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Press Release

Nishagandhi Dance Festival opens on a high note



Minister Riyas opens fest, presents Nishagandhi Puraskaram to Chitra Visweswaran

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb. 15: Kerala Tourism's week-long Nishagandhi Dance Festival opened at the sprawling Kanakakunnu Palace grounds here this evening.

Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas inaugurated the iconic annual event and presented the prestigious Nishagandhi Puraskaram to eminent Bharatanatyam exponent and choreographer Smt Chitra Visweswaran for her outstanding contributions to Indian classical dance.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Riyas said the state government considered it as its responsibility to preserve diverse art forms and support artists by organising cultural events like the Nishagandhi Dance Festival.

The cultural festival organised by the government during the Onam provides plenty of opportunities for artists representing various traditions, the Minister said.



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Apart from the state-level events, festivals organised by the Responsible Tourism Mission in different parts of the state offer opportunities to artists at the local level to showcase their talent and preserve various performing traditions, he said.

Minister for General Education and Labour Shri V Sivankutty, who presided over the ceremony, said Nishagandhi Dance Festival reflected the government's deep commitment to preserve the classical art traditions and encourage the established and budding artistes.

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Legal Metrology Shri G R Anil was the chief guest.

Shri V K Prasanth MLA, Mayor Smt Arya Rajendran, IMG Director and former chief secretary Shri K Jayakumar, KTIL Chairman Shri S K Sajeesh, and Smt Rajashree Warriar were present.

Shri P B Nooh, Director Tourism, welcomed the gathering and Tourism Additional Director Shri S Prem Krishnan proposed a vote of thanks.

The inaugural ceremony was followed by an opening dance presentation by Regatta Dance School and a specially choreographed Mohiniyattam performance 'Ámba' by Kalamandalam Major troupe.

The festival has lined up some of India's best classical dancers representing India's diverse choreographic traditions, as well upcoming stars to mesmerise the audience for the next seven days.

The dance festival will also see Kathakali Melam being performed by leading exponents of the traditional Kerala dance-drama on all the festival evenings.

The public entry to the festival, which has already gained global attention for its ensemble of diverse Indian traditions, is free.

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