

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of "Bharatheeya Lok Utsav 2019" – All India Folk Festival organised by South Zone Cultural Centre

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit participated as Chief Guest at the inauguration of "Bharatheeya Lok Utsav 2019" – All India Folk Festival organised by South Zone Cultural Centre at Kerala Samajam Auditorium, Chennai today (23.12.2019) and addressed the gathering.

Hon'ble Governor said, "It gives me joy to be here at the inaugural ceremony of the seven day long "Bharatheeya Lok Utsav 2019" – All India Folk Festival -- being jointly organised by the South Zone Cultural Centre, Madras Kerala Samajam and the Zonal Cultural Centres of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

When the Chennai city is witnessing the Margazhi Season, dedicated to Classical Music and Dance, conducting of an All India Folk festival during this season will bring together the rich Cultural Heritage of India. The UNESCO has recognized the speciality of Chennai's music tradition by including it in the list of Creative Cities Network. There are only two other cities of India in this list – Varanasi and Jaipur

It is indeed a pride moment of cultural happiness that, the Folk artistes from Kanyakumari to Kashmir have assembled in Chennai for the Lok Utsav, which clearly proves the cultural diversity and delivers the message of **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat** (One India Great India). The aim of the Union Government is to preserve this great cultural heritage of our civilisation. Zonal Cultural Centres were established with a view to bringing the cultural diversity of country closer to the people by breaking barriers of distance and language.

The South Zone Cultural Centre has been promoting, propagating and preserving our cultural wealth by organising programmes on the various art forms, arranging training programmes and workshops etc., and also by documenting the rare works of art. Its mission has been to promote National Integration through culture and to raise the level of awareness about our Cultural Heritage among the common people of our country.

A strong and vibrant culture nurtures diversity and togetherness. The world over, dance and music are expected to calm the mind and please the senses. Apart from classical tradition, the state of Tamil Nadu is particularly home to a rich repertoire of folk, tribal and devotional hymns. The tradition of Tamil music goes back to the ancient era in Tamil history. There are various references to this musical tradition found in the ancient Sangam books. The ancient grammatical work Tolkappiyam (तोल्काप्पियम) mentions the various musical expressions pertaining to the five landscapes of the Sangam literature.

In one of his poems, **Mahakavi Subramanina Bharathiar** said and I quote,
“Go out in all eight directions. Bring in all treasures of Arts!”

I am happy that this is happening today. Artistes from all parts of India are here to perform.

The festivals such as these, serve the all-important purpose of bringing the performers of folk arts closer to the people. The festivals provide a platform for budding artists to exhibit their talent. They help create awareness about varied expressions of the art form by different artistes.

I understand that more than 260 artistes from all over India are taking part in this festival and this is for the first time such an initiative to organize Lok Utsav is taken by the South Zone Cultural Centre with the support of the Six Zonal Cultural Centres, Art and Cultural Department of Government of Tamil Nadu and Madras Kerala Samajam. I am sure that the amalgamation of various Folk Arts from different parts of India will be a new experience to the visiting foreign tourists and to the art lovers of Chennai and nearby areas.

Mark Twain has defined India beautifully. He said and I quote **“India is the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legends and the great grandmother of tradition”**.

I appeal to all the artistes, the people and all the institutions engaged in the promotion of fine arts to carry forward the rich legacy, culture and tradition of our nation.

I congratulate the South Zone Cultural Centre, Madras Kerala Samajam and the Zonal Cultural Centres of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India for having taken

special efforts for staging this festival. They deserve my appreciation and praise. I wish them all success in their future endeavours.

Being the President of South Zone Cultural Centre, I take this opportunity to thank all the artists for coming here to perform and wish them best.

On this occasion, Prof. M. Balasubramoniam, Director, South Zone Cultural Centre, Dr. B.M Sundaram, Musicologist, Thiru. P.K.N. Panicker, President, Madras Kerala Samajam, Padmashri Dr. Nalli Kuppuswamy Chetty and other dignitaries participated.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai – 22

Sd/-

Date : 23.12.2019

Addl. Director (PR)