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Press Release

Nishagandhi Dance Festival begins on an exciting note

The fest will be promoted at global level: Tourism Minister P A Mohamed Riyas

Manipuri dancer Darshana Jhaveri presented Nishagandhi Puraskaram

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb. 13: Kerala Tourism's flagship cultural event Nishagandhi Dance Festival began on an exciting note at Kanakakkunnu Palace grounds here this evening, setting the stage for performances by India's top-notch classical dancers for eight nights.

Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas inaugurated the festival through videoconferencing.

Shri VK Prasanth MLA, who presided over the function, presented Kerala's prestigious Nishagandhi Puraskaram to eminent Manipuri dance exponent Padma Shri Darshana Jhaveri on the occasion.

The award, presented to a leading classical dance exponent every year, carries Rs 1,50,000 citation and memento.

Tourism Director Smt Sikha Surendran; Tourism Additional Director (General) Smt. Sreedhanya Suresh, and Ward Councilor Shri K R Cleetus attended the inaugural ceremony.

Tourism Department will promote Nishagandhi Dance Festival globally by reimagining the event by without losing its identity to attract more foreign travelers, Shri Riyas said in his inaugural address.

The aim is to tap the immense potential of the iconic event to attract more foreign travelers along with domestic tourists and art lovers, Shri Riyas said.

Smt Jhaveri was selected for the honour in recognition of her significant contributions to the preservation and propagation of the Manipuri dance in her career spanning over 60 years.

The danseuse was selected for the honour by a jury with Kerala Tourism Secretary Shri K Biju as Chairman and Smt Sikha Surendran, Director of Kerala Tourism, as Convener.

Thanking Kerala Tourism for bestowing on her with the prestigious award, Smt Jhaveri said she has been visiting Kerala since 1961 for performing Manipuri dance.



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“I’m always impressed by the keen interest shown by people of Kerala towards all our Indian art forms and for their highly developed aesthetic sensibility,” said Smt Jhaveri.

Noting that Nishagandhi Dance Festival is an important festival of the Tourism Department, Smt Sikha Surendran said cultural and art events like this are an integral part of Kerala’s dynamic tourism landscape.

The festival has lined up India's best classical dancers and upcoming performers to enthrall the audience converging at the venue. The performers represent diverse Indian classical dance traditions including Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Manipuri, Kathak, Sattriya and Odissi.

A Kathakali Mela featuring hundreds of Kathakali artistes is also part of the February 13-20 festival. Kathakali performances will be held inside Kanakakkunnu palace every day from 5.30 pm.

Starting with ‘Lavanasura Vadham’ on the inaugural day , ‘Ravanolbhavam’ (Feb14), ‘Nala Charitham Moonnam Divasam’ (Feb15), ‘Baka Vadham’ (Feb 16), ‘Karna Sapadham’(Feb 17), ‘Duryodhana Vadham’ (Feb 18), ‘Daksha Yagam’ (Feb19) and ‘ThoranaYudham’ (Feb 20) will be performed as part of the Kathakali Mela.

The Nishagandhi Festival also showcases recent trends in Indian classical dance forms and offers a stage for upcoming artists to present their talents and artistic expressions.

The inaugural ceremony was followed by Bharatanatyam performance by Padma Shri Dr Narthaki Nataraj, and then a performance by Dr Rajashree Warriar. A Manipuri dance performance by Latasana Devi & Group was the final performance on the opening day.

Dance performances of noted and upcoming artistes will commence everyday at 6 pm.

On February 14 (Saturday) Puja Dasami's Mohiniyattam, Shobhana's Bharatanatyam, and Madhulita Mohapatra and her team's Odissi dance will be performed.

On February 15 (Sunday) Bharatanatyam by Srividya Sailesh, Kuchipudi by T. Reddi Lakshmi, and Bharatanatyam by Dr. Ananthashankaar Jayant and his team will be performed.

On the February 16 (Monday), Bharatanatyam by Akshaya Arunkumar and Meenakshi Srinivasan, and Mohiniyattam by Dr. Kalamandalam Rachitha Ravi and team will perform.

On the February 17 (Tuesday), Bharatanatyam by Sharmada Vishwanath, Mohiniyattam by Sitara Balakrishnan, and Bharatanatyam by Pratibha Ramaswamy and Sandhya Udappa will be performed.



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On the February 18 (Wednesday), Dr. Aruna Mohanty's Odissi, Dr. Satyanarayana Raju's Bharatanatyam, and Shruti Shobi and her team will perform Mohiniyattam. On the February 19 (Thursday), Dimpee Baishya's Satriya Nritya, Navya Nair's Bharatanatyam, and Rachana Narayankutty and her team will perform Kuchipudi.

On the closing day, February 20 (Friday), Bharatanatyam by Asha Sarath, Mohiniyattam by Aparna Balram Marar, Kathak by Swathi Sinha and her team, and Bharatanatyam by Shaijaa Bineesh will be performed.

Public entry to the festival is free.

Ends