

## **Visit Notes of V.Srinivas, Joint Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Culture for the Festival of India to South Africa, July 25-28, 2014**

### **Key Issues:**

- 1. The Festival of India in South Africa is the largest ever Festival of India abroad conducted by Ministry of Culture with 11 institutions participating for over 45 days in 12 cities of South Africa;*
- 2. The South African authorities, people have received the Festival of India in South Africa with considerable warmth in the best spirits of the bilateral relationship;*
- 3. The Gandhi-Mandela exhibition at the Constitution Hill Johannesburg and the Cricket Exhibition at Wanderers cricket stadium have been the innovations of the Festival of India in South Africa;*
- 4. Significant collaboration is possible in the coming months once the program of cooperation is finalized.*

### **Introduction**

I led the Indian delegation to South Africa for the Festival of India to South Africa from July 25-28, 2014. In my 4 days visit, I attended the inaugural functions of the Dance Festival at Preotria, the Cricket Connects Exhibition and visited the Gandhi-Mandela Exhibition in Johannesburg. The Literary Festival will be held in Durban and the other events like Kathak Pravaha, the Qawali program, the Food Festival and the Film Festival have been scheduled for later dates. During the visit, bilateral meetings were held with the Department of Art & Culture, Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Sports. The discussions were cordial and constructive and held in the backdrop of the issues discussed in Secretary Culture's visit to South Africa in December 2013.

The Festival of India in South Africa 2014 was held to commemorate 20 years of India-South Africa diplomatic relations, 100 years of the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India and 20 years of South African Liberation from Apartheid. The High Commission of India and the Department of Arts and Culture of South Africa coordinated to ensure local hospitality, transportation and venues were provided by the South African side. The Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Director General of Arts and Culture, several senior

officials of Department of Arts and Culture as also Department of Foreign Affairs and Department of Sports, Cricket South Africa and other dignitaries attended the events. It was also a fitting farewell for High Commissioner Shri Virendra Gupta to had served over four years as High Commissioner of India to South Africa and would be superannuating by end August 2014.

### **The Festival of India to South Africa 2014:**

**Dance Festival:** The Sangeet Natak Akademy production, Nrityarooma was performed at the inaugural event of the Dance Festival. The performance had received the award for the Cultural Event of the year 2013 from the Government of Cuba and was well received by the packed houses in the State Theater of Pretoria. The Director General Culture and the entire Department of Arts and Culture attended the function as also over 50 Ambassadors of Missions located in Pretoria and officials of the High Commission. The High Commissioner of India to South Africa hosted a reception for the guests, The Department of Arts and Culture presented a composition of Zulu dancing and following the two performances, a fusion of classical dances of India and Zulu dances. At the inaugural speeches, the South African Authorities and the High Commissioner profusely thanked Secretary Culture Shri Ravindra Singh ji for his stellar leadership in bringing the Festival of India to South Africa. The performance at Polokwane in Limpopo State was inaugurated by the Deputy Minister of Culture and the performance at Sekunda was inaugurated by the Mayor.

**Cricket Exhibition:** The Cricket Connects Exhibition of NCSM was received with tremendous excitement at the Wanderers Cricket Stadium. Cricket South Africa officials and Chairman of Selectors, Chairman of the Johannesburg Cricket Association and a former international cricketer Mr. Frank Templeton were present at the inaugural function as also the High Commissioner of India and a number of senior officials of the High Commission of India to South Africa. A number of young children were present and the digital components of the exhibition were huge draws. The photographic exhibition had five sub-components:

1. The history of India-South Africa cricketing relations,
2. The legends of India-South Africa cricket;
3. The 2003 World Cup moments where India reached the finals;
4. The 1991-92 Friendship series played in South Africa;
5. The political background of cricket relations;
6. The 1990 tour of India by South Africa

There were models on swing of the cricket ball and the digital screens on the third umpire and cricket quizzes. In their speeches, the officials of Cricket South Africa reminisced their fond memories of the bilateral cricket relations.

**Gandhi-Mandela Exhibition:** The Gandhi – Mandela Exhibition was held at Constitution Hill by the Birad Rajaram Yagnik Foundation with inputs from the National Archives of India, the National Records and Archives of South Africa and the Nelson Mandela Foundation. The Exhibition presented in digital form had a number of screens for presenting the events of the lives of Gandhi and Mandela. Some part of the exhibition was on display at the Mandela Foundation. The National Archives of India and ICR division must look into the proprietary issues involved with the Exhibition and some clarity is required on the exhibits being in accordance with the approved items before payments are settled. The Gandhi – Mandela Youth Summit was held on sidelines of the exhibition sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs and was attended by a number of school students.

**Bilateral Meetings:** Bilateral meetings were held with the Department of Arts and Culture, Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Sports and Youth Affairs. The following are the areas of collaboration identified:

1. There was consensus that the Program of Cooperation between India and South Africa has been very successful will be renewed following a review for a three year period by deepening the areas of collaboration to cover Libraries, Archives, and Exhibitions. The first drafts will be exchanged in August 2014;
2. A publication of archival papers on India's role in the Liberation Struggle of South Africa will be attempted by National Archives of India with support from the National Records and Archives Government of South Africa;
3. The National Archives of India would provide technical assistance for developing training programs for records management to the National Archives and Records Government of South Africa;
4. The South African side requested for follow up work on the transnational nomination for indentured labor which featured in the discussions between Secretary Culture and Deputy Director General Ms.Monika Newton in the December visit. I was not clear on how the nomination is to be taken up and said that the issue would be taken up by the UNESCO division in the Ministry of Culture;
5. The Gandhi–Mandela Exhibition will be displayed in Rajghat after due approvals are obtained in the Department of Arts and Culture on the Mandela papers;
6. The statements made at the bilateral meetings are enclosed at annex 1,2 and 3.

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**Statement of V.Srinivas, Joint Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Culture in the Bilateral meeting with Director General, Department of Arts and Culture, Mr. S. Xaba dated July 28, 2014 at 1000 hrs in the Department of Arts and Culture at Pretoria, South Africa**

Excellency,

On behalf of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, I bring you greetings and good wishes. Secretary Culture Mr. Ravindra Singh in his December 2013 visit to South Africa had met Ms. Monica Newton Deputy Director General and Mr. John Mogashoa Director International Relations in the Department and discussed the various options for deepening the cultural relations between the two countries. In this meeting the Indian proposal of a Festival of India in South Africa was discussed and mutually agreed upon.

The Festival of India in South Africa is being celebrated to commemorate 20 years of our diplomatic relations and also 100 years of Gandhiji's return to India from South Africa.

The Festival of India in South Africa being conducted from July 18 to August 31, 2014 is one of the most comprehensive with 11 institutions participating in the various events being held in 12 South African cities. We appreciate the support extended by the South African authorities in terms of providing the venues and local hospitality. As per the December 2013 discussions, the Festival of India includes the Gandhi – Mandela exhibition at Constitution Hill and Nelson Mandela Foundation, the Cricket Connects Exhibition at the Wanderers, the Dance Festival that is being held in 3 phases with the Sangeet Natak Akademy's Nrityaroupa, the Kathak Kendra's Kathak Pravaha and the ICCR sending an Odissi dance troupe; a Literary Festival by Sahitya Akademy, a Qawali Program, a Food Festival by the Ministry of Tourism, a Film Festival by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Gandhi- Mandela Youth Summit by the Ministry of External Affairs. You have witnessed the fusion between the Classical dances of India and the Zulu dancing of South Africa and it was thrilling to watch the event.

I was closely involved with each of the events that are being conducted in South Africa and such a large Festival would not have been possible but for the warm relations between the two countries and the immense support of the High Commission of India in South Africa which coordinated meticulously with the Department of Arts and Culture to make the events so successful. My association with the two exhibitions that are on

display in South Africa, gave me an immense exposure to the commonality in the vision for peace and non violence between the two countries.

To take the collaboration forward, the Government of India proposes that the Cultural Exchange Program between the two countries be firmed up expeditiously. The Cultural Agreement between India and South Africa was signed on December 4, 1996 at New Delhi and Program of Cooperation between the two countries was signed on August 15, 2008 in Pretoria for the years 2008-10. The Program of Cooperation was valid till December 31, 2010 following which it was renewed for a period of three years till December 31, 2013 after which it needs to reviewed and renewed. The major activities undertaken under the Program of Cooperation are the following:

1. A Festival of India in South Africa was organized in 2011;
2. A Festival of South Africa in India was organized in 2012;
3. The Exhibition of National Archives of India to commemorate 100 years of Transvaal March was organized in 2013 at Volsrust Prison
4. India supports Indo-South African Friendship societies in South Africa with significant grants in aid.

The Program of Cooperation covered areas of Handicrafts & Crafts, Books and Publications, Performing Arts and Films. The new Program of Cooperation for the 2015-18 period could cover collaboration in Libraries between the National Library of India and the National Library of South Africa, collaboration in Archives between the National Archives of India and the National Archives and Record Services of South Africa, cooperation in exhibitions like the cricket exhibition and Gandhi-Mandela exhibition, linkages between the Gandhi Heritage Portal and the Nelson Mandela site through a hyperlink in addition to the collaboration in Performing Arts, Books & Publications and Handicrafts & Crafts. This deepening of the collaboration in the areas of culture and performing arts will enable greater people to people interactions in the coming year. We would be willing to submit the first draft by mid August 2014 and propose that the Program of Cooperation be finalized by the end of 2014.

We also look forward to cooperation in conducting the Festival of South Africa in India in the coming years.

To conclude, Excellency, let me thank you and all the South African authorities for making the Festival of India in South Africa a grand success.

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**Statement of V.Srinivas, Joint Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Culture in the Bilateral meeting with Ambassador Moloji Chief Director Department of Foreign Affairs dated July 28, 2014 at 0900 hrs in the Department of Foreign Affairs at Pretoria, South Africa**

Excellency,

India-South Africa cultural relations have been marked by intensive program of cultural exchanges led by the International Council of Cultural Relations conducting a number of events in South Africa under the Program of Cooperation signed between the two countries in August 2008. A Festival of India in South Africa is being jointly organized by the High Commission of India in Pretoria and the Department of Arts and Culture in South Africa during July – August 2014 commemorating 20 years of our diplomatic relations and also 100 years of Mahatma Gandhi's return from South Africa.

The Festival of India in South Africa being conducted from July 18 to August 31, 2014 is one of the most comprehensive with 11 institutions participating in the various events being held in 12 South African cities. We appreciate the support extended by the South African authorities in terms of providing the venues and local hospitality. As per the December 2013 discussions, the Festival of India includes the Gandhi – Mandela exhibition at Constitution Hill and Nelson Mandela Foundation, the Cricket Connects Exhibition at the Wanderers, the Dance Festival that is being held in 3 phases with the Sangeet Natak Akademy's Nrityaroupa, the Kathak Kendra's Kathak Pravaha and the ICCR sending an Odissi dance troupe; a Literary Festival by Sahitya Akademy, a Qawali Program, a Food Festival by the Ministry of Tourism, a Film Festival by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Gandhi- Mandela Youth Summit by the Ministry of External Affairs.

At the inaugural function of the cricket exhibition, Mr Frank Templeton who had visited India with the 2006 tour of Proteas, narrated his excitement with the warmth with which he was received at 6 am in the Mumbai airport. Cricket South Africa officials said that they had warm memories of India's strong performances in the 2003 Cricket World Cup and the 2007 T20 World Cup and the Indian Premier League that was held in South Africa.

In my meetings with the Department of Arts and Culture, Government of South Africa, I will seek renewal of the Program of Cooperation between the two countries which lapsed in December 2013 while deepening several of the components.

The Program of Cooperation covered areas of Handicrafts & Crafts, Books and Publications, Performing Arts and Films. The new Program of Cooperation for the 2015-

18 period could cover collaboration in Libraries between the National Library of India and the National Library of South Africa, collaboration in Archives between the National Archives of India and the National Archives and Record Services of South Africa, cooperation in exhibitions like the cricket exhibition and Gandhi-Mandela exhibition, linkages between the Gandhi Heritage Portal and the Nelson Mandela site through a hyperlink in addition to the collaboration in Performing Arts, Books & Publications and Handicrafts & Crafts. This deepening of the collaboration in the areas of culture and performing arts will enable greater people to people interactions in the coming year. We would be willing to submit the first draft by mid August 2014 and propose that the Program of Cooperation be finalized by the end of 2014.

We seek your support to take the collaboration forward.

Thank you once again for all the support extended during the Festival of India in South Africa 2014.

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**Statement of V.Srinivas, Joint Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Culture in the Bilateral meeting with Dr. Bernadus Van Der Spuy Chief Director, Strategic and Executive Support in the Department of Sport and Recreation dated July 25, 2014 at 1300 hrs in the Department of Sport and Recreation at Pretoria, South Africa**

Excellency,

Thank you for sparing your valuable time for meeting me this afternoon even as the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow are about to commence and your deep commitments for having your exhibitions in Glasgow.

The High Commission of India to Pretoria in collaboration with the Department of Arts and Culture Government of South Africa is conducting the Festival of India in South Africa 2014. Cricket Connects is an exhibition that is being held at Wanderers to celebrate India-South Africa Cricketing relations over the past 20 years. South Africans have done well in India, Gary Kirsten has coached India for several years and was coach when India won the world cup in 2011.

The photographic exhibition has five sub-components:

1. The history of India-South Africa cricketing relations,
2. The legends of India-South Africa cricket;
3. The 2003 World Cup moments where India reached the finals;
4. The 1991-92 Friendship series played in South Africa;
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There are models on swing of the cricket ball and the digital screens on the third umpire and cricket quizzes.

There is one issue that I wish to seek your consideration. When we planned the event we were assured that the Wanderers venue charges would be waived by the Department of Sports. However at the last minute we have been informed of a significant amount of venue charges. We would request that the charges be waived. We had also planned that an on-field event and a round table discussion would be held with the Cricket Connects exhibition so that its visibility can be increased. However, the Department of Sports has not supported the proposal. These could be incorporated for the Durban leg of the Exhibition.

Excellency, let me once again thank you for your time and we look forward to many years of collaboration.