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Press Release

Nishagandhi Dance Fest to get off to a colourful start on Friday

Tourism Minister to present Nishagandhi Puraskaram to Kathak maestro Pandit Rajendra Gangani

Kadhakali Mela to be held parallelly along with Dance Fest

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb. 12: The week-long Nishagandhi Dance Festival, one of India's iconic classical dance carnivals organised by Kerala Tourism, will get off to a colourful start at the verdant Kanakakunnu Palace grounds here on Friday (February 14).

At the inaugural ceremony of the annual festival at 6 pm, Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas will present the prestigious Nishagandhi Puraskaram to leading Kathak exponent Pandit Rajendra Gangani, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to Indian classical dance. The honour carries a prize money of Rs 1,50,000, citation and memento.

Pandit Gangani was selected for the honour by a jury comprising former chief secretary and writer Shri K Jayakumar, playwright and cultural personality Soorya Krishnamurthy and performer and choreographer Rajashree Warriar, with Tourism Secretary Shri K Biju as the panel Chairman and Director of Tourism Smt Sikha Surendran as Convener.

Minister for General Education and Labour Shri V Sivankutty will preside over the inaugural ceremony and Food and Civil Supplies Minister Shri G R Anil will be the Chief Guest. Dr Shashi Tharoor MP, Shri AA Rahim MP, Adv V K Prasanth MLA, Mayor Smt Arya Rajendran, District Panchayat President Shri Suresh Kumar and Ward Councillor Dr Reena K S will be present.

Shri K Biju will welcome the gathering and Smt Sikha Surendran will propose a vote of thanks.

The festival has lined up India's best classical dancers and upcoming stars to mesmerise the audience converging at the venue. The performers are drawn from diverse Indian classical dance including Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi, Manipuri, Kathak, Sattriya and Odissi.

A Kathakali Mela featuring hundreds of Kathakali artistes will also be part of the seven-day festival. Kathakali performances will be held at the venue inside Kanakakunnu palace every day from 5:30 pm.

'Bali Vadham' (Feb 14), 'Kalayanasougandhikam' (Feb15), 'Baka Vadham' (Feb16), 'Nala Charitham Randam Divasam' (Feb 17), 'Kamsa Vadham' (Feb 18), 'Uthara Swayamvaram' (Feb 19), and 'Rukmangada Charitham' (Feb 20), will be performed as part of the Kathakali Mela.



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The Nishagandhi Festival also brings alive recent trends in Indian classical dance forms and sets a stage for upcoming artists to present their talents and artistic expressions.

The inaugural ceremony will be followed by Bharatanatyam performance choreographed by Parshwanath S. Upadhye & Adithya P.V of Punyah Dance Company.

Pandit Rajendra Gangani & Group will enthral the audience with a Kathak performance later at 8.30 pm on the opening day.

Public entry to the festival is free.

Ends