical and folk dances of Manipur, one of the 29 states and 7 union territories that form the Union of India.

In bringing today's performance, I acknowledge and thank the contribution of the National Art Gallery for offering the venue, and assistance received from ONGC Videsh Limited, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year and the Tea Board of India.

I am confident that the cultural performance will contribute to further strengthening of cultural ties between India and Kazakhstan.

We hope you will enjoy the performance.