



Department of Tourism

Park View Thiruvananthapuram 695 033

Kerala India Fax: +91-471-2322279

Tel: +91-471-2326579 2321132

Email: info@keralatourism.org

marketing@keralatourism.org

www.keralatourism.org

Press Release

Onam celebrated at the Rashtrapati Bhavan

President Pranab Mukherjee is a gracious host at the first state-led celebration of the festival at his official residence

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 4: President Pranab Mukherjee hosted hundreds of guests at his official residence for an evening that celebrated the sights, sounds and colours of the Onam festival at a special programme organised by the Government of Kerala at the Rashtrapati Bhavan for the first time.

Titled “Kairali”, the Onam evening on Saturday provided a glimpse into a variety of unique art forms of Kerala that demonstrate the spirit of the secular festival which has through ages reinforced the idea of unity in diversity.

Organised by Kerala’s Tourism Department in partnership with the Rashtrapati Bhavan’s ‘Indra Dhanush’ cultural series, the programme was graced by dignitaries including Vice President Hamid Ansari Kerala Governor Mr P Sadasivam, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his cabinet colleagues Mr A C Moideen, Mr E Chandrasekharan, Mr Kadannappally Ramachandran, Mr A K Sasindran, Ms K K Shylaja , Ms J Mercikutty Amma and Mr K T Jaleel, Kerala High Court Acting Chief Justice Mohan M Shantanagoudar, MPs, senior state and central government officials including the Chief Secretary Mr SM Vijayanand as well as Ambassadors from Gulf nations.

“Onam is a festival that transcends the barriers of caste, creed and social status. It is a secular festival celebrated by one and all,” said Shri Pinarayi Vijayan, who spoke on the occasion. “Onam reminds us every year of the spirit of love, brotherhood, peace and harmony.”

Press Secretary to the President Shri Venu Rajamony, who was instrumental in bringing the first state-led Onam celebrations to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, welcomed the gathering.

Around 70 artists performed at the hour-long cultural programme. It began with a “Vadyamanjari” a percussion ensemble presented by the Delhi Panchavadya Trust, followed by a performance of Kerala’s classical dance form Mohiniyattam by Dr Jayaprabha Menon and her team.

Artists from Kerala Kalamandalam presented Kathakali, and Girija Chandran choreographed a medley of performance arts including Mayoora Nritham, Kerala Natanam, Margamkali, Oppana, Thiruvathirakali and Theyyam as well as Kerala’s martial arts Kalaripayattu, to a song written by Prabha Varma and set to music by Mathew T. Itty, who also conceived and directed the show.

The guests were also treated to an ‘Onasadya’, the grand feast served during the festival.