



**Embassy of India
Harare**

Press Release

As part of National Day celebrations and phase 2 of commemoration of 150 Years of *Vande Mataram*, Embassy of India organised ‘*Shastriya Nritya Prastuti*’ (Classical Dance Performance) featuring 10-member Kathakali troupe from The International Centre for Kathakali in various cities of Zimbabwe in Vic Falls (on 23 January at the Victoria Falls Theatre), Bulawayo (on 24 January at Hindu Community Center), Harare (on 26 January at India House), Harare (on 26 January at Hyatt Regency Harare during National Day Reception), Chitungwiza (on 27 January at Young Africa) and in Mutare (on 28 January at HillCrest Prep School). With enthusiastic participation, people from Indian Community and Zimbabweans enjoyed the vibrant and colourful performances by the troupe. The troupe was deployed by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

2. Established in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the ICCR is India’s premier cultural diplomacy institution under the Ministry of External Affairs. With 38 Cultural Centres abroad and 19 Regional Offices in India, it promotes India’s heritage and fosters friendships across nations. Offering nearly 4,000 scholarships annually to students from over 140 countries, ICCR also organizes “Festivals of India Abroad” to showcase dance, music, yoga, art, and literature. Through cultural delegations, exhibitions, and collaborations with groups, ICCR preserves traditions while serving as India’s cultural ambassador worldwide.

3. ICCR has also offered around 68 fully funded courses (for PhD and Post Graduate courses in various fields) in the past six years. Earlier, ICCR deployed troupes for Namaste Zimbabwe-2022, a cultural festival organized by Embassy of India in 2022 across Zimbabwe. In November 2023, the second edition of Namaste Zimbabwe was organized by the Embassy in various cities of Zimbabwe. Later, in September 2025, ICCR deployed a 12-member Gujarati Folk and Dance Group of Sanskruti Dance Academy to perform in various cities of Zimbabwe. ICCR has also been sponsoring Zimbabwean cultural troupes who participates at India’s prestigious Surajkund International Crafts Fair annually in February since last 5 years.

4. International Centre for Kathakali, a premier institution established in 1960 and recognised by India’s Ministry of Culture. The group perform Kathakali art on different theatrical stages worldwide, expressing its beauty

and grace to the brim. Since the group love authenticity, they ensure that their stories are original and are illustrated by actors par excellence before their devoted audiences. International Centre for Kathakali also train interested participants in Vadyam, Chutty, Vesham, and other Kathakali aspects. By so doing, they ensure this dance drama of Kerala travels far beyond its state of origin.

5. 150 Years of *Vande Mataram* is a national commemorative initiative to celebrate the spirit of *Vande Mataram* and its unique role in the history of India. Over time, *Vande Mataram* became a rallying cry of freedom fighters, a spiritual force, and a devotion to the motherland and a depiction of inspiration against the foreign power. The colonial authorities recognized its power and banned its singing or display, as it evoked deep patriotic sentiments.

6. India and Zimbabwe share centuries-old historical people-to-people contacts with a strong cultural linkage since the time of Mutapa kingdom. On this strong foundation, our two countries share very dynamic, strong and cordial political relations reflected in presence of strong Indian business community and Indian diaspora in Zimbabwe. To appreciate our people-to-people contact, our governments have facilitated exchange of cultural troupes to cement the existing bonding between our peoples.

7. Last year in February, the Government of India sponsored a 20-member cultural troupe of Zimbabwe to participate at Surajkund International Crafts Mela, Haryana, India.

28 January 2026