Remarks of Ambassador at the 'Festival of India- Salmiya Theatre', March 17, 2023

Friends of India in Kuwait,
Members of the Indian community,
Friends from media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening, Namaskar!

I welcome you all to the inaugural event of Festival of India in Kuwait being organized by the Embassy with support from the Ministry of Culture of India. This is the first Festival of India event that is being organized outside India post Covid period and is, therefore, very special.

2. I am really happy to see a good turn-out today of over 700 people in this auditorium. I thank all of you for joining us to celebrate this cultural extravaganza.

3. The event today is a celebration of our cultural diversity and showcases one of the best of Indian music and dance forms. We will be witnessing performances of classical and contemporary Fusion music by Anirudh Verma Collective, Rajasthani Folk dance by Hasan Khan and team and Qawwali by Qutbi Brothers, all of whom are renowned in their own genres. I welcome the leaders of these groups as well as the talented artists who have

come all the way from India to enthrall us with their performances over the next 2 days.

4. The classical and contemporary fusion music will give you a glimpse of how Indian classical music had adapted to the demands of contemporary fast music while keeping its foundations intact. The Rajasthani Folk performance will showcase the rich heritage of Rajasthan through its vibrant dance, music and costumes. And finally, the Qawwali performance will take us on a soulful and spiritual journey of the Sufi music.

5. Friends, It needs no reiteration that culture and trade exchanges at people to people level have been the backbone of India-Kuwait relations. Culture has been a binding force between India and Kuwait, and the 'Festival of India in Kuwait' is a testament to our cultural ties. The Indian community in Kuwait has been instrumental in promoting Indian culture and heritage in Kuwait by organizing numerous events and performances from time to time. I thank and congratulate you for doing so and would request you to continue this tradition. Culture in its myriad forms is an anti-dote to many negative influences in society and that is why promotion of culture has so much significance in today's digital age.

6. I will not take more time as we have 3 beautiful performances waiting for us. Before concluding, I would like to thank the Ministry of Culture and Information as well as National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NACCAL) for their support in organizing this event today. I hope that you would enjoy the evening. We also have some Indian restaurants who have put up their delicious lip-smacking snacks to enjoy during the 2 short-breaks.

Thank you.