



WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL

MARCH 11-13, 2016 | *New Delhi, India*

REFLECTIONS

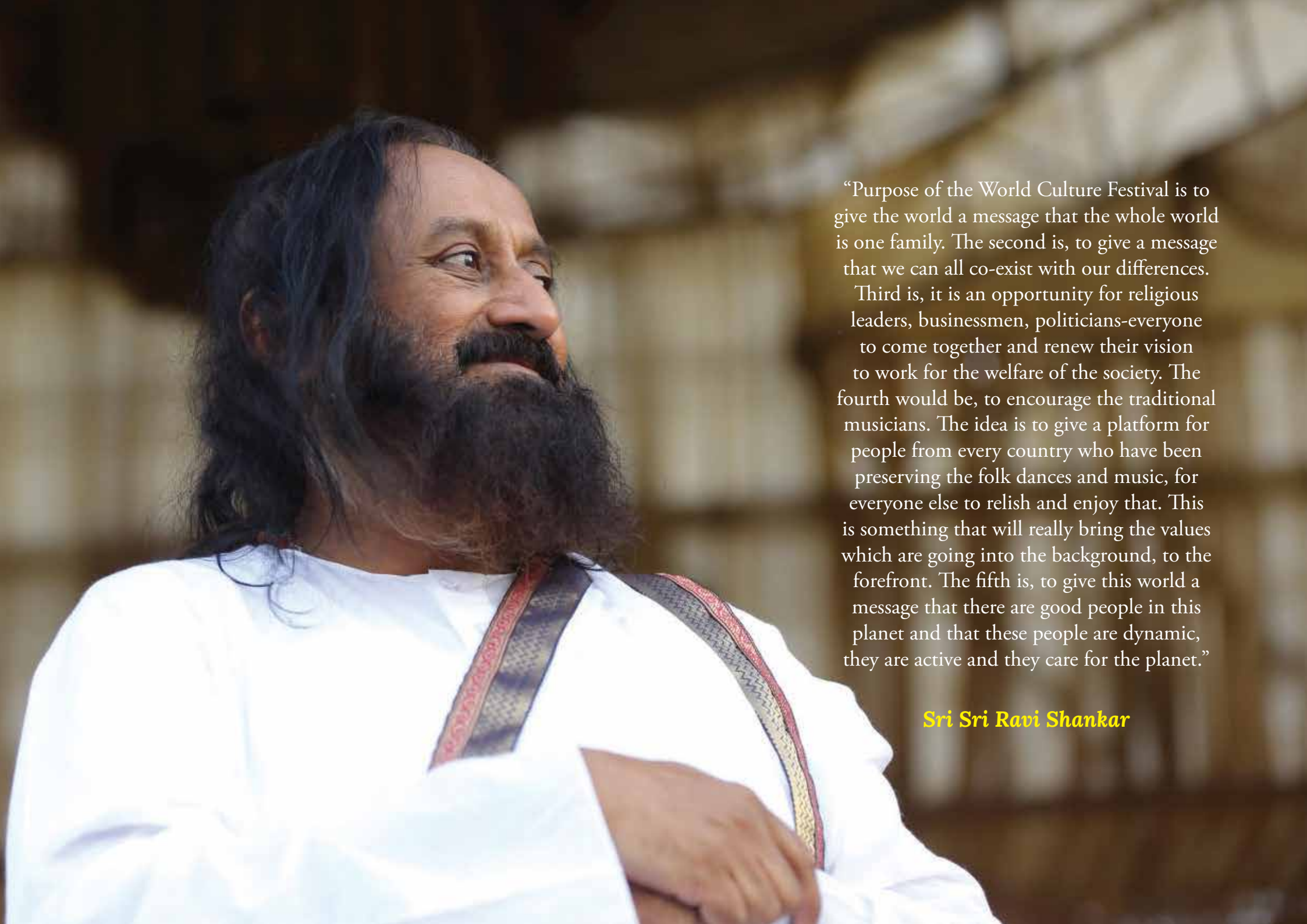




WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL

REFLECTIONS





“Purpose of the World Culture Festival is to give the world a message that the whole world is one family. The second is, to give a message that we can all co-exist with our differences. Third is, it is an opportunity for religious leaders, businessmen, politicians-everyone to come together and renew their vision to work for the welfare of the society. The fourth would be, to encourage the traditional musicians. The idea is to give a platform for people from every country who have been preserving the folk dances and music, for everyone else to relish and enjoy that. This is something that will really bring the values which are going into the background, to the forefront. The fifth is, to give this world a message that there are good people in this planet and that these people are dynamic, they are active and they care for the planet.”

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL

The World Culture Festival held in New Delhi, India was a historic 3-day event from 11th to 13th March 2016 organised by the Art of Living to celebrate its 35 years of service, spirituality and humanity. Over 3.75 million people from 155 countries gathered to witness sterling performances by artists, musical renditions, and dance shows and to participate in the world's largest meditation.

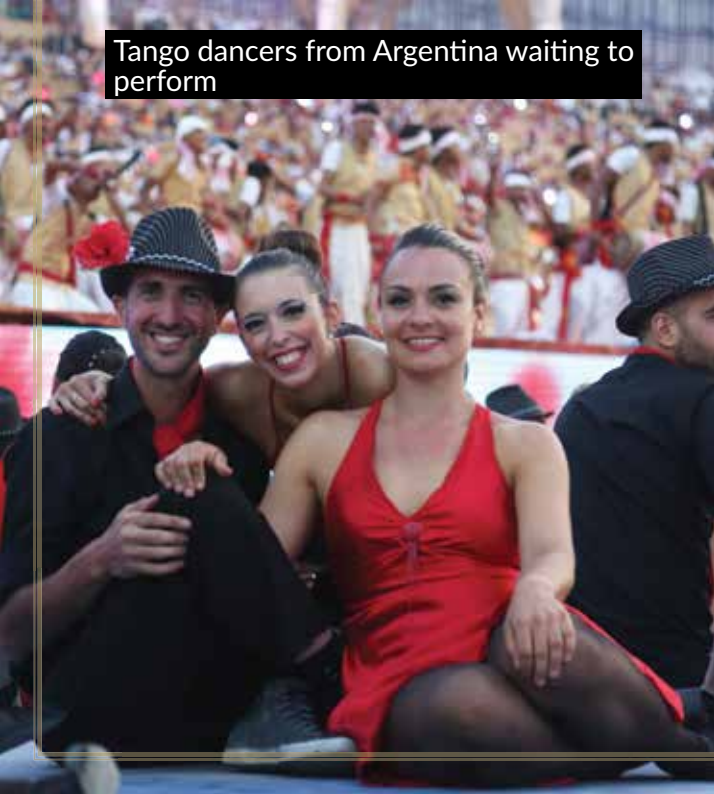
On a unique 7-acre stage, over 37,000 artists and 172 international dignitaries from the field of politics, religion, art, media, business came together to share a resounding message of understanding and dialogue in difficult times and to celebrate the diversity in cultures from across the world while highlighting our unity as a human family.

In these times of conflict and turmoil, the World Culture Festival has brought forth the message of peace and the unity in diversity of a One World Family beyond the narrow boundaries of religion, nationality, race and language.

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Founder of the Art of Living and the International Association for Human Values says: "We are inspired to continue with more enthusiasm and greater speed to realize the dream, where life becomes a celebration and the world will become one family. The World Culture Festival is a celebration of achievements and a vision to do better."



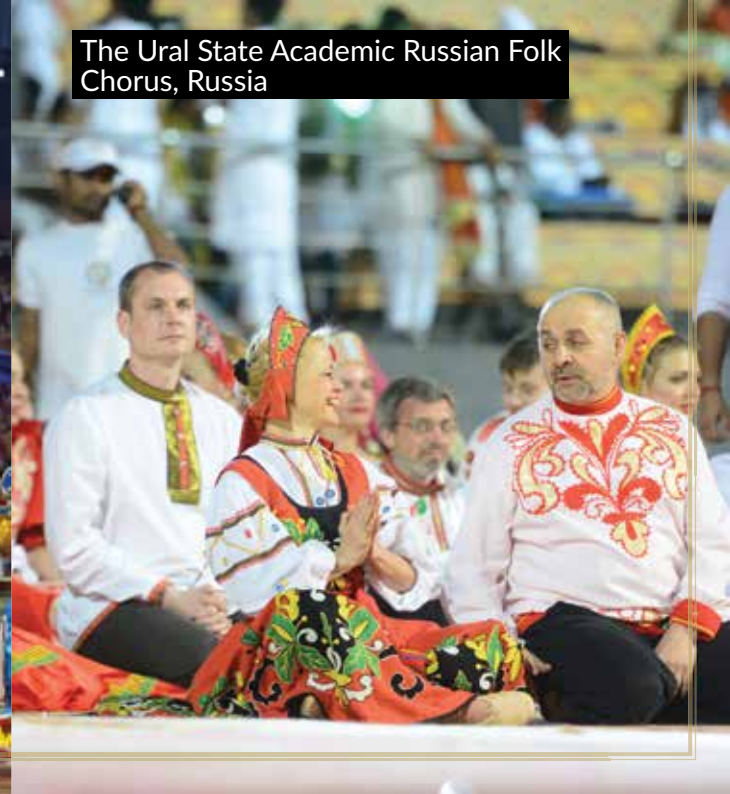
Rabindra Sangeet artists



Tango dancers from Argentina waiting to perform



Biyelgee, the dance of the Mongolian shepherds



The Ural State Academic Russian Folk Chorus, Russia

RECEPTION COMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRS

Justice R.C. Lahoti
Hon. Former Chief Justice of India.

Late. Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali
Hon. 6th Secretary General of the United Nations.

VICE-CHAIR

Prof. Ruud Lubbers
Hon. Former Prime Minister, Netherlands.

MEMBERS

Mr. Lal Krishna Advani
Hon. Former Dy. Prime Minister, India.

Dr. Karan Singh
Hon. Member of Parliament, India.

Dr. Mahesh Sharma
Hon. Minister of Culture, India.

Mr. Hildebrando Tapia Samaniego
Vice-President - Andean Parliament.

Ms. Tatyana Poronova
Hon. Deputy Governor of Murmansk, Russia.

Mr. Hakubun Shimomura
Hon. Minister of Education, Culture, Sports,
Science & Technology, Japan.

Ms. Nancy Pelosi
Hon. Congresswoman,
Minority Leader of the House of Representatives,
United States of America.

Ms. Katherine Clark
Hon. Congresswoman, House of Representatives,
United States of America.

Mr. Ed Whitfield
Hon. Congressman, House of Representatives,
United States of America.

Dr. Abdelsalam al-Majali
Hon. Former Prime Minister, Jordan.

Prof. Vytautas Landsbergis
Hon. Former President - Lithuania,
Member of the European Parliament.

Prof. Alojz Peterle
Hon. Former Prime Minister - Slovenia,
Member of the European Parliament.

Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu
Hon. 9th Secretary General of
Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

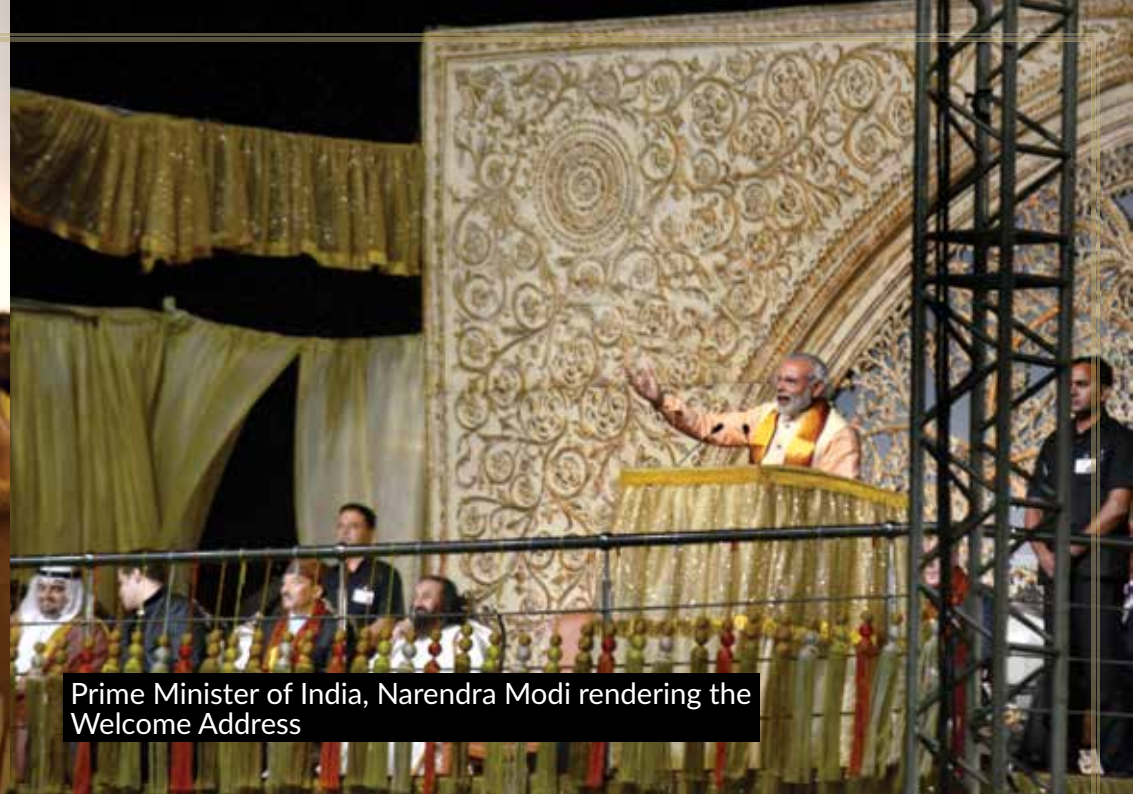
Mr. Kapil Mishra
Hon. Minister of Culture, Delhi, India.

Mr. Jo Leinen
Hon. Member of the European Parliament.

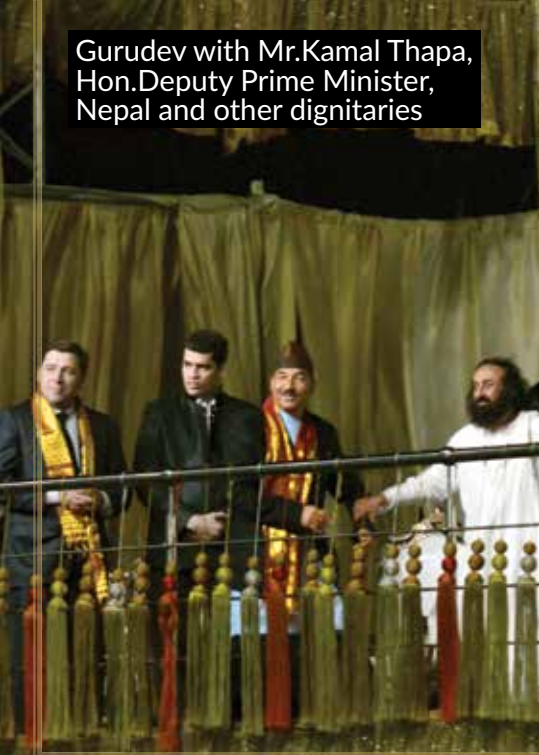
Mr. Nirj Deva
Hon. Member of the European Parliament.



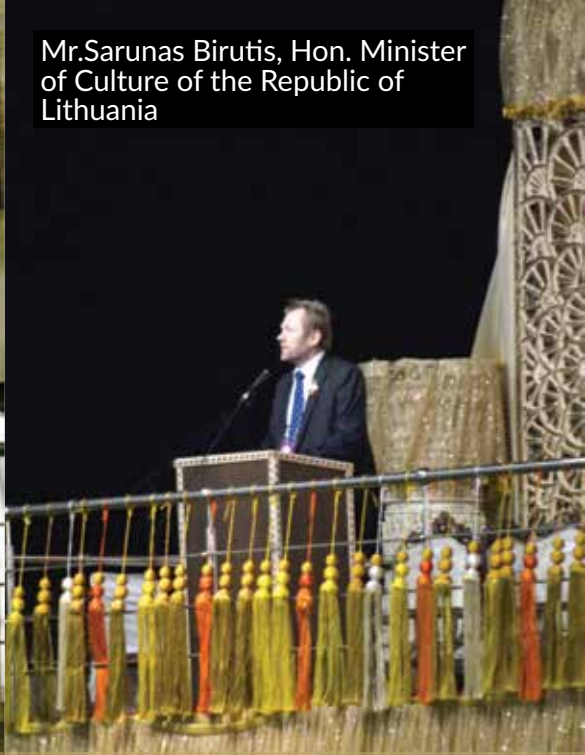
Vedic chanting by a 1,000 pundits



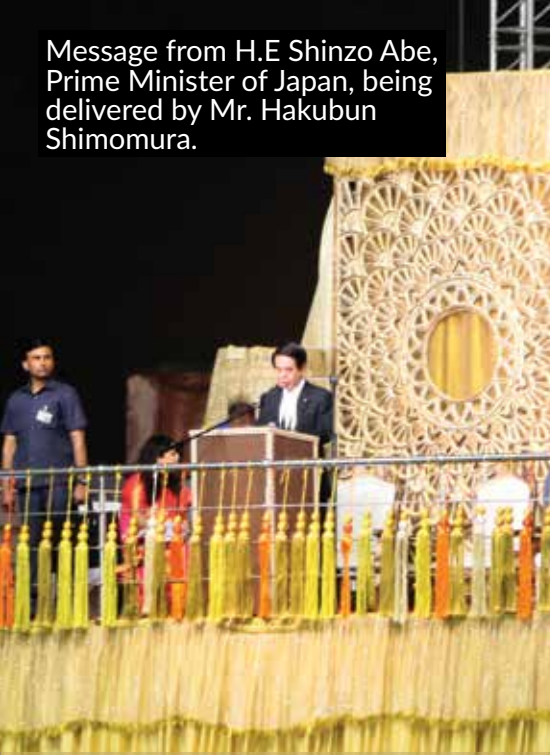
Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi rendering the Welcome Address



Gurudev with Mr.Kamal Thapa, Hon.Deputy Prime Minister, Nepal and other dignitaries



Mr.Sarunas Birutis, Hon. Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania



Message from H.E Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, being delivered by Mr. Hakubun Shimomura.



His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister, United Arab Emirates

WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL DAY 1

The World Culture Festival began on an auspicious note with ancient Vedic chants.

Shri Narendra Modi, Hon. Prime Minister of India rendered the Welcome Address, saying India can surely meet and fulfill the needs of the world in some form or in some measure or another. But this can only happen when we truly take pride and honour in this great cultural heritage. If as a community, India criticizes its own culture and only looks into finding flaws and shortcomings, then why would the world ever look up to the country? Today, he observed, India has given a very unique gift to the entire world in the form of this musical confluence, adding that when you need to march forward in life to achieve your goals that is when you need to know The Art of Living. He said, when you need to make the journey from your limited self to the unlimited vast Infinity of Existence, then you truly need The Art of Living!

Following the Welcome Address, His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Cabinet Minister and Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development, United Arab Emirates hoped that one day his whole family would also embrace the entire population of the world, and the One world family would be truly complete when everyone everywhere finally understands the moral necessity of a culture of knowledge, understanding, kindness and respect.

Mr. Karu Jayasuriya, Hon. Speaker of Parliament, offered the traditional Sri Lankan Greeting of 'Ayubhovan', meaning 'May you have a long life' bringing a message from His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka, Shri Maithripala Sirisena.

His Excellency Ryszard Czarnecki, Vice President of the European Parliament thanked Gurudev for organizing a festival to celebrate harmony and cultural diversity. He spoke of his compatriot Pope John Paul II, who said almost 14 years ago that nations express themselves by their culture, highlighting the important role played by culture in connecting people and nations.

His Excellency Dominique de Villepin, Former Prime Minister, France emphasized on the need to open up to other cultures, other religions, to abandon the comfort and security of our daily lives to build bridges for a better world. He said it is our task to invent the weapons of peace to overcome the spirit of war. He spoke about how every one has to become peace builder, setting an example by one's own life.

Mohiniyattam performed by more than 1350 dancers



The Bollywood tribute to the World Culture Festival, choreographed by Terence Lewis



The Grand orchestra with 8500 musicians and 40 instruments performing



Mr. Evgeny Kuyvashev, Hon. Governor of Sverdlovsk Region, Russia said he was convinced that the language of culture does not need translation, since it appeals to the very soul of a man. That is because real art, he said, is based on kindness and love and this is the solid ground on which are based peace and mutual understanding.

Mr. P.J.Kurien, Hon. Deputy Speaker, Rajya Sabha said India has always been a cultural beacon of the world. The basic instinct and the cultural of India has been to let free and noble thoughts come from all parts of the world. He spoke of how India has always received ideas form the world and given ideas to the world – and this process has enriched the Indian culture through millennia.

Mr. Sarunas Birutis, Hon. Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania said culture is not like a shining ornament; culture binds societies and helps people overcome divisions. It is a real life blood, no less important than a nation's health or wealth. He urged world leaders to establish individual rights own culture as a fundamental right. He also called on the world leaders to establish diversity as the main principle of our harmonious existence.

Mr. Kamal Thapa, Hon. Deputy Prime Minister, Nepal said this massive gathering, once again, from the land of ancient civilization, India, has sent a message to the world that the world is one family 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. He also conveyed the support and solidarity of thousands of Nepalese in joining the initiative.

Padma Bhushan Vaidya Devendra Triguna / Brihaspati Dev Triguna, Ayurvedic Doctor and expert in Nadi Vigyan observed that Gurudev's vision of the entire world being a One World Family appears to have become a reality. He said people from all over the World are present here today, and India, which was once regarded as a Vishvaguru (Teacher to the Whole World), can once again regain that high pedestal by spreading the values and the message of love and peace.

QUOTES ON PERFORMANCES

DHANAGARI DHOLS, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

The Dhanagari Dhol is the drum of the Shepherd clan in Maharashtra. The Dhangars – the last of India's truly nomadic tribe – migrate 500 kms across central India twice a year. To mark the beginning and the end of each chapter of migration, the Dhanagari drums are brought out and passed around while the clan dances the Gaja dance.

PAKHAWAJ, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

Vari (Marathi word for 'visit at regular intervals') is an annual religious Padayatra (pilgrimage by foot) where over one million pilgrims travel for 21 days to the Vithoba temple, Pandharpur, in the Indian state of Maharashtra. The Pakhawaj players enacted the palanquin procession from the Vari, adding rhythm to the hymns.

GRAND SYMPHONY

The Grand Symphony featured 8500 musicians playing over 40 instruments playing nine compositions, three on each day of the festival. Each song, composed by Chitra Roy, was set in different raags — Malkauns, Bhoopali, Darbari Kanada, Desh,Peelu, Kaafi, Vrindawani and Bhairavi

NADASWARAM, INDIA

The Naadaswaram, a classical South Indian wind instrument, is considered to be very auspicious. It is the key instrument played in almost all Hindu marriages and temples in South India. It is essentially an outdoor instrument due to its intense volume and strength.

Garba-Ras with over a 1000 dancers from Gujarat



The tabla section part of the Grand Symphony



The splendour of 60 Kathakali dancers



Brazilians performing the Samba, Capoeira and Frevo



KATHAK, INDIA

Kathak is the classical dance of North India, characterized by rhythmic footwork and spectacular spins. Under the choreographic direction of Pt Birju Maharaj, the living legend of Kathak, presented the sounds of nature; the sounds of Pakhawaj (Indian drum producing a strong masculine sound); followed by an invocation of Goddess Shakti.

BHARATANATYAM, INDIA

Bharatanatyam is one of the oldest and the most traditional classical dance styles. This dance gets its name from Sage Bharata who wrote the Natya Shastra. Bharatanatyam as a dance form is deeply grounded in Bhakti or devotion. Choreographed by Padma Shri Dr Guru Saroja Vaidyanathan, the dancers performed a verse that describes Lord Shiva and another piece dedicated to the Guru.

LATIN FIRE, SOUTH AMERICA

The performance, led by Argentine singer Patricia Sosa and Argentine musician Ignacio Escribano of Indra Mantras, featured songs from different parts of Latin America including Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, and Venezuela describing the gaiety of Latin American culture.

HORO, BULGARIA

Horo is a collective dance performed in a chain or a circle at different feast days from the calendar and the life cycle. Most Bulgarians are able to dance the basic Horo at social gatherings such as weddings. It is common practice to have 'live music' by an accompanist (accordionist) – during Horo dances.

PERFORMANCE BY ART OF LIVING SINGERS, INDIA

Art of Living singers Shalini and Srinivas rendered 'Ishwar Basa', a song written and composed by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

PERFORMANCE BY HEMA SARDESAI, INDIA

Hema Sardesai is an Indian playback singer best known for her work in Bollywood. She has sung for more than 60 Hindi films and has released several Indipop albums. She is the only Indian Singer to win the Grand Prix at the 16th International Pop Song Festival in Germany.

BONITA BRAZILIAN SOUL, BRAZIL

The performance featured three Brazilian dance forms: Samba, a lively, rhythmic dance of Afro-Brazilian origin; Capoeira, which evolved from martial arts, and Frevo, which was developed by transforming movements from Capoeira. The performance reflected the Brazilian roots, way of life, identity, happiness and cultural diversity.

GARBA-RAS, GUJARAT, INDIA

The Garba dance is part of the celebratory worship of the Goddess Shakti. The Gujarati community performs the circular dance – related to fertility and divine procreative energy – at weddings and other life-cycle events. It is also the centerpiece of the spiritual nine-night Navaratri festival

THE URAL STATE ACADEMIC RUSSIAN FOLK CHORUS, RUSSIA

The Ural State Academic Russian Folk Chorus, from Sverdlovsk, Russia, is a folk song and a dance ensemble formed in 1943, drawing inspiration from the life and the traditions of the villages in the Sverdlovsk District. The 30-member ensemble presented a musical collective, which includes a chorus, an orchestra and a ballet performance.



Terence Lewis dancing the Bollywood Rendition with his troupe



The African contingent dances to the beats of the Djembe



The Russian folk ensemble from Sverdlovsk



Over 1500 Bharatanatyam dancers performing

MOHINIYATTAM, INDIA

One of the most lyrical classical dances nurtured in Kerala - the land of the Gods, the Mohiniyattam portrays feminine love in its myriad forms - carnal, devotional and maternal. The performance paid obeisance to the prominent composers of Kerala, bringing out the dance in its purest form

KATHAKALI, INDIA

The Kathakali dancers enacted a story from the Legend of King Mahabali – a king so generous and devoted it made the Gods jealous! The culmination saw the entire Mohiniyattam and Kathakali troupe perform ‘Thillana’ – a rhythmic piece performed at the end of a concert.

BUYOGAN, PHILIPPINES

Just like the bees (called buyogan in the local dialect), the resilient people of Abuyog continue to persevere and promise to work and live with merriment, despite the natural calamities they have faced. The Buyogan dance, part of the Buyogan Festival, celebrates the mannerisms of the bees.

DEV NATI, HIMACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

The people of Himachal celebrate the New Year by performing the Nati dance that spans across several hours, often until the orchestra is tired. The Nati dance is a celebration of the culture of Himachal Pradesh, presented as a homage to Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati – whose abode is known to lie in these mountains.

AFRICAN DDD, WEST AFRICA

African DDD is a rhythmic expression of life and a celebration of ‘One Africa’ and ‘One World’ through Dance, Drumming and Dressing. The African Drum “Djembe” literally means ‘coming together’. The Djembe – an integral part of ritualistic life – is one of the most versatile and widespread percussion instruments on the planet.

WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL THEME SONG, INDIA

The song, composed by Siddhant Bhatia, which promotes the spirit of oneness, love and togetherness in the vision of a ‘One World Family’, was led by Chitra Roy

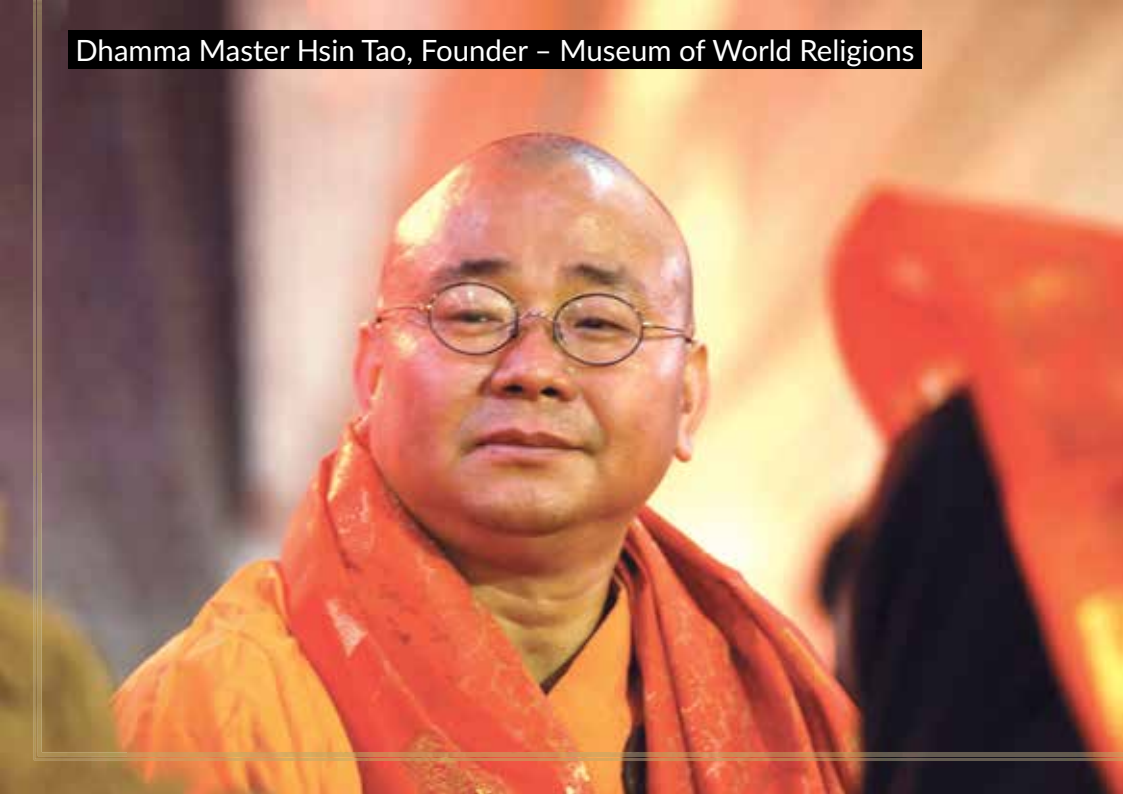
BOLLYWOOD RENDITION, INDIA

The contemporary dance performance was constructed by artistic choreographer Terence Lewis, as a homage to the living Guru. This was followed by a cultural dance, a Bollywood tribute, to the tunes of a special composition by Lalit Pandit rendered by singing legends Asha Bhosle, Shaan, Alka Yagnik, Abhijeet Bhattacharya, Babul Suriyo, Aakruti Kakad, Kanika Kapoor, Javed Ali, Pratibha Baghel, Aishwarya Nigam, Lalit Pandit and Amitabh Narayan followed by a Bollywood walk of tribute to the cause of a one-world family.

Gurudev addressing the millions of spectators. (In the background) Faith leaders and world leaders



Dhamma Master Hsin Tao, Founder – Museum of World Religions



The Strings - sitar section of the Grand Orchestra featuring 8500 musicians playing over 40 instruments



WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL DAY 2

The second day of the World Culture Festival witnessed the unprecedented gathering of over 2000 religious and faith leaders, statesmen and dignitaries on a single stage unanimously voicing the need for building a peaceful world based on human values and universal brotherhood. Dignitaries and speakers lauded the extensive humanitarian efforts of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and the Art of Living in bringing people from diverse faiths and backgrounds together through spirituality. In attendance were some prominent political and faith leaders and like His Eminence Dr. Ahmad Badreddin Hassoun, Grand Mufti & Chairman of the Supreme Iftaa Council, Syrian Arab Republic Ven. Dhamma Master Hsin Tao, Founder – Museum of World Religions, Rev. Dr. Gerald L. Durley, Pastor of Providence Missionary Baptist Church, United States of America, H.H. Sri Nirmalanandanatha Swami Ji – Head of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Matha, Sherry Rehman, Senator from Pakistan and Vice President of Pakistan's Peoples Party, Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister for External Foreign Affairs, Mufti Mohammed Saeed Khan Islamic Scholar and Founder of Madani Trust – Pakistan, among others.

The Inter-faith meet was interspersed with some vibrant, foot tapping and colorful performances including Maruni dance from Sikkim, graceful Khon recital from Thailand, the Grand Art of Living Symphony where about 8500 musicians from all over the country played over 40 musical instruments, among others. Day 2 opened with 40 musicians playing the Nādaswaram, the world's loudest non-brass acoustic instrument. The instrument is played at the start of any auspicious ritual or ceremony in the temples in India.

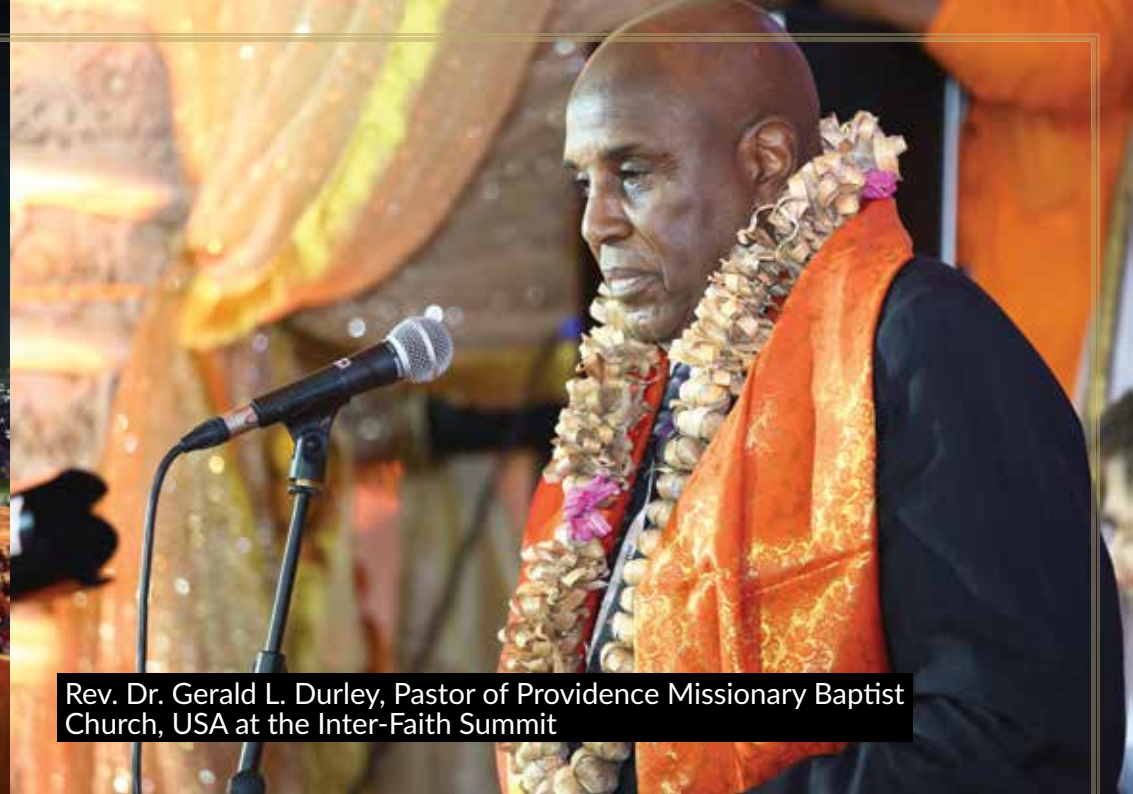
INTERFAITH MEET

Founder of the Art of Living Foundation, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar opened his address to a rousing applause from the lakhs of participants present on the second day of the World Culture Festival. He said that when there is tension among communities, faiths and people, it gives rise to disturbance and a sense of loss and after trying everything, a single cry arises from every heart- Sarve Jana Sukhinou Bhavantu (May everyone be happy and at peace). “Let everyone be happy — this pure intention is already in every heart, it only needs to unfold a little bit more,” he said.

The venerated Dhamma Master Hsin Tao, Founder– Museum of World Religions spoke about the need for holy peace that arises from tranquility and love. “It is because of The Art of Living that we have been intimately coexisting together. Let our hearts quiet down and allow us periods of stillness which brings about the energy of love between heaven and earth,” Tao said.



Indian faith leaders at the World Culture Festival



Rev. Dr. Gerald L. Durley, Pastor of Providence Missionary Baptist Church, USA at the Inter-Faith Summit



Musicians watching Ms. Sherry Rehman, Senator from Pakistan speaking at the Festival



Ram Jethmalani, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha addressing the gathering

Swami Swatantranand Ji Maharaj from Rishikesh, called the World Culture Festival the 'Maha Kumbh' of the world. While talking about the diverse groups and backgrounds of people present at WCF who came together in celebration of values of harmony in diversity, he said- "There are different kinds of flowers in a garden, and each flower has its own unique beauty. But when all these different flowers are strung together in a garland, then the garland looks so much more beautiful. Those who strive to bring everyone together in peace and love are given the greatest respect and honor."

Swami Rambhadracharya, Founder and Head of Tulsi Peeth in Mathura congratulated Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and the Art of Living for organizing an event of such a large scale in 'Indraprastha' (ancient name of New Delhi). "This cultural festival has clearly shown that the day is not far off when India shall once again ascend to the exalted seat of being a Vishwaguru (Guru to the whole world) and shall give the message of peace and harmony to everyone everywhere," Swamiji said.

Hon'ble Minister for External Foreign Affairs, Sushma Swaraj, speaking about the depth of diversity present, she said that there were Swamis from various Muths, Islamic scholars and Christian priests present on a single stage. "Dear Gurudev, the glory you have bestowed upon us all by organizing this grand World Culture Festival is without a second," she said. She also appreciated that WCF provided a global platform to Indian music, culture, arts and elevated the glory of Yoga and Indian music-which is India's soft power- in the eyes of the world. "You have managed to bring together an unparalleled confluence of art and music in this momentous event," Swaraj said.

H.H. Sri Nirmalanandanatha Swami Ji – Head of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Matha said that Gurudev, through his profound wisdom and iron will, had turned the vision of a One World Family into a reality. He praised Gurudev's efforts in taking the spiritual legacy of India and its culture to the world through the philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'.

Addressing the gathering, Sherry Rehman, Senator from Pakistan and Vice President of Pakistan's Peoples Party, said that an event like the World Culture Festival was important and needed today, when the world is increasingly divided. "Today's conference and gathering, and this immense outpouring of love and unity foster for us from Pakistan a very important sense of a regional community in this family of Nations; especially those of us from South Asia," Rehman said.

Rev. Dr. Gerald L. Durley, Pastor of Providence Missionary Baptist Church from the United States of America pointed to the fact that even as there were 3.5 million people gathered at the WCF, there was no sign of violence or discord and that everybody was in peace and love. He said that the world needed peace and everyone had to come together for that. "I am willing to go to jail with Sri Sri! It is our time! I will go to jail for peace! I will go to jail for love! I will go to jail for faith!" Durley said. Ramesh Bhai Ozha, Founder-Devka Vidypith and Sandipani Vidyaniketan opened his address with ancient vedic chant of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumkum' meaning the One World Family. Ozha appreciated the Art of Living for bringing together people from all over the world to showcase their art, culture and musical traditions. "The whole world appears to have come together here as One World Family," Ozha said.

Ram Jethmalani, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, spoke about the need to reduce human suffering, which he said should be the principal object of one's existence. "You can ignore everybody but please take care of those who are suffering from pain and who are not as happy as you seem to be," Jethmalani said.

Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Home Minister of India said that Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has worked tirelessly to spread the message of India's culture of peace and spirituality in the whole world. "It is the message of peace and non-violence of this great country India, that Pujya Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji is working to spread to everywhere in the



Mr.Rajnath Singh, Hon.Home Minister;Ms.Sushma Swaraj, Hon.External Affairs Minister and Mr.Manish Sisodia, Hon.Deputy Chief Minister, Delhi



H.H. Sri Nirmalanandanatha Swami Ji - Head of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Matha speaking at the Inter-Faith Summit seated next to Mufti Mohammed Saeed Khan, Founder of Madani Trust from Pakistan



His Eminence Dr. Ahmad Badreddin Hassoun, Grand Mufti and Chairman of the Supreme Iftaa Council, Syrian Arab Republic

world. I believe there can be no greater worship and service of Mother India than this. There can be no greater service to humanity today than what Pujya Gurudev is engaged in," Singh said.

Mufti Mohammed Saeed Khan, Islamic Scholar and Founder of Madani Trust from Pakistan acknowledged the love and compassion of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for everyone and said that everyone reciprocated the same love and adoration for him. "We should all know this for a fact that all the problems and conflicts in this world can be resolved" Khan said. He said that with the lamp of love and knowledge, the veil of negativity and ignorance disappears. "When the veil lifts then one realizes that everything is made up of the same Divinity and there is no other," Khan said.

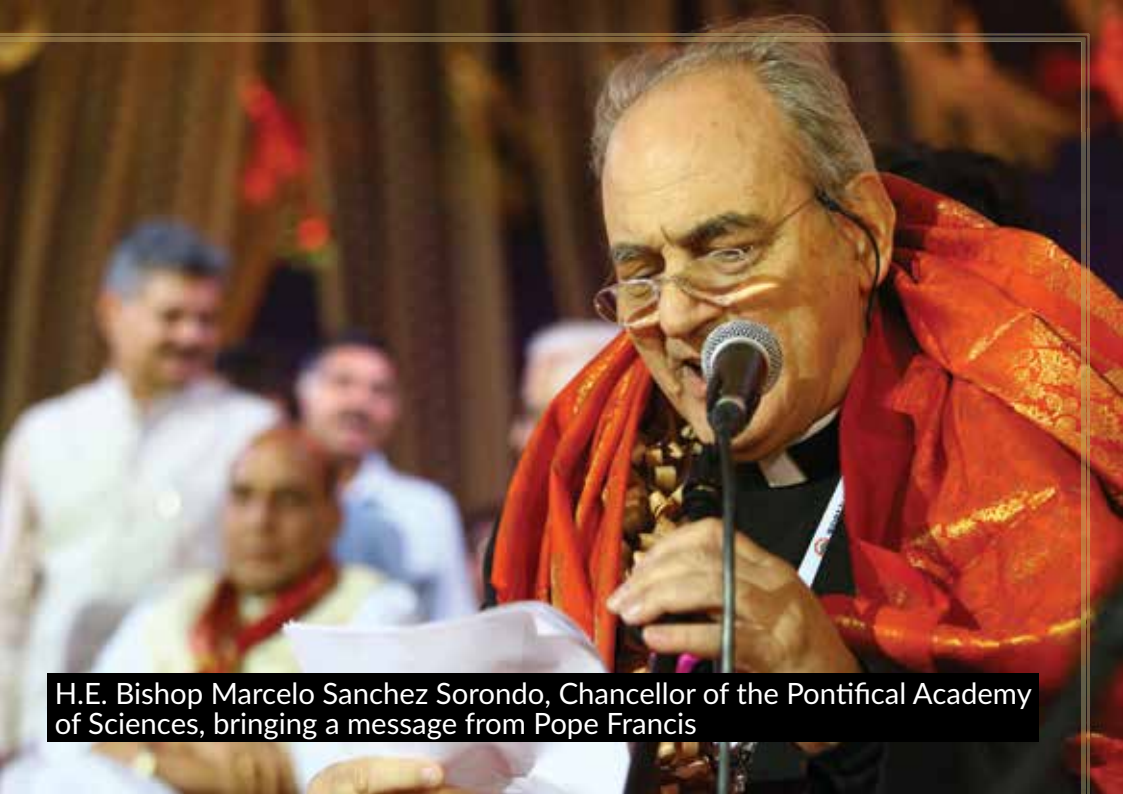
Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister of New Delhi said that it was a blessing that Gurudev had arranged a divine congregation of saints and holy spiritual leaders from different faiths and parts of the world. "The whole world today is looking up to India, and this glimpse of the universality of Indian Culture, the founding principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam today has taken the shape of reality before us in this august occasion of The World Culture Festival," Sisodia said. Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji, Jagadguru Sri Veerasimhasana Math, Suttur Sri Kshetra said that Sri Sri was an inspiration for deeper living. He also offered good wishes for Gurudev's 60th Birthday on 13th May this year. "May God bless him with health in his journey of selfless sacrifice for 100 years, and enable him to take The Art of Living Foundation to new heights of human service," Mahaswamiji said.

Hon Raja Varuthian Sampanthan, Leader of the Opposition, Srilanka, who spoke on behalf of the speaker of Srilankan Parliament, congratulated Sri Sri for starting the Art of Living Foundation which today has a presence in over 150 countries. "We must deeply concentrate on building a stress-free and violence-free society. Our world is diversified with many ethnic groups, religions and castes, and nevertheless all of us belong to the human family which inhabits this planet. Thus irrespective of various divisions, we must cohabit faithfully in order to achieve progress, peace, harmony and prosperity," Sampanthan said.

In a message addressed to Gurudev, His Holiness Dalai Lama noted that the Ancient Indian psychology is advanced and profound and Tibetans, as students of the Nalanda tradition have greatly benefited from it. "I request all my respected Indian sisters and brothers to pay more attention to your ancient heritage, and combine its values with science and technology to ensure greater benefit. In ahimsa and inter-religious harmony India sets an example to the rest of the world, and I believe The World Culture Festival is taking place in that spirit," Dalai Lama said.

Talking about a shared history a common sense of belongingness, His Eminence Dr. Ahmad Badreddin Hassoun, Grand Mufti & Chairman of the Supreme Iftaa Council, Syrian Arab Republic said that humanity shared common parentage. He said that earth was our mother our souls went back to the same almighty. "That's why we are all One, we will always be One, and no one can separate us" Hassoun said, "So may the pigeon of peace fly from India all over the world because in India is present the messages of God. We await you in Syria and in all Arab countries. You are our brothers and sisters. You are our family. We love you!" Hassoun also spoke about the beauty of India and the Indian civilization and Syria's peaceful relationship with her.

H.H. Jagadguru Shri Shankaracharya Vasudevanand Saraswati Ji, from the Jyotirmath Badrika Peeth echoed the sentiment of the dignitaries and faith leaders and acknowledged that the World Culture Festival symbolized the realization of the ideals of Vasudhaiv Kutumbkum-the gift of India to the world.



H.E. Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, bringing a message from Pope Francis

A panoramic view of a section of the seven-acre stage of the World Culture Festival



H.E. Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Holy See (Vatican) who was present on behalf of Pope Francis noted that Art of Living had done immense work in bringing peace and harmony on an individual level. “The Art of Living has shown by example over 3.5 decades that it has earned its place as a leader in this important work and I congratulate you for this work. The people gathered here today have such visible joy and serenity, that it is a testament of this fact,” Sorondo said.

Giani Gurbachan Singh Ji, Akal Takht Jathedar said that when every human was connected, then it was easy to realize and connect with God. He said that Gurudev had been blessed by the Grace of God and he had achieved something great and remarkable in a very short span of 35 year which was “to join all of humanity as one”.

INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar appealed religious and faith leaders who were present on the stage to join in the ‘Declaration of Support to the International Solar Alliance’ with the objective of raising awareness and harnessing renewable sources of energy on the path to economic and infrastructural development.

LIGHT OF THE SOUL

In a spectacular display of harmony in diversity, lakhs of mobile flashes went off to light up the crisp Saturday evening, as participants joined Gurudev to present the ‘Light of Soul’, a symbolic gesture signifying a strong message of commitment to spreading peace and joy in the world.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCES

VEDIC CHANTS BY 1000 SANSKRIT SCHOLARS

1000 trained Sanskrit scholars recited prayers from the Vedas, the world’s most ancient scriptures.

GURU PUJA CHANTING

15000 Art of Living volunteers chanted an ancient prayer honoring wisdom from Masters of all traditions and lineages.

THE ART OF LIVING GRAND SYMPHONY

About 8500 musicians from all over the country played over 40 instruments showcasing the rich musical treasure house of talent in India led by Chitra Roy, one of the most popular Art of Living singers.

THE WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL THEME SONG

The World Culture Festival Theme Song - Sangachadwam - ‘Let us move together as One’ was rendered by the Art of Living Grand Symphony of 8500 musicians led by some of the most well-known Art of Living singers like Chitra Roy, Gayathri Ashokan and Dr.Manikantan.



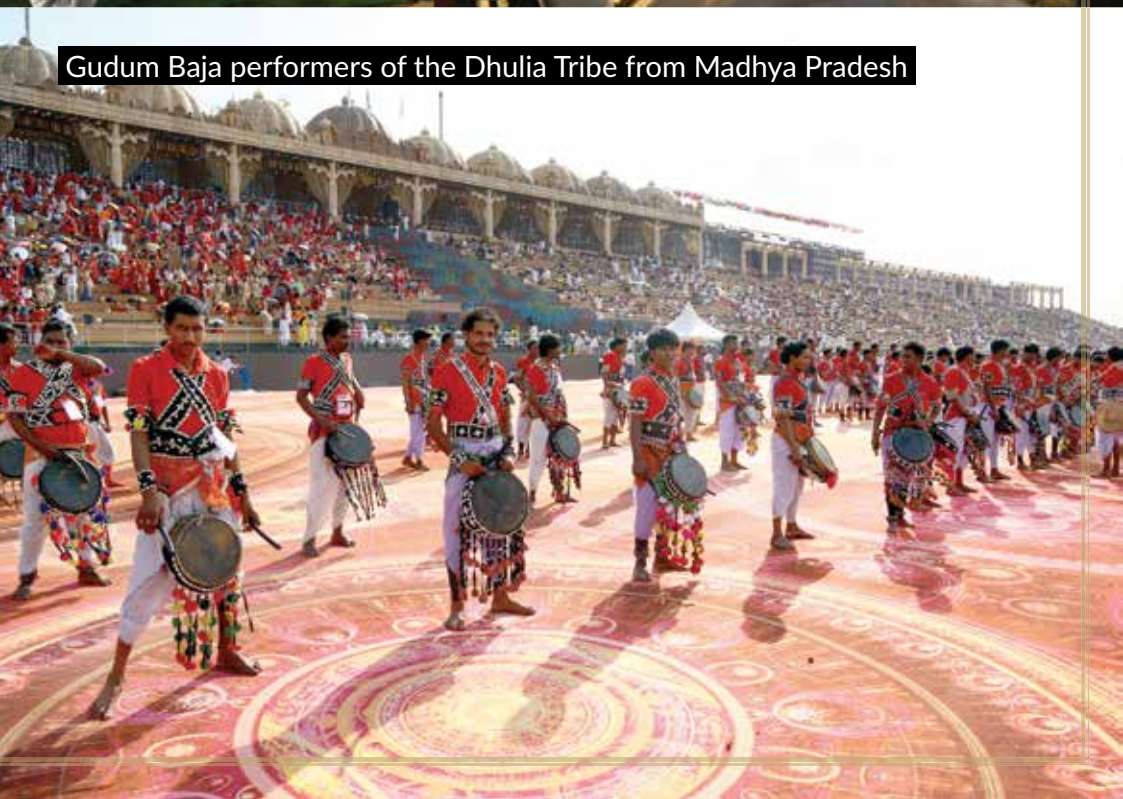
Bhangra dancers performing at the World Culture Festival



The resounding beats of the 1000 Dhanagari Dhols from Maharashtra



Panthi dancers from Chhattisgarh



Gudum Baja performers of the Dhulia Tribe from Madhya Pradesh

ODISSI DASHAVTAR, ODISHA, INDIA

Over 16500 artists performed the classical dance from Odisha, considered to be one of the eight main Indian classical forms. The dance form is considered to be one of the oldest surviving dance forms in the country. The dance was choreographed by members of the Sri Sri University Faculty of Performing Arts. Odissi has its origin in the Devadasi tradition and it was initially performed in the temples as a religious offering by the 'Maharis' who dedicated their lives in service to the Divine. Dashavatar, a famous piece of Odissi Dance was based on the ten incarnations of Vishnu. It is believed that whenever injustice and negative forces prevail on Earth, Lord Vishnu comes in various forms to uproot them. Internationally acclaimed musician Guru Sri Rama Hari Das composed the music.

KATHI, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA

500 dancers performed the powerful form of folk theatre of the tribal population of Balahi Harijan community of Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh. Men exclusively perform this dance, as it requires difficult and advanced acrobatic moves. The dance is performed all through the night during the Durga Puja festival, where the dancers balance lamps while dancing and make swift acrobatic moves and pirouette. In fact, the movements of the Kathi dance resemble a battle ground – complete with shouts that sound like war cries.

GUDUM BAJA FROM MADHYA PRADESH

Over 250 artists from Madhya Pradesh, the central state of India performed this powerful form of folk theatre. Gudum is a traditional instrument which is more popular amongst the Dhulia Tribals of Dindori, Mandla and Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh.

DHANGARI DHOL FROM MAHARASHTRA

1008 Dhangari Dhol drummers from Maharashtra enthralled the audiences with a power-packed synchronous recital of the drums. The Dhangars – the last of India's truly nomadic tribe – are always on the move and, twice a year, they migrate 500 kms across central India. To mark the beginning and the end of each chapter of migration, the Dhanagari drums are brought out and passed around while the clan dances the Gaja dance along rhythmic tunes, exhibiting boundless enthusiasm.

BHANGRA, PUNJAB, INDIA

1150 exuberant dancers presented the popular, peppy and lively Bhangra from Punjab in vibrant and colorful Pagdis or turbans. Originally, the Punjabi wheat farmers danced and sang songs about village life to help pass time while working in the fields. Gradually, these songs became part of harvest celebrations at Bhaissakhi festivals, as the sight of their crops growing invigorated the farmers. Earlier danced purely to Punjabi folk music, today the musical repertoire extends to elements of rap, hip-hop, and other commercial forms of Western music. Choreographed by Satpal, the dancers performed Girdha to Dhol (Drums), Alghoza (a pair of woodwind instruments).

MARUNI, SIKKIM, INDIA

353 dancers performed the resplendent Gorkha-tradition Maruni dance, one of the oldest and most popular dance forms from Sikkim, India. It is also performed in parts of Nepal. Performed by males in female costumes, whose body movements are extremely graceful, the 370 performers danced to the Samala beat- a rhythm expressing celebration with a touch of romance. The piece was choreographed by Phurba Lhamu Sherpa and sung by Rajen Ghimiray. This dance celebrates the return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya after his exile.



The majestic Khon dance from Thailand



Lithuanian folk dancers at the World Culture Festival



A 1000 singers from Chinese-speaking countries performing

PANTHI, CHHATTISGARH, INDIA

Over 1000 artists from Chhattisgarh, India performed this devotional acrobatic dance to songs conveying the spirit of renunciation. Panthi dance is generally performed by followers of Guru Ghasidas who are called the Satnamis as a tribute to their master. With an intention to elevate the Panthi sect who were being exploited, Guru Ghasidas shared with them profound knowledge and instructions on right living. The dance begins with slower movements to the accompaniment of a song led by the leader of the group. The tempo increases gradually, culminating in vigorous fast-paced movements interspersed with occasional characteristic pyramid-like formations.

CHINESE SONG: MÍNG TIĀN HUÌ GÈNG HǎO (TOMORROW WILL BE BETTER)

Over 1000 singers from Chinese speaking countries rendered the Chinese song written by Taiwanese songwriter Luo Da You. It was created in 1985 inspired by the single 'We Are the World' (written by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richi) to commemorate the forty-year anniversary of the end of the Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan. The song was originally sung in Mandarin Chinese and more than 60 artists involved in the original recording were from the four main Chinese music industry centers of Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan. Luo Da You is known for revolutionising Chinese music in Taiwan by inculcating a sense of social awareness into his songs.

GENESIS: SONG FROM TAIWAN

Genesis was a contemporary dance recital performed by 59 Taiwanese dancers. Through the songs of native Taiwanese singer Amuyi Sulu, along with dancers holding tree branches in their hands, they awoke the beings of the land and expressed our gratitude to Mother Nature.

BYELORUSSIAN, EAST EUROPE

50 Artists enthralled the audiences with a lively Byelorussian folk dance. The recital showcased the celebrations of 'Ivan Kupala Rituals' where water-nymphs, fairies, fertility goddesses, flowers and bonfires are believed to come together to mark the peak of summer. Performed by non-professionals from Belarus in Eastern Europe and trained by the famous choreographer Elena Rybchinskaia to the accompaniment of their 200-year old musical instruments, the dancers presented through their piece the relationship between man and nature.

MATYÓ CSÁRDÁS, HUNGARY

50 Hungarian dancers 'Matyó Folk Dance Ensemble', from the town of Mezökövesd, are trained by Zoltán Zsuráfszky Jr and Judit Szabó. lit up the stage with their beautifully embroidered costumes and energetic music. The Csárdás dance, which is always danced with a partner, originally began as a pastime for villagers many years ago. Moving to the tunes of a Gypsy orchestra, the tempo in the dance increases steadily climaxing in a fast tempo.

KHON, THAILAND

150 dancers performed the mesmerizing traditional Khon dance from Thailand. Khon is a form of silent theater combining gracefulness with masculinity in its dancing and singing, with elaborate costumes and masks. It employs many aspects of the arts: drama, dance, pantomime, and music. The team presented Brahmastra that features an episode from the Ramakien, the Thai epic adapted from the Indian epic Ramayana. It features a fight between Hanuman (the deity monkey) and Indrajit (son of antagonist King Ravana).

The stirring strains of Swiss Alphorns



Maruni dancers from Sikkim



Smt. Bhanumati Narasimhan, Director, Women and Child Welfare Programs, Art of Living, rendering the invocation

BILAD ALORIB AWUTANI (SONG OF UNITY), MIDDLE-EAST

About 150 singers from the Middle East came together to perform the Song of Unity. Bilad Alorib Awutani is a National Pan-Arabism Song, unofficially recognized as the Arab World's National Anthem, written by Fakhri Al-Baroodi, and composed by the Folleyfel brothers. The 150 performers from the Middle-East pray for an Arab world without any borders, asking for their traditions and their culture to be kept alive, and for a good education system.

KALINKA, RUSSIA

300 Russian dancers presented the high tempo Russian folk number. The Russian song was written in 1860 by folklorist Ivan Laringov. The song is known for its simple lyrics and a fast tempo. Russian folk dances are daring, energetic, exuberant, poetic with modesty, simplicity and profound dignity! Russian folk dances functioned as a rite, connecting people with nature and uniting them.



Gurudev lighting the lamp with Shri Arvind Kejriwal, Hon.Chief Minister, Delhi; and Smt.Sumitra Mahajan, Hon.Speaker, Lok Sabha



WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL DAY 3

The third day of the World Culture Festival began with the strains of the Nadaswaram a traditional Tamil Instrument followed by an invocation by Bhanumati Narasimhan, Director of the Women and Child Welfare Programs of the Art of Living Foundation.

The Welcome Address was given by Mr. Jeff Houk, Chief Administrative Officer, Art of Living Foundation, U.S.A and Nikhil Sen, MD Unibic India who said that the main objective of The Art of Living was social transformation. The Art of Living conducts programs at every level of society and for people in almost every field. They shared that Gurudev has inspired volunteers in over 160 countries throughout the world. Conflict resolution, trauma relief, and transforming the educational system are paramount visions of Gurudev and The Art of Living. Gurudev's vision of Vasudaiva Kutumbakam (One World Family) was just beginning at the World Cultures Festival.

Mr. Lawrence Carter, Professor of Religion, Morehouse College, U.S.A said this was the largest gathering in the history of the world, recommending Gurudev for the Nobel Peace Prize. He called for world peace and non-violence, to walk stress-free down the halls of human happiness, one and together in freedom and union, united and indivisible, joint and inseparable, now and forever in the name and the nature of Omni goodness and eternal spirit.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Jo Leinen, Hon. Member of the European Parliament said that the world needs inspiration from India, that yoga, meditation, Ayurveda should be a world heritage that must be practiced everywhere. He called on the world to use the energy of the sun and to make it sustainable and secure. He requested the gathering to walk together to make the world a better place.

Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Former Prime Minister of Norway spoke about the necessity for peace between neighbours, nations, ethnics and religious borders. He emphasized on the need for dialogue, the need to listen to each other, understand and respect each other, and create an inclusive multicultural society all over the world, like in India.

Ms. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon. Speaker of the Lok Sabha said that the message of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam that goes out from the colossal stage of the World Culture Festival would reach far and wide, the message of love would spread to the entire world.

Indian leaders including Mr.Amit Shah, President, Bharatiya Janata Party; Mr.Arun Jaitley, Hon.Minister of Finance and Mr.Venkaiah Naidu, Hon. Minister of Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation and Parliamentary Affairs



Mr. Geoffrey Van Orden, Hon. Member of United Kingdom Conservative Party observed how we often have to make difficult decisions, and sometimes we meet unexpected difficulties and sometimes we are disappointed, but if we try to lead good lives all will work out well in the end. He said that duty, faith, and tolerance should be our guide. He emphasized that our aim should be to create a world community of peaceful nations and a one world family.

Mr. Arun Jaitley, Hon. Minister of Finance, India said that it was a matter of pride for India to host such a grand festival which is spreading the message of peace and harmony to the world.

Mr. Alojz Peterle, Former Prime Minister of Slovenia shared a musical message on his mouth organ titled 'The Storm of Peace', declaring that when there is a storm of peace, people become very joyful.

Mr. Arvind Kejriwal, Hon. Chief Minister of Delhi, India said, in the world today, on one side you have people trying to create an environment of hatred and violence. But he strongly believed that violence cannot be cured by violence in turn. Violence and hatred can only be won over by love and peace. This, he said, is the very message that Gurudev is giving us all today through spirituality, and through his love and compassion.

Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria observed the similarities in cultures around the world in the dances, music and songs at the Festival in spite of the dispersion of humanity, over thousands and thousands of years from Africa. Caring and sharing must be made part of life and when there are differences, we must learn to appreciate our culture as the purpose of our existence in the world is to dance, sing, make merry, join hands and move forward together.

Mr. Frank Heinrich, Hon. Member of Parliament from Germany spoke on the need to have a peaceful heart and learn to serve with that spirit. What is needed, he said, is to take the celebration back to our neighbourhoods and bring our learning, our common values into practice to bring hope and change.

Mr. Amit Shah, Hon. President of the Bharatiya Janata Party said that the whole world tries to come together through business and trade but Gurudev, through the medium of culture, has united and brought the whole world together.

Dr. Biren Sikder, State Minister for Youth and Sports, Bangladesh spoke about the contributions of Gurudev in the last three and a half decades in creating a one world family through social activities and spiritual rejuvenation. He observed that the people of Bangladesh find short-term and long-term relief through the techniques taught in the Art of Living Programs. He said if one wants peace in family life, social life, and even in political life, one needs to come to The Art of Living foundation.

Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation expressed his gratitude to Gurudev for spreading the message of India's heritage to the whole world through the vast unparalleled platform of the World Culture Festival. He said that we more often than not talk about improving and increasing the productivity of our animal wealth, our flora and fauna, but we adopt genetic modification techniques to achieve this aim. If there is one institution that stands for upholding human values and working towards naturally preserving and protecting our environment, then that is the Art of Living foundation and its founder.

Mr. Venkaiah Naidu, Hon. Minister for Urban Development, India observed how as we move forward, liberalization, privatization and globalization, there is more tension as the attention towards peace and harmony is decreasing. Gurudev's message is of peace and harmony, which is the need of the hour. He said it was time for all of us to re-dedicate ourselves to this great cause for peace, irrespective of caste, creed, religion and background.

The glittering stage of the World Culture Festival



Cheer Dancers from Japan



Bihu - the Assamese folk dance



Dr. Petra De Sutter, Hon.Senator, Government of Belgium said what he had seen here the last three days was a glimpse of the future, the only possible future if we want to save the this planet.The only way to solve the challenges from the crisis both in Europe and in the world is through love, peace and happiness, he said

Ms. Sarah Claerhout, Hon.Member of Parliament, Belgium, shared that India has a very old tradition of sharing her knowledge, her wisdom and her spiritual richness with the rest of the world and this is also what was seen in this festival, which has brought together people together.She expressed that the Festival was an invitation for all of us to take home that we have to build more bridges between our cultures.

Mr. Kapil Mishra, Hon.Minister of Art, Culture and Tourism, India shared that he felt a new Sun rising from the happiness of River Yamuna, as if to say “The people who have gathered here will surely take this Sankalpa(intention) to clean River Yamuna, and will also cleanse their heart and mind of all negativity with the message of love and brotherhood that they have received here.”

Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad, Hon.Minister of Communications and Information Technology, India expressed that he had never seen such a vast sea of people. What he saw here, where people have come together from Argentina to Russia; from Kenya to Germany; from Nepal to Bangladesh; from Pakistan to Sri Lanka; from USA to Europe and then of course India herself, was true diversity.

Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Hon.Union Minister of Railways, India observed that this was a unique forum for people from different parts of the world, who belong to different communities, backgrounds, languages, cultures and different notions and ideologies. But when they go back home, he said, they shall go back as a single entity, thinking for a common goal – and that is peace for the whole world.

QUOTES ON THE PERFORMANCES

The final day of the World Culture Festival was a continuation of the cultural feast featuring performances from India, its neighbouring countries as well as from the corners of the world.

WAIKUA, NEW ZEALAND

The Waikua is an ancient Maori tradition featuring songs that are a vital part of Māori life. Their performance, demonstrated through song and beautiful geometric patterns made by hand weights (Poi), spoke of the importance of self-reflection, that we are essentially one spirit experiencing human birth.

SIEBEN SCHRITTE AND GERMAN POLKA,GERMANY

The name of dance, ‘Sieben Schritte’, means seven steps. It’s the dance of peasants who are celebrating in the Oktoberfest and it is performed in circles.

BIHU, ASSAM, INDIA

The dance performed by the Karbi tribe of Assam was a combination of four dances: Nimso Kerung — performed during funerals, Banjar Kekan —also permed during funerals, Haccha Kekan — performed at the first harvest season and Ritnong Chingdi — associated with farming activities.

Punk Sufi from Pakistan



Folk Dances, Nepal



Royal Rajasthani folk- Ghoomar



The bee dance of Buyogan, Philippines



RABINDRA SANGEET, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

Rabindra Sangeet is music composed by the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore— Asia's first Nobel Laureate and the author and composer of India's National Anthem.

FOLK DANCES, NEPAL

The performance featured the traditional dances of the five main communities of Nepal, the Sherpas, Mewari, Tharu, Sakela Rai and Gurung. The dance showcased the essence of the various cultures to represent the significance of unity in diversity.

BIYELGEE, MONGOLIA

The Biyelgee embodies the nomadic way of life expressing the everyday lifestyle of the Mongolian herders such as milking the cow, cooking, hunting, household labor, customs and traditions.

GHOOMAR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA

This is the folk dance of Rajasthan, originating from the Rajput royalty. It was traditionally danced by queens and princesses depicting their demureness and sincerity. Costume and jewelry is an important part of the dance, expressed through hand and waist movements.

CHEER DANCE, JAPAN

The performance was a wonderfully synchronised combination of acrobats and cheerleading.

KUCHIPUDI, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

This unique art form, originating in the Kuchipudi village of Andhra Pradesh, is a blend of grace and vigour, elevation and sensuality, control and abandon. The dancer not only dances but also acts with gestures as well as words. This performance described the dance of the Indian God Shiva with his consort Goddess Parvati.

PUNK SUFI, PAKISTAN

The dance is based on the Sufi precepts of love, intoxication and ecstasy through the trance of rhythmic song and dance to achieve unity with the divine.

TANGO, SOUTH AMERICA

It is said that Tango is a language without words, a way of seeing and living life where each movement encourages the development of sensitivity, trust and respect, as two people move as one.

DRUMMING AND DANCE, SRI LANKA

The drums used in Sri Lanka's classical Kandyan dances are known as Bera in Sinhalese. It is an ancient Sinhalese custom to present ritual music when seeking the blessings of the guardian deities of the land.

CENDRAWASIH MENEBAR PESONA, INDONESIA

This was a Balinese dance illustrating the mating rituals of the bird of paradise or 'Burung Cendrawasih' as it is called in the Indonesian language.



Argentinian Tango



American Hip-hop for a cause



Kandyan dance from Sri Lanka

HIP HOP, USA

This performance brought out the dance's core philosophy against violence, inspiring people to work for social and economic justice. It also expressed Gurudev's message for the peaceful people of the planet to stand up and make a loud noise.

POLONAISE, POLAND

Originally danced by the Polish aristocracy, this dance brings out the Polish values of hospitality, culture and unity. It is a dance of greeting and celebration to express joy.

THE COSMIC RHYTHM

The dance drama featuring 3700 artists performing 33 dance forms from around the world, will explore the journey of a seeker to find divinity.

The 1100 Kuchipudi dancers from Andhra Pradesh



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL

- World's largest floating stage of 7 acres that housed 36,603 artistes, 3000 dignitaries, 2500 religious and spiritual leaders.
- An estimated 1.8 billion people watched the live telecast of the event from 767,463 locations across 188 countries.
- The lowest step was at 6 ft high and the highest was at 47 ft. There were about 22 steps.
- Over 1000 people worked on stage and venue development.
- More than 20,000 international guests attended the event. Sizable contingents from South America, Mangolia, Russia, U.S., Europe, Middle East, Japan, Malaysia, Australia, Pakistan among others were present.
- Revival of tribal art forms: WCF saw the revival of some of the tribal art forms from India from states like Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Sikkim among others.
- World's largest Peace meditation: This was the first time in the world that 3.5 million people meditated for world peace on all three days at one physical location. Millions also participated virtually.
- For the grand Art of Living Symphony, the tracks were sent out to more than 8000 participants for rehearsals.
- For the dance performances, each state had been assigned a choreographer. States decided on the dates for rehearsals with all the participants assembled at one place. For example, Gujarat had its final rehearsals on March 7th with 2000 people in Ahmedabad. Chattisgarh practiced the Kathi dance with the participants assembling in Raipur on February 6th, 7th & 8th. They also did the Happiness Program simultaneously. They traveled together from Raipur.
- Coordination effort: Participants were sent the tracks and dance steps to practice individually. The state co-ordinators moved from district to district to monitor the practice sessions.
- The Global Leadership Forum, co-hosted by the World Forum of Ethics in Business and The Art of Living Foundation in New Delhi on the 12th and 13th March 2016 brought together senior leaders from business, government, politics, science, NGOs, faith-based organizations, sports, academia and media to reflect on the paradigms of leadership needed to maneuver the world of today.

HISTORIC PERFORMANCES

- 1700 Bharatnatyam performers were trained by 3 Padma awardees
- 1700 Kathak dancers choreographed by Kathak maestro, Pandit Birju Maharaj
- 375 drummers from South Africa
- More than 1445 Odissi dancers
- More than 1100 Kuchipudi dancers
- About 1620 Kathakali and Mohiniattam dancers
- 1400 Ghoomar dancers from Rajasthan
- More than 1150 Bhangra dancers
- Over 1500 Garba dancers from Gujarat
- Over 1000 singers from West Bengal performed Rabindra Sangeet
- About 1050 Naati dancers
- 1000 Panthi dancers from Chattisgarh
- 1008 Dhangari Dhol players from Maharashtra
- Artists from across the world also performed Brazilian Samba, Argentinian Tango, Hip Hop, Rap
- Bulgarian Folk artists and Swiss Alphorn players adorned the stage
- Cosmic Rhythm saw about 4,600 artists perform 30 dance forms
- Some of the international performances include Contemporary Sufi (From Pakistan), Kandyan dance (Srilanka), Genesis (Taiwan),
- 375 drummers arrived from South Africa. The drums were shipped to in October 2015 which were transported to Delhi from Mumbai Port.

Hon. Mr. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways



110 speakers and 4112 participants from over 80 countries attended the Global Leadership Forum



Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar lights the auspicious lamp along with other esteemed dignitaries to mark the opening of the Global Leadership Forum

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP FORUM DAY 1

The Global Leadership Forum (GLF) was held under the aegis of the World Culture Festival – a celebration of The Art of Living's 35 years of service to humanity. The digital revolution has turned the world into a global village and the economic challenges in the last few years have led to incredible pressure for businesses to adapt their strategies and keep reinventing themselves. On the agenda were deep discussions on megatrends of the next few decades and evaluate how leadership can ensure resilience, ownership and alignment of the teams to a shared vision to cope with the challenges ahead.

The conference brought together senior leaders from business, government, politics, science, NGOs, faith-based organizations, sports, academia and media to reflect on the paradigms of leadership needed to manoeuvre through the challenging dichotomies of “Ethical and Profitable”, “Current and Farsighted”, “Global and Local”, “Humane and Digital”, “Steady and Adaptive”, “Dynamic and Peaceful”.

110 speakers, participants from 80 countries and total participation of 4442 members. The commitment to a healthier world of tomorrow was demonstrated by making it a low paper-use conference: speaker profiles, agenda and conference information for over 2500 delegates was on an app that could be downloaded on phones. This meant 700 pounds of coal not being burnt and over 300 litres of fuel not used, equivalent to the carbon emissions absorbed by 500 trees in a year.

Hon. Mr. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways spoke about the 3Es – Ethics, Economy and Ecology, emphasizing that the world now needed higher focus on the ecological aspect. He touched upon the progress made e.g. usage of ecofriendly fuels, use of waste material for road construction, recycling plants and so on.

A similar message of optimism was echoed by Hon. Mr. R. V. Deshpande, Minister for Higher Education and Tourism, Government of Karnataka: he talked about the 6 fundamental principles of leadership that he learnt in life: faith in one's own capacity, faith in life, introspection, discipline, meditation & Yoga and a willingness to honor others – Atithi Devo Bhava. He applauded the global work of peace done by the Art of Living and highlighted the strengths of Karnataka as an innovative, skilled state H.E. Michael A. S. Adhin, Vice-President of Suriname, shared 4 ideas: to rise above our lower nature, to uphold Dharma, to differentiate between the political entity of Nation and the cultural concept of State and to contribute through new spiritual world views as individuals.



Dignitaries including Nitin Gadkari, Hon. Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India, H.E. Michael A. S. Adhin, Vice-President of Suriname, Hon. Mr. Abhimanyu Singh Sindhu, Minister of Finance, Government of Haryana, Smt. Bhanumati Narasimhan, Director, Women And Child Welfare Programs, Art Of Living, come together for a photo-op



Hon. Alojz Peterle, Former Prime Minister, Slovenia



Sherry Rahman, member of senate and vice-president, Pakistan People's Party



Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria



Sutirtha Bhattacharya, Chairman, MD, Coal India Ltd

Mr. Ryszard Czarnecki, Vice President of the European Parliament, Belgium spoke about the need to address lack of education and unemployment of young people.

He was followed by Mr. Michael Perlis, President and Chief Executive Officer of Forbes Media, who underlined that a good company must be built on good core sound values, human values and human intent of the highest order. He illustrated this with the example of Forbes which stays close to the market and consumers in an honest and transparent manner, wins by respecting the dignity of others and has fun as a core principle

Hon. Capt. Abhimanyu Singh Sindhu, Minister of Finance, Government of Haryana, praised the contribution of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and described 3 basic lessons on ethics in business: the ability to move in harmony with everybody and the cosmos, the concept of justice in the study and science of business and equitable distribution of wealth.



Contemplative audiences



Rajita Bagga, President, World Forum for Ethics in Business, along with thought leaders, sharing smiles and ideas



Suresh Prabhu, Hon. Railways Minister of India



Piyush Goyal, Hon. Minister of State with Independent Charge for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy



Vijay Kumar Singh, Hon. Minister of development of North Eastern Region



Hon. Gunnar Stalsett Bishop Emeritus of Oslo, Honorary President of Religions for Peace, Adviser to the Norwegian Government on Peace and Reconciliation, Founder and Chair of Instrument for Peace



Audiences respond to the call for collaborations among countries for social and cultural governance



Hon. Ms. Kate Osamor, Member of Parliament, United Kingdom

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP FORUM DAY 2

Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Hon.Railway Minister, India spoke of the paradox of culture: on one hand, it is essential to create an identity and evolve but on the other, differences in culture can also cause conflict. Everyone should feel that their culture is good and conserve it, and also be able to live in harmony co-existing with other culture: the fusion of cultures will make us progress much more. H.E. Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Former Prime Minister of Norway and President, The Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, Norway articulate 3 key aspects of leadership: to be a servant leader and not to secure one's own interest, dialogue as the main means of management and creating an inclusive society. He also believed that the foundation for democracy is laid by respect for human dignity.

Mr. Piyush Goyal, Hon.Minister of State with Independent Charge for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy, India touched on the need for spirituality and not religion. He shared management lessons from the Bhagawat Gita – you have a right to actions but not to their results and that people emulate what leaders do and so leaders must be role models and a leader is one who lives to serve

General Vijay Kumar Singh, Hon.Minister of State for External Affairs, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Statistics and Program Implementation, India defined a leader as someone who ensures that people do something willingly what he wants them to do and one who creates an inspiring vision for the future. He also felt that a global leader must have cautious honesty and be patiently impatient.

Gunnar Stalsett Bishop Emeritus of Oslo, Hon.Honorary President of Religions for Peace, Adviser to the Norwegian Government on Peace and Reconciliation, Founder and Chair of Instrument for Peace talked about leadership as a core values, and about the struggle between peace and injustice. He emphasized that inclusive leadership provides great potential for communication.

The next plenary session discussed the theme 'Building Cities of Tomorrow: The Leadership and Innovation Imperative' and was moderated by Mr. Anant Goenka, Wholetime Director and Head, The Indian Express Group, India.



Mr. Armin Laschet, Member of State Parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia



Mr. Armin Laschet, Member of State Parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia



Hon. Ms. Carla Bacigalupo, Minister of Justice and Labor, Paraguay



Hon. Mr. Yonadam Kanna, Member of the Iraqi National Assembly



Dignitaries being felicitated at the end of a plenary session at Global Leadership Forum

Ms. Kate Osamor, Hon. Member of Parliament, United Kingdom strongly believed social capital is not just an economic or academic construct; it is fundamentally about the importance of building relationships and facilitating individual and collective action. It is about building communities, building engagement and building trust for all of our cities and communities.

Mr. Armin Laschet, Hon. Member of State Parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia, Federal vice-chairman of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Germany shared his view that good social and cultural governance are indispensable for economic growth of a country. He also stressed on the importance of collaboration across countries, quoting the example of the global economic crisis which could not be solved by any country alone.

Ms. Carla Bacigalupo, Hon. Minister of Justice and Labor, Paraguay highlighted the need for social values and care for the environment along with sustainable development and transparency in economic spheres. She said that a true leader is one that inspires other leaders and works for the common welfare of all.

Mr. Yonadam Kanna, Hon. Member of the Iraqi National Assembly, spoke about the concept of boundary-less nations: the need to think about the values which bring us together. He also spoke about the need to resonate the vision of Mahatma Gandhi, one without arms and the path of peace.

Mtro Armando Rios Piter, Hon. Senator, Mexico emphasized the importance of trust: all social capital and networks is about communication, and about trust. He also indicated that the trust levels between people is not very high and that it could be increased by tapping into one's own internal consciousness, by using the breath.



Guests listen in rapt attention



PictureSpeak: Live Art depicting the theme and message of Global Leadership Forum



Whirling Dervishes from Turkey take the audiences on a soulful journey at Global Leadership Forum

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GLOBAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM
15-17 March, 2016

THE ART OF LIVING

What inspires us? ... inspire us?

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GLOBAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

As part of the World Culture Festival, the Art of Living Foundation also hosted the Global Youth Leadership Forum on March 12 and 13 for youth from across the world to come together and discuss the issues facing the world. Over 500 youth delegates from around the world took part in the event featuring interactive sessions with the speakers who were leaders and entrepreneurs across fields.

Mr. VSS Mani, CEO, Justdial, spoke about Ethics in Business. He stated that 'Make in India' will be truly successful if India opens up to the world, and attracts the best of talent worldwide. He described how Art of Living meditation techniques helped him at crucial turning points in the growth of his business.

Dr. Pawan Agrawal, CEO, Mumbai Dabbawalas described how his team has been delivering food to over 200,000 Mumbaikars, through an amazingly efficient supply chain, just as Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is delivering peace to hundreds of millions worldwide.

Mr. Johann Berlin, CEO, Tlex, and Mr. Louis Gagnon, President, Ride.com, conducted an interactive workshop on Connect to Lead. They talked about how the space between clarity and confusion is where possibility happens. First we must connect to ourselves, then to others, and then take responsibility for the world, they said.

Mr. Cedric Baecher, co-founder NOMADIES, and Mr. Deepak Sharma, Trustee, SSRDP and Mr. Himanshu Kalra, Social Activist conducted a panel discussion on Sustainable Development for a Positive Economy. The forum discussed ideas for sustainable development, involving community participation.

Ms. Blake Peterson, Senior Policy Advisor for Women, Peace and Security, US Dept. Of State, conducted an interactive discussion on Women as Agents of Peace. She described how women are affected by conflict, and how they bring a different and vital perspective to world peace. She spoke about the importance of women taking an inclusive, not an individual approach.

MESSAGES



I want to share with you my excitement about the World Culture Festival to be held in India in March this year. At these times when we see so much around the world in terms of fear and trouble and different

countries having the challenges they have, a festival is a time when countries and people from all over the world come together to share their ideas. It is going to be a great event held on a massive scale.

We know it is going to be large both in terms of people who are going to attend, but even larger in terms of the ideas, the motivation and the sense that we all share the planet together, we all share in the problems and therefore we all share in the making of the solutions. It is going to be a wonderful celebration for the people of the world.

~ THE HONORABLE MATT MEAD,
GOVERNOR OF WYOMING



I am delighted to send you the warmest greetings to the hundreds of countries and millions of people celebrating this year's World Culture Festival and Global Leadership Forum. I congratulate

The Founder, His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for the 35th anniversary of the Art of Living Foundation and its goals of promoting humanity, spirituality and human values.

We are delighted to be a part of an international movement that is promoting those values.

In closing I want to thank you for allowing me to be a part of this very important celebrations.

~ DR. ARTHUR C. EVANS, JR. - COMMISSIONER
OF PHILADELPHIA'S DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY SERVICES
(DBHIDS)



I love hearing that the Art of Living Foundation is celebrating its 35th year of good works that have helped so many people.

I learned an awful lot about the Foundation, about its good works. I know this anniversary celebration in New Delhi is going to be a wonderful event.

I cannot be with you personally at this time. Please know that I am there with you in spirit and I wish you all the best for the world culture festival. I know it will be a huge success.

~ ELAINE F. MARSHALL, NORTH CAROLINA
SECRETARY OF STATE



I am so honored to acknowledge the great work of His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. Your Holiness, you've done so much to bring people together globally. You've done so much to teach us again

what love is all about. You've done so much to reach people who would be called the unreachable, even the untouchables.

I am a disappointed that I couldn't be with you, but that disappointment would never stop me from saying thank you for the work that you are doing.

~ BISHOP DR. BARBARA KING,
HILL SIDE INTERNATIONAL TRUTH CENTER,
ATLANTA, GEORGIA.



On behalf of the citizens of Houston, I send greetings to the attendees of the World Culture Festival in New Delhi, India. I wish I could be on hand to celebrate the Art of Living's 35 years of service to humanity, spirituality and human values. Best wishes for a successful and uplifting event.

~ SYLVESTER TURNER, MAYOR, CITY OF HOUSTON



I would like to congratulate the Art of Living Foundation for its 35th anniversary and I am delighted to confirm my participation as a speaker during the World Culture Festival in Delhi in the month of March. My presentation will be addressed around profitability and ethics and how we can enter into a wise world.

~ CARLOS MOREIRA, CHAIRMAN, FOUNDER AND CEO, WISEKEY



Very excited and honored to be participating in the World Culture Festival in Delhi, hosted by the Art of Living Foundation. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's vision resonates with me as it is all about driving peace and harmony globally across diverse cultures. He wants to create a one world family and he has been working tirelessly to instill and emphasize common human values and unity among people. As humans we need to move away from a self-serving agenda and focus towards a united voice of peace, mutual respect and helping each other to create a better world.

~ GARY GAUBA, PRESIDENT, CENTURYLINK



I would like to congratulate the Art of Living Foundation on their 35th anniversary and the celebration of the World Culture Festival. This festival and the work of the Art of Living Foundation has always been about

unity, always been about bringing people together. World Culture Festival is a big celebration of 155 or more countries celebrating peace, love and harmony. I have seen the work of the Art of Living Foundation and I am proud to be associated with it. I think this festival comes at a very appropriate time in our world's history to teach us how we can recognize that we are all part of the human race, that we have so much more in common than that which could possibly divide us. I want to thank you for the leadership that you have provided and I stand ready to continue to partner with you as you move forward.

~ TIM RYAN, HON. CONGRESSMAN, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



I am Nancy Pelosi of the Democratic Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives. The World Culture Festival is a celebration of our common humanity reflecting the bold vision of the Art of Living

Foundation and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. It brings together thousands of participants to work to create a violence-free, stress-free society by honoring and valuing all traditions and cultures, who are fostering tolerance and appreciation for diversity and ultimately harmony. You know that an individual at peace is the basis of a society at peace. Working with the greatest diversity of people from children to returning veterans to those in the criminal justice system you are building a brighter future. The Foundation aims reflect best of our world - empowering women, promoting human rights and preserving our planet. Sri Sri and all attending World Cultural Festival, thank you.

~ NANCY PELOSI, DEMOCRATIC LEADER OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



I am sorry I can't be with you to celebrate the Art of Living's 35 years of service and contributions to our global community. Your goal to celebrate our cultures and to promote peace and service is important. The annual world cultural festival is a great reminder of the diverse world we live in. I applaud your work to help the global community recognize our common values and the common good. Thank you for all you do and enjoy the festival with peace and in peace. Be well.

~ AMI BERA, HON. CONGRESSMAN, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



The rich diversity of cultures across the globe is something that should be nurtured, promoted and celebrated by all. The World Cultural Festival organised and hosted by the Art of Living Foundation provides an

excellent occasion for that very celebration. Individuals from around the world come together to observe and showcase their rich traditions and culture. I sincerely hope this event will help us realise that while expressions may vary, we belong to one human race. I congratulate the Art of Living Foundation on their 35th Anniversary and wish the very best for the World Cultural Festival.

~ MIKE QUIGLEY, HON. CONGRESSMAN, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



All you need to do is open the newspaper in the morning to read about the threats that are facing people and nations. Spread of terrorism is a unique and lethal challenge for the US, India and scores of other nations. And this threat makes it more important than ever that we bridge our cultural, spiritual and historical differences to work together to protect our nations from enemies that have no respect for freedom, decency or for human life. The WCF is one way to bridge our differences to lay a groundwork for different nations and people to work together. I thank His Holiness Sri Sri and the Art of Living Foundation for its unrelenting work and I wish you all the best at this year's Festival.

~ GEORGE HOLDING, HON. CONGRESSMAN, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



Hi, I am Chris Van Hollen, I'm a Member of Congress from the State of Maryland and I've lived many years in southern India, where I went to school in Tamil Nadu, and of course, southern India is the

home of His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. So I am very pleased to be celebrating 35 years of the Art of Living Foundation and everybody coming together for the World Cultural Festival... 3.5 million people and more from over 150 countries. So I hope will come and gather as we celebrate peace, unity and diversity- 3 things we need a lot more of in this world.

~ CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, HON. CONGRESSMAN, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

16 BAHRAIN NEWS 16th March 2016

Celebrating a cultural

Celebrations to mark the 35th anniversary of the Art of Living Foundation was dubbed the 'cultural Olympics' with a stage that accommodated 37,000 artists and an arena holding up to 3.5 million people. The GDN was at the World Culture Festival in India...

35th Anniversary Celebrations
 100 walk onto a 1,000 sq ft stage which the stage itself is the size of six football fields at once...
 The Art of Living Foundation, which is a spiritual and health organization, was the main attraction of the World Culture Festival (WCF) in New Delhi, India...
 Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the founder of the Art of Living Foundation, was the chief guest...
 The festival was held on the banks of the Yamuna River in New Delhi, India...
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Art of Living performers from Bahrain

Colour of culture

The World Culture Festival's fusion of arts, culture and humanity was a sight to behold.

- Star2
- 30 Mar 2016
- By M. Krishnamoorthy star2@thestar.com.my



I could barely believe that three-and-a-half million people could converge at the Art of Living's (AOL) World Culture Festival (WCF) in one day. So, I made a bee-line to New Delhi to be part of the historic event, held on the Yamuna Bank plains from March 11-13.

I made the trip with much trepidation and anxiety, unsure of what it would be like to be among such a mass of people.

But seeing is believing - spectators started entering the festival grounds from noon when the gates opened on the first day. By 5pm, there was already a crowd of one million participants.

The 405ha site adjacent to the Yamuna River flood plains saw double the crowd of the million who turn up at Batu Caves in Kuala Lumpur annually for Thaipusam. However, having covered the religious festival for more than 20 years, the crowd at WCF, instead, came from every corner of the world.

In the end, a record crowd of 3.75 million people converged over the three days. More than 37,000 artists from 155 countries descended upon New Delhi to showcase their unique sights, sounds and tastes.

Cameron invites Sri Sri to House of Commons

- The Free Press Journal
- 14 Mar 2016

World leaders on Sunday hailed Art of Living (AoL) and its founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for holding the World Culture Festival and invited him to their countries. British Prime Minister David Cameron invited Ravi Shankar and invited him to their countries. British Prime Minister David Cameron has invited you to address the House of Commons whenever you visit UK next next World Culture Festival.

Cameron sent his invitation in a message through his Conservative Party's parliamentarian Matthew Offord who attended the AOL's World Culture Festival here. "British Prime Minister David Cameron has invited you to address the House of Commons whenever you visit UK next time," Offord said.

"People say that no one can change the world but Sri Sri had made a good start. We are seeing a ray of hope," Cameron was quoted as saying in his message. "Art of Living founder, a peace and understanding," the British prime minister's message said. "We are seeing a minister, who could not turn up for the event, invited you to address the House of Commons whenever you visit UK next time." Cameron was quoted as saying in his message. "Art of Living founder, a peace and understanding," the British prime minister's message said. "We are seeing a minister, who could not turn up for the event, invited you to address the House of Commons whenever you visit UK next time."

Omani singer Nadeem Al Balushi performing at the World Culture Festival 2016, said to have been attended by 3.5 million people from around the world, was an experience of a lifetime

- Times of Oman
- 17 Mar 2016
- DEEBA HASAN



Supplied photo

MUSCAT: Omani singer Nadeem Al Balushi was chosen by the Art of Living organisation to perform at World Culture Festival 2016, which was held on the banks of the Yamuna River in New Delhi, India from March 13 to 15.

The festival marked the 35th anniversary of the organisation, which was started by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

Nadeem was first contacted by Kamal Khimji, head of the Art of Living organisation in Oman, about participating in the festival. "Kamal Khimji called me to discuss performing in a show at the Al Falaj Hotel to celebrate 35 years as a representative of Art of Living, and then she offered me the chance to join the big celebration, which she said would happen in India, and said I would be representing Oman in India. I was very excited about the opportunity and agreed. I was also supported by friends Hassan, Jagdip and Dipti in this."

ASIAN NEWS

2.com/)



Head of Art of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar called for "peace and harmony" as the World Cultural Fest, billed as one of the biggest cultural gatherings in recent times, begins in Delhi... reports Asian Lite News

Amidst controversy over environmental and security concerns, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's three-day extravaganza began in Delhi on Friday evening soon after thunder and lightning lashed the World Culture Festival on the banks of the Yamuna River in New Delhi, India.

CREATING HARMONY VIA WORLD CULTURE FEST



Creating Harmony via World Culture Fest

Artists perform at the World Culture Festival on the banks of the Yamuna in New Delhi, 16th March 2016. The festival was held on the banks of the Yamuna River in New Delhi, India from March 11-13. The festival was held on the banks of the Yamuna River in New Delhi, India from March 11-13. The festival was held on the banks of the Yamuna River in New Delhi, India from March 11-13.

INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE

GULF DAILY NEWS, MARCH 25, 2016

“Celebrations to mark the 35th anniversary of the Art of Living Foundation was dubbed the ‘cultural Olympics’ with a stage that accommodated 37,000 artists and an arena holding up to 3.5 million people.”

GDNONLINE, BAHRAIN MARCH 25, 2016

“To walk into a 1000 acre arena where the stage itself is the size of six football fields is awe-inspiring.”

STAR 2, MALAYSIA, 30 MARCH 2016

“The World Culture Festival’s fusion of arts, culture and humanity was a sight to behold.”

TIMES OF OMAN, 17 MARCH 2016

“For Omani singer Nadeem Al Balushi performing at the World Culture Festival 2016, said to have been attended by 3.5 million people from around the world, was an experience of a lifetime.”

BUSINESS WORLD, 11 MARCH 2016

“IAHV’s Philippine Empowerment Workshop Project Leader Siaw Liew said the dancers from Leyte, one of the areas hardest hit by typhoon Yolanda in November 2013, exemplified that ‘they can still celebrate life no matter what happens.’”

PHILIPPINE DAILY ENQUIRER, 29 MARCH 2016

“3.5 million people from 155 countries-Incredible India holds an incredible festival”

FREE PRESS JOURNAL, SOUTH AFRICA 14 MARCH 2016

“Cameron invites Sri Sri to House of Commons”

PRETORIA NEWS WEEKEND, MARCH 12, 2016

“Festival to celebrate diversity

This weekend hundreds of South Africans are in New Delhi for the World Culture Festival which hopes to unite 3.5 million people in a celebration of diversity.”

ASIANLITE, UK, 11 MARCH 2016

Head of Art of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar called for ‘peace and harmony’ as the World Culture Festival , billed as one of the highest cultural gatherings in recent times, begins in Delhi”

TIMES OF OMAN, MARCH 2016

“Art of Living to celebrate 35 years of service, spirituality- Festivals don’t just offer reprieve from the daily grind. They infuse your life with a deep sense of joy, love and fulfillment. Like the exuberance of the spring, festivals wrap you up in their warmest hues, leaving you young as morning and fresh as dew.”



Do not politicise events which concern India's prestige: Sri Sri

By Sri Sri Prasad

It is a common sight to see people who are not only ignorant but also malicious. They are the ones who are always ready to politicise any event. They are the ones who are always ready to create a rift between the people of this country. They are the ones who are always ready to create a rift between the people of this country. They are the ones who are always ready to create a rift between the people of this country.

Event goes on even as spoilsport, turn venue

By Sri Sri Prasad

The World Culture Festival continues to draw a large crowd of people to the banks of the Yamuna River. The event is going on as planned despite the presence of some spoilsports. The venue has turned into a place of chaos and confusion. The organizers are doing their best to manage the situation. The event is a success and the people are enjoying it.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the founder of Art of Living Foundation Sri Sri Ravi Shankar during the opening day ceremony of the three-day World Culture Festival on the banks of Yamuna River in New Delhi on Friday. — PTI

It's Kumbh Mela of art, says Modi

USUAL SUSPECTS
SRI SRI PRASAD

'Secularists' shaken by Sri Sri's grand show

By Sri Sri Prasad

The secularists are always ready to politicise any event. They are the ones who are always ready to create a rift between the people of this country. They are the ones who are always ready to create a rift between the people of this country. They are the ones who are always ready to create a rift between the people of this country.

As participants run for cow volunteers cheer on, say if

By Sri Sri Prasad

The World Culture Festival is a success. The people are enjoying it. The event is a success and the people are enjoying it. The event is a success and the people are enjoying it. The event is a success and the people are enjoying it.

Soggy stage no problem as WCF awash in colour and culture

By Sri Sri Prasad

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NATIONAL COVERAGE

ECONOMIC TIMES, MARCH 12, 2016

“Rains and hailstorms fail to deter followers flocking the venue in huge numbers”

THE PIONEER, 12 MARCH 2016

“Art of Living sets the world on fire-
Despite initial hiccups like rain, gala show continues as planned”

DELHI TIMES, MARCH 13, 2016

“Lagta Hi Nahi Yahan Aa Kar Ki Pakistan Mein Nahi Hain. We asked our agent if we could extend our trip”-A 62- member team from Pakistan attended the World Culture Festival on Friday.

THE HITAVADA, 14 MARCH 2016

“Art of Living Founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar on Sunday said parties should not politicize events having a bearing on the country’s reputation.”

MILLENNIUM POST, MARCH 14

“Fusion of culture marks glittering end to AOL fest”

MINT, 14 MARCH 2016

“Stars aligned”

DECCAN CHRONICLE, 12 MARCH 2016

“It’s Kumbh Mela of art, Modi opens AoL event”

ASIAN AGE, 14 MARCH 2016

“Minister of state for power Piyush Goel said the gathering of people from ‘over 150 countries’ under one roof in India proves that high ideals and humanity transcend boundaries”

SUNDAY GUARDIAN- DELHI MARCH 13, 2016

“Bharatnatyam dancers take to the state at the World Culture Festival on Friday”

SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA, 13 MARCH 2016

“Rajnath, Sushma hail diversity, secularism (at WCF)
Home Minister praises Sri Sri’s multi-faith and multi-lingual program”

SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA, MANGALURU, MARCH 13,

2016

“Sri Sri: Chaos is a blessing in disguise
Thinking, arguing and debating will certainly lead to something meaningful if they are done with the right intentions, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the founder of Art of Living Foundation said here on Saturday”

TIMES OF INDIA, MANGALURU, MARCH 14, 2016

“Dont politicize Indian events: Ravi Shankar”

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, MARCH 12, 2016

“At Sri Sri event, PM asks: If we damn ourselves, why will world look at us”

TIMES OF INDIA, PUNE MARCH 12, 2016

“World’s my family, this is a private party; Sri Sri”

TIMES OF INDIA, PUNE, MARCH 12

“... World Culture Festival received a huge vote of confidence from Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he called it the “Kumbh Mela of culture, heaping praise on Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for his role in familiarizing the world to India’s rich spiritual and artistic heritage”

INDIAN EXPRESS, BHUVANESHWAR, ORISSA, MARCH 14,

2016

“Raising funds through flash mobs and with practice o Skype, visitors put on stellar show”

INDIAN EXPRESS, BHUVANESHWAR, MARCH 14, 2016

“Yamuna will not be polluted but some minds are polluted:Naidu”

SIKKIM EXPRESS, MARCH 12, 2016

“Maruni dancers eye world record at World Culture Festival”

SIKKIM REPORTER, 14 MARCH 2016

“CM attends World Culture Fest in New Delhi-

The second day of the World Culture Festival marked a special chapter for the rich and vibrant culture of Sikkim as a strong contingent of 340 dancers from Sikkim and North Bengal mesmerized the audience with the traditional Maruni Dance, the oldest form of dance from this part of the world.”

NEW INDIAN EXPRESS, CHENNAI, 12 MARCH 2016

“As many as 1200 artists perform Kathak and Bharatnatyam, 8,500 part of AOL ‘s Grand Orchestra; 1,050 Vedic pundits attend ceremony”



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