

THE MWALIMU NYERERE FOUNDATION



REMARKS

BY

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AT THE

INDIAN CLASSICAL DANCE CONCERT

INDIA HOUSE
DAR ES SALAAM
11TH MAY 2004

Your Excellency High Commissioner – Dinesh Jain and Mrs Alka Jain,

Your Excellencies,

Dear Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let me begin by thanking the Indian High Commissioner in Tanzania for organizing again this classical Kathak dance concert entertaining us this evening. I wish to pay tribute to the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) for sponsoring the Kathak dancers tour in Africa.

This current tour in Africa including Tanzania will strengthen the cordial relations that exist between the peoples of both India sub-continent and Africa. It is within this dynamic continental linkage that the Tanzania-India relations have also to be situated and advanced. It is necessary to harness our respective endowments, traditional culture being one of them, and deploy them in optimising the collective good of our peoples and in the process promote understanding and cooperation.

We are delighted to receive these distinguished artists and to have the opportunity once again to witness one of India's remarkable and entertaining

classical dance styles. Their artistic style, Kathak, is highly respected worldwide in view of its deep-rooted education through story telling by means of dance mirrored through intricate footsteps and rapid pirouettes.

I am sure Tanzanian viewers who have never seen this dance before, will, after the concert, be more cognizant of the richness and diversity of Indian culture. During my long association with India, I have never ceased to be impressed by that country's great civilisation, culture and traditions besides its modern, rapid and gigantic development in different fields of human endeavour. Furthermore, India has effectively utilised its cultural diversity not only as a source of strength and pride for India but also to share with the rest of our common humanity. The fusion of Hindu and Muslim culture that is personified in Kathak also demonstrates the wisdom of a country and people making appropriate use of its diverse cultural heritage as a source of unity and strength rather than a factor of division. We, the people of Tanzania who pride ourselves in forging unity and not allowing our diversity in ethnic, or cultural backgrounds, should take particular pleasure in welcoming our friends from India and appreciating the richness, colourfulness and above all the appropriate use of their culture to foster friendship and cooperation among nations.

Let me once again stress that both our countries are characterized by social diversities that we have strived to use in our collective development. The ethnic, religious, socio-cultural advancements and differences found in our societies are providing a rich mosaic of culture and traditions that are being harnessed for the benefit of our peoples. The fact that among the people of Tanzania, there is a sizeable population that traces its historical origins to India, makes the social bond between our two countries to become even more profound.

This concert is an extension of the friendly cultural exchanges between India and Tanzania. Today we have here the Kathak dancers in Dar es Salaam. The presence of these distinguished artists Abhimanya Lal, his wife Vidha Joshi Lal and members of their Troupe will certainly further contribute to our appreciation of Indian culture as well as serve to further enhance the cultural cooperation between our two countries. I sincerely hope that Tanzanian cultural groups will in the future be staging cultural shows, in New Delhi, Bombay or other Indian locations.

Thank you for your attention.