

**Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as  
Chief Guest at the inauguration of 64<sup>th</sup> Margazhi Mela & 39<sup>th</sup> Natya Kala  
Conference 2019 organised by Krishna Gana Sabha**

Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of 64<sup>th</sup> Margazhi Mela & 39<sup>th</sup> Natya Kala Conference 2019 organised by Krishna Gana Sabha at Krishna Gana Sabha, Chennai today (13.12.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "I am happy to be here for the inauguration of 64<sup>th</sup> Margazhi Mela being organised by the Krishna Gana Sabha.

I note that this festival of music and dance is being held to honour the serenity of the month of Margazhi. This month of the Tamil Calendar denotes many things to many people. It is associated with the Thirupavai, the beautiful kolams designed with rice flour, the Thiru Athirai Festival and with the Vaikunta Ekadashi Darshan. It is, therefore, not surprising that the atmosphere of Chennai is filled with music and dance during this time of the year.

The auspicious month of Margazhi or Margha Shirsha as it is referred to, in the Bhagavad Gita is symbolic of Lord Krishna himself. And who else can personify the fine arts better than Lord Krishna!

The rich cultural heritage of India dates back to several millennia. Our nation has, through the centuries, served as a fertile soil for the blossoming of different genres of music, dance, literature and fine arts. Of these, dance represents the colourful kaleidoscope of India. The world over, dance and music are expected to calm the mind and satiate the disturbed senses. The Indian form of cultural expression goes one step further in the sense that it appeals to the soul. Dance weaves the country together even as it celebrates the diversity and colours of the land with all its beauty and grace. It is a celebration of the body, the mind and the spirit. It is Spiritual; it is esoteric and is a manifestation of the Jeevatma yearning to merge with the Paramatma.

There are a number of dance forms such as Bhartanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Kathak, Odissi, Manipuri practised in India. They all generally have the central theme of

propagating ideas and stories from India's ancient texts with a spiritual orientation. The music is divine and all the performers are intimately linked with the Creator.

Our Classical Music has enjoyed a captivated audience across the globe. The secret of its vitality is its growth without losing its purity and pristine form. History reveals that in our ancient societies, music and dance were parts of daily life and they were deeply rooted in religions. There have been no civilizations without music, dance and art.

There is a strong tradition of linkage of Carnatic music with Gods and Goddesses. Lord Shiva is considered to be the embodiment of Nadha and Thandava. Goddess Parvathi is seen as the embodiment of Lasya, the feminine quality. Goddess Saraswathi is associated with the Veena and Nandi and is considered to be the deity of Laya. Hanuman was an expert on the Hanumantha Veena which is considered to be the precursor to the present day Chitra Veena. Lord Krishna is always associated with the flute. There are 72 fundamental ragas and the objective behind any composition has been to see and seek the blessings of God.

The Religious Discourses and Bhajans attract a larger audience. Dramas with topical interests entertain members of the audience who come from various walks of life.

Awards instituted by Krishna Gana Sabha are considered prestigious in the field of fine arts. These awards provide honour to the recipients and inspiration and motivation to the aspirants. Hence, these awards are welcome.

Today I am happy to present the Sabha's awards to illustrious artists and confer titles on them.

I am happy to confer on Vidwan P. Unni Krishnan the title of 'Sangeetha Choodamani. Having listened to his concerts earlier I am convinced that he richly deserves this honour. He is an accomplished Carnatic Musician and a teacher as well. He is proficient in light music also. As a playback singer he has gained fame in the film industry also. He takes special care of the blind. Hailing from a family of Ayurvedic Medical Practitioners, he makes music as medicine for many. He has performed at over 2000 concerts across the world.

I am happy to confer the title Nritya Choodamani on Kathak exponent, Pandit Rajendra Gangani. He has specialized in Rajasthani style of the Kathak dance. He is considered a torch-bearer of Jaipur School of Kathak. To him dancing is quite natural because he hails from a family of dancers. Such families carry to posterity our traditional art forms. Such persons promote this special school of performing art. Honouring him is honouring the Northern School of dance. It also indicates the Sabha's concern for Unity in Diversity, which is the core of our culture. I congratulate both of them. I request the youngsters to follow these two Role Models in their life.

I have heard much about Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, which is one of the contributory factors for Chennai's International acclaim in the field of Indian culture. Your five annual festivals such as Pongal Dance Festival, YCPA Theatre Festival, Yagnaraman July Fest, Gokulashtami Music Festival, December Art and Dance festival aim to provide a state of the art platform. It is commendable. I feel it satisfies all your members who have diverse interests as in the case of any Sabha.

I am amazed over the variety of events you have got up for this season. I counted it to be 108. The number 108 has auspicious connotations in our tradition. Your festive treat launched today extends up to January 3rd 2020. This also indicates that you bid farewell to the outgoing year and welcome the New Year, with music as the food of life.

It has gone on record in the history of the Krishna Gana Sabha that its President Nalli Kuppuswami Chettiar has rendered yeoman service by patronizing artists.

The Chennai city is only 350 years old but, it projects several centuries old fine arts and Indian culture. The city's achievement is far bigger than its vintage. A city is what the illustrious citizens have made it. Chennai's pride is the contribution of its patrons of art. That there are nearly 150 Sabhas in Chennai which host about 2500 Music concerts, dance recitals, lecture demonstrations, dramas and Bhajans - all in the month of December go a long way to prove the worth of the city and its citizens. Perhaps this is the world's largest festival of fine arts.

The people of Chennai have nurtured Carnatic music, classical dance and its traditions for several centuries. We are all justifiably proud of the fact that Chennai has been listed in the UNESCO's Creative Cities Network. Only two other Indian cities

Banaras and Jaipur are found in the list. Among them Chennai is the most recent, having been founded only in the 17th century. This is ample testimony to the mix of tradition and modernity in Chennai. Here is a city where Sabhas and Software, and Puttus and Popcorn co-exist, to hold aloft music and culture. May this tradition continue.

When these art forms originated in India the life was very calm, and the population was very limited. Now in modern cities, transport is difficult, time is short, residences are far flung. Amidst all these conditions connoisseurs come from many parts of the city attend events like this. If people brave all the difficulties to enjoy the concerts, it proves their love for performing arts. And so the rasikas who have come here in large numbers, are the real patrons of arts. My best wishes go to every one of them.

Organisations such as the Krishna Gana Sabha are playing their role in propagating the beauty of the fine arts among the people. The office bearers of Krishna Gana Sabha deserve a special appreciation for their painstaking efforts. I am sure that with the support of the rasikas of Chennai they will grow bigger in size year after year. May they be greeted with success in all their endeavours.”

On this occasion, Mr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti, President, Thiru. Rajendra Gangani, Awardee, Thiru. P. Unnikrishanan, Awardee, Thiru. Y. Prabhu, General Secretary, Ms. Saashwathi Prabhu, CEO, Ms. S. Janaki, Chief Editor, Sruti Magazine and other dignitaries participated.

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Raj Bhavan, Chennai – 22

Sd/-

Date : 13.12.2019

Addl. Director (PR)