

ACTIONAID NATIONAL CONCLAVE – TOWARDS A PEOPLE’S ALLIANCE

11-14 JUNE, HYDERABAD

CULTURE AT THE CONCLAVE

Cultural expression has always been an integral part of social movements, used as a language of resistance, a voice of the repressed and to enliven the spirit.

The ActionAid National Conclave brings together a diverse mix of cultural ambassadors from struggles across the country (as well as a range of community experiences and vibrant socio-political debates).

The Langa Manganhaars of Rajasthan join Dalit women drummers of Andhra, Baigas from Madhya Pradesh, Karmas of Uttar Pradesh, Khasis dance of the North East and the Bhudan theatre troupe.

The programme also includes a candlelight event led by people living with HIV and AIDS and a premier of the ‘India speaks’ that brings alive the ‘other India’ to which so many are oblivious.

The following groups will be among those appearing. For schedule at a glance see final page.

DAY 1 – Monday 11 June

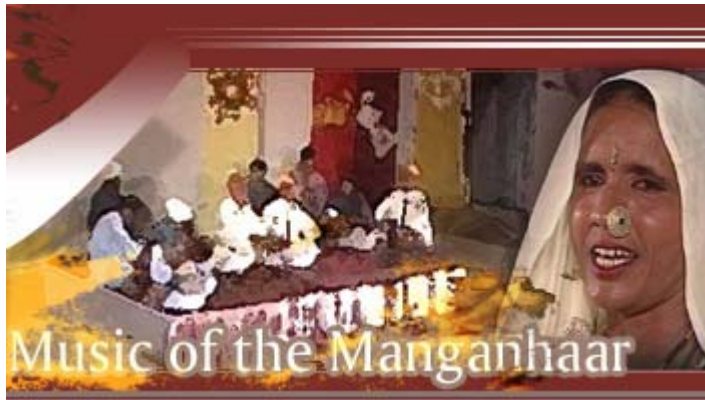
Women Drummers from Andhra Pradesh (Inauguration session: 2pm) The dappu is the simplest of traditional percussion instruments used in Andhra. It got its name from the ‘*dhup*’ sound that it produces. The drummer controls the sound by placing her left palm on the upper edge of the frame and uses the stick with the left hand to control the rhythm using different types of “beating styles” called “debba”. In spite of the existence of several other types of drums, none can beat the thrill that dappu can create in the minds and hearts of countless villagers of Andhra even today.

Rajasthan’s Langa Manganhaar Musical Group (evening: 5.30 – 7pm) The Manganhaar, by descent an ethnic group of musicians, are indigenous to the Thar Desert of Rajasthan, India and Pakistan. Muslims with close ties to their pre-conversion Hindu background and patrons, their sufi songs, both vocal and instrumental, reflect the wisdom of secular poet saints such as Surdas and Kabir.



For more information and to arrange interviews contact:

Alice 9810923904, Anjali 9899370715, Pragma 9868424692 (Delhi numbers)
Vishy 9866650300, Pragma 9966271 985 (Hyderabad numbers)



The Baiga Group from Madhya Pradesh (evening: 5.30 – 7pm)

Baigas are a primitive tribe found in Eastern Madhya Pradesh and parts of Chattisgarh. Their folk dance is common way of celebrating special occasions and festivals. The dancers use drums and other indigenous instruments to make music. The whole village joins in the song and dance. The dancers wear traditional ornate silk dresses and jewelry and decorate their hair with flowers.



Light of Hope (evening: 5.30 – 7pm)

People living with HIV and AIDS from all states will lead the crowd in a candlelight event to give hope and pledge commitment to fight for rights of those affected.



For more information and to arrange interviews contact:

Alice 9810923904, Anjali 9899370715, Pragma 9868424692 (Delhi numbers)
Vishy 9866650300, Pragma 9966271 985 (Hyderabad numbers)

DAY 2 – Tuesday 12 June

Dance By Visually Impaired Artists (evening 6.30 – 8.00pm). “Panchavaktram”, the five faces of Shiva, touches on the belief that Lord Shiva created and fused the five elements earth, water, fire, air and space that exploded to form the universe.

The ballet depicts the five elements in different dance styles and includes a ritual from the Natya Shastra more than 2500 years old. It concludes with vibrant foot work in Kathak style.

Performed by 5 visually challenged artists along with other professional dancers, this exciting ballet has gathered high acclaim in Bangalore and Cochin. The dance is richly costumed, elegantly choreographed and boasts of music infused with vibrant and varied regional fervor.



Budhan Theatre Group (evening 6.30 – 8.00pm)

The Budhan Theatre Group was founded on August 31, 1998 in commemoration of the day India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, lifted the stigma of criminality from the settled tribes in 1952. Since 1998, Budhan Theatre has performed street plays dramatising events surrounding custodial deaths, abductions, beatings and torture of indigenous people throughout the country. Budhan Theatre is now reaching out to other discriminated communities and including their stories in its repertoire.



For more information and to arrange interviews contact:

Alice 9810923904, Anjali 9899370715, Pragma 9868424692 (Delhi numbers)
Vishy 9866650300, Pragma 9966271 985 (Hyderabad numbers)



DAY 3 – Wednesday 13 June

Karma Dance from Uttar Pradesh (evening 6.30 – 8.00pm)

The Karma dance is associated with the fertility cult and is related to the Karma festival that falls in the month of August. It symbolizes the coming of green branches in trees during the spring season. A branch of Karma tree is hoisted at the center and the dancers dance around it. The Karma songs are of one line only and that line is repeatedly sung in a chorus with rhythm. There are other variants of the Karma. The songs associated with these variants differ with each pattern..



For more information and to arrange interviews contact:

Alice 9810923904, Anjali 9899370715, Pragma 9868424692 (Delhi numbers)
Vishy 9866650300, Pragma 9966271 985 (Hyderabad numbers)

Khasi Dance from the North East (evening 6.30 – 8.00pm)

This dance holds immense importance as it represents thanksgiving for a good harvest, peace and prosperity of the entire community. Women dressed in silk costumes with gold, silver and coral ornaments dance in the inner circle of the performing arena. Men form an outer circle and dance to the accompaniment of music of flutes and drums.



India Speaks – Film Screening (evening 6.30 – 8.00pm)

Contrasting India's constitutional provisions with reality, women and men from across India speak candidly about how hunger, displacement and loss of livelihood are affecting their lives.



For more information and to arrange interviews contact:

Alice 9810923904, Anjali 9899370715, Pragma 9868424692 (Delhi numbers)
Vishy 9866650300, Pragma 9966271 985 (Hyderabad numbers)

DAY 4 – Thursday 14 June

Closing song (12.30pm)

CULTURAL SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Date ▼	Performance ►	Morning	Evening (6.30 – 8.00)		
Monday 11 June		Women Drummers from Andhra Pradesh	Rajasthan's Langa Maganhaar Musical Group	The BAIGA Group from Madhya Pradesh	Candle Light memorial by the HIV/AIDS Group
Tuesday 12 June			Dance By Visually Impaired Artists (60 –70 mins)	Budhan Theatre Group (20 mins)	
Wednesday 13 June			Karma Dance from Uttar Pradesh	Khasi Dance from the North-East	India Speaks-Video Screening
Thursday 14 June			Closing Ceremony - SONG		

For more information and to arrange interviews contact:

Alice 9810923904, Anjali 9899370715, Pragya 9868424692 (Delhi numbers)

Vishy 9866650300, Pragya 9966271 985 (Hyderabad numbers)