

Luminaries Galore at The Closing Ceremony of 8th Theatre Olympics in Mumbai



Mumbai, 8th April 2018: After a glorious run of 51 days across 17 cities of India, the historic event 8th Theatre Olympics drew to a colourful close here today.

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Devendra Fadnavis was the Chief Guest at the closing ceremony. Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Culture, Dr. Mahesh Sharma and eminent theatre and film personality Shri Nana Patekar were Guests of Honour at the closing ceremony.

The closing ceremony was honoured by the gracious presence of Artistic Director, 8th Theatre Olympics, Shri Ratan Thiyam and presided over by Acting Chairman, National School of Drama Society, Dr. Arjun Deo Charan. Shri Theodoros Terzopoulos, Chairman of the International Committee of Theatre Olympics, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Shri M L Srivastava, and popular theatre and film personality Shri Nawazuddin Siddiqui were special guests at the closing ceremony. Director of National School of Drama, Prof. Waman Kendre, was also present on the occasion.

“We get many chances to show our strength and potentials, but 8th Theatre Olympics has given us unprecedented opportunity to show the power of our culture. 8th Theatre Olympics could not have been possible without the inspirational support of Dr. Mahesh Sharma, our beloved and visionary Culture Minister, Government of India. NSD is proud to have organised an event that has shown the cultural might of India, a vision shown by our honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi,” says Director, National School of Drama Prof. Waman Kendre.

“I wish the Indian theatre with support of Indian government should dominate the world. The 9th Theatre Olympics will be jointly organised by Russia and Japan,” says Chairman of the International Committee of Theatre Olympics, Shri Theodoros Terzopoulos.

“I am really happy that Prof. Waman Kendre has taken theatre on another platform. I appreciate your work and thanks that you kept theatre alive, thanks for being associated with theatre for so long in all possible manner,” says eminent

theatre and film personality Shri Nana Patekar.

“Our rich heritage and culture is the reason that India stands united today despite the diversity. My friends, Life is like Theatre. Like life, it goes on; it is only time, settings and people that change. It is true for this city Mumbai, which goes on in all situations. Entire nation should be woven in the cultural fabric to create a united India. Through Theatre Olympics, we have commenced our journey to reach that goal,” says Hon’ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Culture, Dr. Mahesh Sharma.

“I thank Dr Mahesh Sharma and NSD to have selected Mumbai to organise the final phase of Theatre Olympics. Maharashtra is known as birthplace of cinema but actually much before that Maharashtra has been the centre for theatrical activities. Our theatre will flourish from generation to generation. Without even the technical aspects of movies, theatre is able to create the effect through acting, and hence our theatre will never die,” says Hon’ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Devendra Fadnavis.

“Theatre is a place where we can reflect all emotions and sentiments of society. Politics also has a bit of theatre in this. If we do our role well, people give us support and when we fail to play our role, they reject us. This I see a parallel between the theatre and politics,” Hon’ble Chief Minister Shri Devendra Fadnavis adds.

“We thank Dr. Mahesh Sharma; he took this initiative and took Theatre Olympics on another level. I am grateful to the

students and faculty of NSD who have supported all through the event. Also, I thank all the coordinators in the 17 cities who have worked very hard to make this a success," says Acting Chairman, National School of Drama Society, Dr. Arjun Deo Charan.

'Rang Shikhar', a vibrant collage of tribal, folk and theatre performances, followed the closing ceremony. Renowned actors Shri Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Shri Manoj Joshi, Ms. Himani Shivpuri, Shri Sachin Khedekar, along with well-known ventriloquist and puppeteer Shri Ramdas Padhye, famous Bharatnatyam dancer Ms. Sandhya Purecha and famed Lavani dancer Ms. Vaishali Jadhav, performed at the presentation.

The 8th Theatre Olympics was inaugurated by Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri Venkaiah Naidu on 17th February 2018 at the majestic Red Fort in New Delhi. This edition of Theatre Olympics brought together around 25,000 artists under the theme "Flag of Friendship". The event witnessed 450 shows from more than 30 countries performed across 17 cities such as Agartala, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Guwahati, Imphal, Jaipur, Jammu, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi, Patna, Thiruvananthapuram, and Varanasi during the festival.

The 51-day long 8th Theatre Olympics, the biggest international theatre festival held in India for the first time, staged more than 400 plays and hosted 78 allied events including 34 Living Legend series, 29 Master Classes, 7 Interfaces, 6 national and international seminars and 2 workshops across 17 cities. Besides, about 600 ambience performances and 250 youth forum shows took place during the nationwide event.

The Spirit of the Running Spirit By Neville Tuli



We did it, I did it. Mind has overwhelmed matter, delusions outlasted reasons.

I completed the half marathon at 9:14am, 21km in 2.30hrs, having never run more than 10km in my life, so pushing oneself beyond oneself as have thousands of others. One imagined the lungs and breathe would collapse first but the legs turned out more wobbly, after all I am a 'veteran' according to the marathon category, and childhood football probably took a greater toll than imagined.

It is unlikely that many would be able to have run the half marathon and have the stamina or will to go and write a few

words to share with strangers, within the hour, but this need to write a few words finally became my motivation to finish the race (at the 14km point I think).

So many times the body was packing up, the knees crying, yet we dug deeper, and the body moved forward, and the mind tried to motivate itself to plug on. Initially I thought the run would be a good time for quiet introspection, to think clearly about all the issues which constitute one's infrastructure-building responsibilities. Yet, after the motivational start with Rocky's 'Eye of the Tiger' the first two km seemed so very tough, as if even six will not be reached.

As we moved into the third km only Prithviraj from Osian's seemed capable of sustaining the journey. My Delhi staff seemed keen but had little clue about what 21km implies, but they came and competed with themselves, and are strengthened for the next challenge. After the first three km the breathe had already dried and there seemed to be no chance of completing this race by running, to walk seemed inevitable, but the mind naturally said not yet, at least reach six before your first walking step.

Then I saw a man pass me who was probably the age of what my father would have been today, and I smiled, so receiving another dose of energy. Quietly the mind kept focused, recognizing that all the strength lies within, that one has pushed on a daily basis for the last fifteen years, and so it will automatically happen now. When the legs and lungs tire, the mind will shout: not now, there is so much within, stores of energy you cannot see,