

## Report of inaugural

Sangam: Festival of India in Sri Lanka, 2015-2016 was inaugurated in Colombo on November 19, 2015. The inaugural event, a mosaic of Indian dance forms, "Nrityarupa", was held at the iconic Nelum Pokuna theatre.

2. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Hon'ble Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, former President of Sri Lanka. Other prominent guests included Hon'ble Karu Jayasuriya, Speaker of the Sri Lankan Parliament, a large number of Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament. Other invitees included senior officials from Government Ministries, a cross section of businessmen, cultural and media personalities, members of diplomatic corps, members of the Indian community and students. Over 1000 guests enjoyed the performance, which was followed by a reception.

3. In his remarks, High Commissioner, Shri Y.K. Sinha noted that people-to-people and cultural links constitute one of the cardinal pillars of the bilateral relationship between India and Sri Lanka. India shares a special relationship with Sri Lanka - a relationship that is not merely a friendship but a symbiotic twinning. The Festival of India is a celebration of this shared civilizational heritage and will further strengthen the close links between our peoples and cultures. In her speech, Hon'ble Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, former President of Sri Lanka, noted that a Festival of India in Sri Lanka was long overdue. Both countries enjoy common cultural heritage, which would be emphasized by the Cultural Festival.

4. Nrityarupa enthralled the audience as the dancers performed in complete harmony and yet showcasing the distinctive dance forms of different parts of the country. The music and the choreography added to the electric atmosphere. The segment on Kathak was particularly appreciated.