

**CLOSING CEREMONY  
(14 DECEMBER 2018)**

**SAARC Cultural Festival on Traditional Dance 2018, Kathmandu**

**ADDRESS BY H. E. MR. AMJAD HUSSAIN B. SIAL, SECRETARY GENERAL OF SAARC**

**Honourable Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation,  
Distinguished Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil  
Aviation,  
Director, SAARC Cultural Centre,  
Artists from the Member States of SAARC,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**It is a great pleasure for me to address the Closing Ceremony of the  
SAARC Cultural Festival on Traditional Dance.**

**I wish to convey greetings to the artists and officials from the Member  
States of SAARC, who took part in this four-day Festival. This was a  
welcome opportunity for them to showcase their talents as well as  
some of the best classical dance traditions of the region.**

**As you are aware, dance is a lively expression of a country's  
civilization, culture and history. Dance is an immersive experience  
that gives joy to both the dancers and spectators.**

**The South Asian countries are heirs to a rich tradition of dance and  
music from the ancient times. The dance traditions of our countries  
have evolved drawing inspiration from each other. Many dance  
traditions of our region are intricate and it often takes many years for  
performers to excel in a particular dance form. Therefore, we should**

**support dancers who spend a lot of their time and make effort to promote and preserve a vital part of our culture. We should also encourage the youth in the region to learn and practice traditional dance and to pass them to the next generations.**

**In today's world where many elements of culture and traditions are being overshadowed due to the impact of globalization, our artists have largely managed to keep alive South Asia's dance traditions. Events such as this Festival play an important role in preserving and promoting the traditional dances of the SAARC region. Therefore, this Festival is a great opportunity for the performers and officials from the Member States to interact and develop an understanding and appreciation of each other's dance traditions. Indeed, festivals such as this are examples of the important contribution SAARC is making in promoting and protecting our cultural heritage, while bringing the peoples of South Asia closer. I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the SAARC Cultural Centre in Colombo in making sustained efforts in preserving the region's cultural and traditional heritage through events as this Festival. Here I wish to express my appreciation to the SAARC Cultural Centre for its commendable achievements.**

**In our bid to promote the region's rich cultural heritage, we at the SAARC Secretariat have also been organizing, on every SAARC**

**Charter Day, cultural programmes showcasing the vibrant dance traditions of our region. This year also, we organized a performance of traditional dances of the region which was greatly appreciated by our guests.**

**In concluding my remarks, I wish to thank the esteemed Government of Nepal, particularly the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, and the SAARC Cultural Centre for organizing this Festival of Traditional Dance.**

**I also wish to warmly congratulate the organizers and dance performers over the Festival's great success.**

**Thank you.**

---