

INDIAN COMMUNITY

The commerce of culture between India and Indonesia

"An interchange of goods or commodities, especially on a large scale between different countries or between different parts of the same country trade; business. ... Social relations, especially the exchange of views, attitudes, etc."

I thought this – the meaning you get on the internet for "commerce" – might be an apt way to start penning my 1,100 words (a number considered pious in Indian Mythology) about the cultural links and exchanges between two culturally vibrant nations: Indonesia and India. Both already have their name referenced in each other's names! Surprising? Maybe not for those who are aware of the reality. It has been a bond strengthened for centuries now, which make them both complimentary to each other on every front. Commerce as the definition says is also an interchange of social relations, views and attitudes. This is what has been happening most significantly between India and Indonesia for ages now. Hence, we can conclude that the commerce of culture between the two nations is successful and expanded.



Makrand Shukla

Culture as defined by the dictionary means "Arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively." Citing this definition, it is most certain that the best and most important commerce that has been ongoing between the two is of the utmost importance and directly affects and reflects societies. Be it archeology, performing arts, fine arts, literature or even day-to-day life, the thought process is strikingly similar on both sides. The only question we should be asking ourselves is: How do we preserve this interchange and make it flourish more efficiently? The answer lies in such supplements

from the prominent daily of Indonesian society. I thank you *The Jakarta Post* for this initiative. We also must thank the scholars and intellectual travelers who have tried to explore not just the common melting points but also tried to inspire and encourage the best practices from each other. History of both nations will prove the above points right.

India with more variety in geography and socioeconomic strata represents a very vibrant culture, or we can say several cultures, which culminate to become the unique culture of India/Bharat. Please do not get confused as both mean more or less the same but are just spelled distinctly. India has the soul of Bharat while Bharat is as elegantly dressed as India. How so ever any outer winds may try to separate them, it will only be a futile exercise. The variety and diversity that India enjoys in terms of language or lifestyle make it the biggest USP of India's culture. We as Indians have so much to offer. Even with so much diversity, if India is connected with Indonesia by a thick thread of culture, how strong is the bond? Very strong. As the world's biggest cinema manufacturing market, we know how to transform dreams into reality – the reality being very entertaining.

The challenges we need to address are also more or less the same. We have to keep our windows and doors open for the world winds to come and visit us. Quoting Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, here would be appropriate: "Nationalism cannot flower if it does not grow in the garden of internationalism." At the same time he also cautioned that "learning without thinking is useless, but thinking without learning is very



JPI/Seto Wardhana

Residents take part in the 2015 yoga festival in Menteng Park, Central Jakarta. The event was initiated by the Yoga Gembira (happy yoga) community and facilitated by 27 yoga teachers, meditators and Pilates instructors.

dangerous." Both nations need to introspect and with a serious approach try to bring about a comfortable balance between the two quotes. The youth that will flourish as a result of this balance will become invincible. And it is culture that will play the most important role to make future generations realize the inclusive ideology of India and Indonesia.

We have, as the center dedicated to the culture of India based in Indonesia for more than two decades now, tried to do the same humble exercise. Come 2019 we will be celebrating three decades of formal functioning in Indonesia. What have we contributed and achieved in the last 30 years? It is for thousands of Indonesian yoga practitioners to declare who has benefitted from yoga, which was initiated by the Indian Cultural Centre years ago. Only the hundreds of disciples who have learnt Indian classical dances and music can answer this. The enthusiasm has grown by leaps and bounds. With yoga having become the strongest preventive healing therapy accepted the world over now, Indonesia is no less behind. In every metro city or town of Indonesia you can find yoga and fitness centers spreading the technique successfully. That is an

achievement and contribution of Indian culture to Indonesia. The fan following for Indian cinema in Indonesia goes without mentioning. The entire theater concept, which is practiced and experimented with unique creativity in Indonesia, is reminiscent of *Natya Sastra* – the most elaborate scripture written on theater from India. It is the blend of *Aangik*, the physical; *Vaachik*, the sound; and *Aaharya*, the cosmetic; which are combined in Indian as well as Indonesian theater, culminating in the ultimate *Satvika* – the "Rasa" that the audience feels or enjoys. The ensemble of more than 9,000 books with a vast range of subjects and dedicated teachers of Indian languages has over the years not only taught but shared the commonness between Bahasa and Sanskrit.

The creative fusions that have emerged out of the Indian Culture Centre's collaboration with the best of Indonesia is icing on the cake. It inspires both sides. Bhin-neka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) is what India too stands for and is known the world over for.

It is my personal privilege and pride to head my country's cultural center under the ever-inspiring umbrella of the Indian Ambassador and Embassy in In-

nesia, through which we are more than open to welcome and explore more and more threads that have created this strong cultural connection. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) sponsors such centers in more than 35 nations but Indonesia remains special. With every new cultural connection we identify, we feel that there is still much more. We may or may not reflect on the economic ties between the two nations but we of course have a strong representation on the commerce between the two nations. What we need to do is not to restrict but to channel the world winds, get their best practices in to our day-to-day life and make an improvement. The same applies to culture as well.

Let us join and rejuvenate our creative bondage for more vibrant colors of culture. As the cultures watch us closely, it is the culture that will protect us for a bulletproof civilization. *SARVE BHAVANTU SUKHINAH* – may all be happy. *SARVE SANTU NIRAMAYAH* – may all be free of illness. (Makrand Shukla)

The writer is the director of the Jawaharlal Nehru Indian Cultural Centre, Embassy of India, Jakarta.



Courtesy of Julia Suryakusuma

Prominent writer Julia Suryakusuma (center) participates in the Diwali celebration in Jakarta recently.

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Island with 5,576 beds through a combination of greenfield projects and acquisitions and the potential to reach a capacity of over 6,600 beds as of May 2016, the hospital says on its website.

NH has dedicated centers of excellence for advanced levels of care in over 30 specialties, including cardiology, organ transplant, ophthalmology, critical care, urology, cancer, bone marrow transplant, orthopedics and gastroenterology.

Equipped with the latest technology, its highly experienced doctors are known for their excellent clinical outcomes and dependability.

Data at the hospital shows that a typical day at NH includes 534 inpatient admissions, 131 surgeries, 39 cardiac surgeries, 4,477 outpatients, 141 cath procedures, 513 dialysis procedures and two kidney transplants.

The hospital says that innovative thinking like tele-medicine and tele-radiology centers, training of doctors and paramedics, etc. are its strengths.

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medical query response in 24 hours, complimentary airport pick up and drop off, in-house 24/7 translator services, availability of international channels, preference in OPD and diagnostics, visa assistance, assistance in accommodation, in-house 24/7 forex services, executive deluxe rooms and concierge services.

The hospital management has expressed its readiness to assist with any medical opinions and strategic alliances with hospitals, institutions, diagnostic labs, insurance companies, etc. in Indonesia.

Visit Narayana Health at Stall No. B1, HOSPEX 2017 Medan, from Feb 22 to 24 at Santika Premiere Dyandra Hotel & Convention, Medan, North Sumatra.

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