

A fabulous confluence of Asian cultures



Performers and executive committee of AAC at the 2nd conglomeration of cultures show of 2007 at the Hindu Temple auditorium / community center, New York in July 2007.

NEW YORK (TIP): The second Conglomeration of Asian Cultures Show of 2007, held in New York at the Hindu Temple/Community Center auditorium was a great success with over a thousand people enjoying the four hour cultural extravaganza. The chorus group of Taiwan with fifty performers kept the audience spell bound. Indonesian harvest dancers 'Tari-Piringo' who held on to the plates in their hands while making fantastic moves stole the show and received several ovations. Indian segment of 'Vande Matram' based on world famous singer A.R.Rahman's song and superbly choreographed by a famous professional dancer, Sridhar Shanmugam focusing on India's role as a cradle of many cultures and religions that had also maximum diversity with dancers from Switzerland, France, Spain, America and India was appreciated very much. The vigorous dance of Lamas and Sherpas from the Himalayan kingdom with robust music and synchronized foot steps and lovely flow of body movements was very unique and delightful. Equally appreciable was a Nepalese dance showing a couple wooing each other. The Korean dance, the Burmese dance, and the Philippine dance from the Sultanate of Southern Philippine, produced by. Potri Rank Manhs of Kinding Sindow Productions were all simply amazing and held the viewers spell bound.

Pakistani presentation by Ms. Aneela Khalid Arshad and

Sri Lankan dance presentation Went down very well with the audiences Chinese showed their mastery with their musical instruments and took the fully packed international audience on a musical tour to China and served them with a feast of sounds evoking appreciation, love and understanding for Chinese music and culture.

Many elected officials attended the function and several of them sent emissaries and messages. New York State Supreme Court Judge Hon. Richard Lawrence applauded the efforts of AAC and its president for putting together leaders, cultures, and dignitaries from governments and associations from fourteen Asian countries. He said he had never seen anything like this and hoped that more diversity with dancers from Switzerland, France, Spain, America and India was appreciated very much. The vigorous dance of Lamas and Sherpas from the Himalayan kingdom with robust music and synchronized foot steps and lovely flow of body movements was very unique and delightful. Equally appreciable was a Nepalese dance showing a couple wooing each other.

Governor of New York Eliot Spitzer sent his special assistant Chao and a message for the success of the event.

New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli said "rich heritage of the Asian American community in New York has had a deep and lasting influence on our entire state." U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer recognized the fine

work of AAC and said, "Coalition has greatly helped Asian Americans throughout New York City". Congressman Gary L. Ackerman said, "For nineteen years the Coalition has served our community by establishing merchant associations and working with elected officials to improve the quality of services in various areas". Brooklyn Borough President

Marty Markowitz said, "On behalf of all 2.5 million Brooklynites, I salute President Chopra and the officers, staff...I praise your outstanding work and your ongoing commitment to cultural integration". Senator Frank Padavan said, AAC has "embodied the distinct characteristics that make our community great". Another Senator George Onorato said AAC is, "a strong voice and advocate for Asian Americans in its interactions with government agencies and elected officials on all levels of government." The New York City Councilman John C. Liu said, "I thank the members of the Coalition for your dedication toward promoting intercultural relations". The Senior Councilman of the largest town of America, the Town of Hempstead Anthony J. Santino congratulated AAC's "efforts in promoting welfare and relations between Asian cultural groups in the United States and the world."

Many diplomats who sent messages on behalf of their governments included Ambassador of India Ronen Sen who said, "India has contributed significantly to global cultural and civilization values and has

itself been enriched." Ambassador and Consul General of Philippines Cecilia B. Rebong, who also attended the function last year said, "Truly, the Coalition has been a channel by which Asia's contributions to America's rich cultural diversity are highlighted". Ambassador of Sri Lanka Bernard Goonetilleke said, "The evening's program will no doubt create an atmosphere of home away from home and provide an opportunity for the audience to savor memories of their distinct cultures, which was once part of their lives." Ambassador Kenneth K.M.Liao, Director General of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York said AAC "has made great contributions in promoting the Asian culture among the community...I would like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to all members of AAC for their significant effort to this event." Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nepal Madhu Raman Acharya said, "In a multi-cultural society and a globalize world, cross-cultural solidarity has become a growing necessity. Nepal is rich in cultural tradition and diversity. I strongly encourage the Nepalese associations to be actively involved in activities aimed at upholding cultural links between Asia and America."

The second cultural extravaganza was very unique in America because no one had ever seen so many cultural performances together from so many diverse cultures yet showing some similarity with

their neighboring countries whose people were very appreciative. It enriched the American life with the life and cultural celebrations of the other half of the world.

Bruce A. King, President of the Homeland Security in Washington D.C. addressed the Coalition's audience, leaders and government diplomats present for this celebration. He appreciated the work done by. Golam Mehraj, Vice President of Asian American Coalition for Government Affairs and Bangladeshi community and the Asian American Coalition in educating Asians and Americans in taking a stand to counter global terrorism under the leadership of the President of America, George Bush who is helping to protect America.

Dr. Pushpa Jagoda, Director of Tourism of Sri Lanka was honored by AAC

for promoting understanding between Asians and Americans. She said she would like to promote tourism to Sri Lanka and develop understanding and appreciation of the beautiful landscape of Sri Lanka.

Among those honored on the occasion included Chairman of Taxi and Limousine Commission, Daus and the past president of AAC Fred Lee and his wife for their tremendous work for the AAC. Dr. Chopra said, "Fred Lee is an outstanding American leader, who is past president of Korean Association of America, Commissioner of Human Rights in New York, advisor to the Nassau and Suffolk County Executives and has won the

coveted honor of Ellis Island Medal of Honor". Also honored was. Sam Chang who set up the Center for Asian Pacific Affairs in Flushing, New York and is a very generous leader from China who lends his CAPA's hall and office for AAC's monthly meetings. Among many honors he has received is the most recent honor from The City University of New York. He is a great publisher of many Asian newspapers and has earned respect and admiration from several Asian communities.

Earlier, addressing the gathering, AAC President, Dr. Parveen Chopra spoke of the rich cultural heritage of Asian countries, the need to have a common platform for their projection, and their contribution to enriching the composite culture of America. "Asian community in America has a relentless desire to succeed and nurture their dreams with hard work and family values. They are keen to ensure their next generation follows their values and culture. This has put the Asian Americans in the forefront in America for achievements in education, profession, business and economic and social success, said Dr. Parveen Chopra, President and Founder of Asian American Coalition, USA Inc. which has its membership from fourteen Asian countries in USA, namely, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma/Myanmar, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Taiwan. "America is a very young country that has a history of only two centuries. Asian cultures have a heritage of over five thousand years and can make a very important cultural contribution to American life and enrich it enormously", said Dr. Chopra.

Speaking on the need to have a common platform, Dr. Chora said, "Unlike African-American and another minority of Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans have been pre-occupied mostly with their own cultures and have seldom related to other Asian cultures. There is no such known organization that has created a common platform for so many Asian countries to share, appreciate and understand other cultures or to voice common concerns on behalf of Asian community in America.

If Asian community has to gain strength and make their concerns heard with one voice then it has to use Asian American Coalition platform more actively".