

High Commission of India
Kuala Lumpur

Press Release

INDIA-MALAYSIA@65 MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

Sitar Maestro Mr Samuel Dass Musical Concert

High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur organised a Special musical event:- **“India-Malaysia@65: Musical Extravaganza”** on February 10, 2023 to mark 65 years of establishment of India-Malaysia bilateral relations. The event was organised at the Shantanand Auditorium, Temple of Fine Arts (TFA), Kuala Lumpur. Given that India is also celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav commemorating 75 years of India’s Independence and its G20 Presidency in 2023, the musical event holds special importance which also highlights the traditional and deep linkages between India and Malaysia in field of music and culture.

2. The musical extravaganza was led by the leading Sitar Maestro from Malaysia, Mr. Samuel Dass and his team of musicians from SWARA Community Arts Center. In 2014, Mr. Dass has been awarded with the prestigious title “Sultan of Sitar” by the Malaysian Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC). In 2023, he received the ‘Gandharva Award’ from the Hindusthan Arts and Music Society in Kolkata, India. The event was organised in partnership with SWARA Community Arts Center, OMS Foundation and Temple of Fine Arts, Kuala Lumpur. Swara CAC was founded by Mr Dass to fulfil the cultural landscape of Malaysia.

3. YBrs. Mr. Mohd Yusri bin Mohd Yusoff, Deputy Secretary General (Culture) represented Hon’ble Minister of Tourism Arts and Culture of Malaysia as the Chief Guest for the event. Notable dignitaries included YB Tuan Sivakumar Varatharaju Naidu, Hon’ble Minister of Human Resources of Malaysia, Y.B. Tuan Ganabatirau Veraman and several Hon’ble Members of Parliament and Senators, Heads of Missions, members of Diplomatic corps, civil servants, and distinguished guests from media, community and business. The special event was attended by over 400 distinguished guests.

4. The event began with a 45-minute Sitar recital by Mr. Samuel Dass, who was accompanied by musicians from his team, Swarasia. The session explored the fusion of the classical and modern music genres. It was a treat to the ears as Mr. Samuel Dass and his team enthralled the audience with their performances.

5. Speaking on the occasion, High Commissioner of India, H.E. Mr. B.N.Reddy spoke about the impressive strides made in the India-Malaysia relations over the past few decades and how the 2.7 million strong Indian diaspora in Malaysia, second largest abroad, has helped preserve and nurture the traditions of Indian music and culture in Malaysia. He also thanked the Malaysian-Indian community for their encouraging participation at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. PBD 2023 saw participation of 150 Malaysian Indian delegations from prominent political

parties, GOPIO Malaysia, Malaysia India Heritage Group (MIHG), Malaysia India Diaspora Association, business chambers & prominent NGOs.

6. Speaking at the occasion, Deputy Secretary General (Culture), Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia said that cultural ties between Indian and Malaysia remains as one of its key strengths and extended the full support of the Ministry of Tourism Arts and Culture, Malaysia for taking forward the India-Malaysia collaboration in field of culture and music.

7. The Event also showcased special Millet Promotion Counters marking the International Year of Millets in 2023. The United Nations General Assembly at its 75th session in March 2021 declared 2023 the International Year of Millets (IYM 2023) following a proposal from India. IYM2023 is an opportunity to raise awareness about the nutritional and health benefits of millets and their suitability for cultivation.

11 February 2023
Kuala Lumpur
