

The following events have been held during the Festival of India Phase II in Mauritius:-

**Mehendi Artist Smt. Shakuntla Sharma 15 – 20 October, 2015:**

Four Mehendi Demonstration/Workshop were organized by the Mission for the Mehendi artist. First on 15.10.15 at IGCIC in association with Indian Womens Association (IWA), second on 17.10.15 at Rabindranath Tagore Institute, Ilot, Pamplemousses, in association with RTI, third on 19.10.15 at Geet Gawai School, Petit Raffray, in association with Geet Gawai School of Bhojpuri Speaking Union and the fourth one was organized by Muslim Ladies Council with hundreds of students of Peeroo Institute of Mehendi Ltd, the only Mehendi Institute in Mauritius. This event was graced by Hon'ble Minister Ms. S.Bholah and PPS Hon Mrs Roubina Jaddoo-Jaunboccus.

**Natya Katha – KRSHNA by celebrated artist, Dr. Sonal Mansingh; 6-8 November, 2015 :** Scintillating presentation of 'Natya-Katha: Krishna' was given by renowned Indian classical dancer and cultural icon Dr Sonal Mansingh and her accompanying artistes at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture, Phoenix on 6 November 2015 and at Mahatma Gandhi Institute on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November. The events at IGCIC and MGI were well attended. The audience was mesmerized by Dr Mansingh's evocative narration of some of the most known and loved episodes from the life and deeds of Sri Krishna.

**Sir Syed Day Lecture; 9 November, 2015:** Dr. M. Mohibul Haque, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University delivered the Sir Syed Memorial Lecture at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture, Mauritius. The lecture was jointly hosted by the Indian High Commission in Mauritius and the AMU Alumni Association of Mauritius and was held under the overall banner of Festival of India. Dr. Haque highlighted the contributions and achievements of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan as a social reformer, political activist and scholar of comparative religions. He said that in present time of crisis, when religious extremism is rising across the globe and the Huntingtonian thesis of 'Clash of Civilizations' is getting wider acceptability, Sir Syed's ideas and views of large hearted tolerance and free inquiry find increased relevance. He described Sir Syed as the pioneer of Inter-Faith understanding. Mrs. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius, former President of the Republic of Mauritius, High Commissioner of India, Mr. A. K. Mudgal, High Commissioner of Bangladesh, Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan,

Ambassadors of the United States and Egypt and several other intellectuals and scholars were present on the occasion.

**Islamic Calligraphy Exhibition; 18-23 November, 2015:** Islamic Calligraphy Exhibition from the famed collection of the Rampur Raza Library was displayed at the Islamic Cultural Centre (ICC), La Paix Street, Port Louis from the 18th of November to the 23rd of November. The Chief Guest at the event was Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Housing and Lands of Mauritius, the Hon. Showkutally Soodhun. The Exhibition was inaugurated by Mauritian Minister of Arts and Culture the Hon. Santaram Baboo, High Commissioner of India to Mauritius H E Shri Anup Kumar Mudgal and Chairman, Islamic Cultural Centre, Mr Samiullah Lauthan. The Rampur Raza Library was represented by Mr Syed Tariq Azhar, Senior Technical Restorer and Mr Himanshu Singh, Technical Restorer. Mauritius, the Hon. Showkutally Soodhun. The Exhibition was inaugurated by Mauritian Minister of Arts and Culture the Hon. Santaram Baboo, High Commissioner of India to Mauritius H E Shri Anup Kumar Mudgal and Chairman, Islamic Cultural Centre, Mr Samiullah Lauthan. The Rampur Raza Library was represented by Mr Syed Tariq Azhar, Senior Technical Restorer and Mr Himanshu Singh, Technical Restorer. The Exhibition was appreciated immensely in Mauritius and has lately been gifted by the Rampur Raza Library to the Mission.

**World Urdu Conference; 26 to 28 November 2015:** The World Urdu Conference was held from 26th to 28th of November at IGCIC under the aegis of Urdu Speaking Union in association with this Mission and the Mauritian Ministry of Arts and Culture. The Urdu Conference was held under the overall banner of Festival of India. Topic of the Conference was "The Relevance of Urdu in the Globalised World". The Conference was inaugurated on 26 November 2015 at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture, Phoenix by H E Dr Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius. The Conference saw participation from Urdu scholars/poets from many countries. Most of the Urdu scholars/poets in the Conference were from India. Other countries represented in the Conference were Egypt, Germany and Pakistan. A six member strong delegation of Urdu Scholars/poets from the Sahitya Akademi also took part in the Conference. The deliberations for each of the three days was followed by a cultural performance with Mushaira scheduled for 26th November, Mehfil-e-Ghazal for 27th November and Mehfil-e-Qawwali for the 28th of November, 2015. The Conference was a resounding success.

The Islamic Calligraphy Exhibition and the Urdu Conference have really generated tremendous interest amongst the Mauritian Muslim population about the strength and historical importance of Indian Islamic art, culture and languages. They have significantly added to appreciation of Indian values of multiculturalism.

**Qawwali Performance by Nizami Brothers; 25-29 November, 2015:** As part of the Festival of India 2015, and coinciding with the 3rd World Urdu Conference, Mauritius, the High Commission of India presented a soulful and melodious Qawwali performance by the renowned Nizami Brothers, led by Sh. Ghulam Sabir. In total three performances were given by them including a gala show on Saturday, 28 November 2015 at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture, Phoenix. The artistes enthralled the audience with their varied repertoire covering a range of compositions and styles. The gala performance was attended by several Indian and Mauritian dignitaries, including Mauritian Minister of Local Government the Hon. Anwar Husnool, former Vice President of Mauritius Mr R Bundhun and other dignitaries.

**Bhojpuri Folk Music and Dance Group; 1-4 December, 2015:** The Group led by Ms. Malini Awasthi started their performances with a workshop at Rabindranath Tagore Institute, Ilot, Pamplemousses on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, 2015. There were nearly 100 audience learning the new development in the folklore of Bhojpuri in rapt attention. Their performances on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, 3<sup>rd</sup> of December and 4<sup>th</sup> of December also elicited a resounding response.

**Media Coverage:** All the events mentioned above were extensively covered by the Mauritian Media and most of the events were telecast live by the Mauritian Broadcasting Corporation.