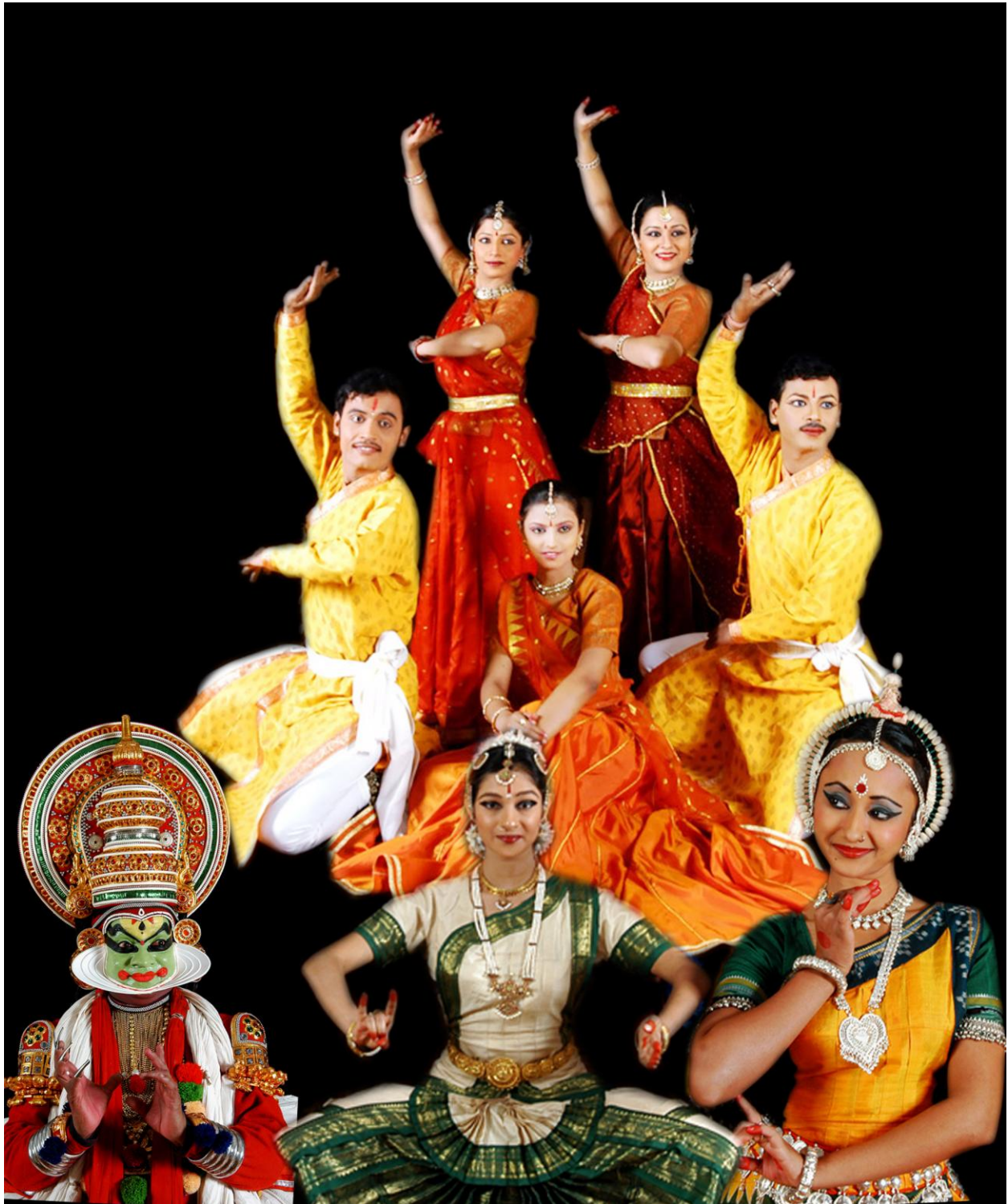


**Embassy of India  
Tunis**

***Shanti* – A dazzling spectacle of classical Indian dance  
On 28<sup>th</sup> July 2013 in Tunis**



*Shanti* or peace is more than just an absence of violence: it is harmony, freedom and oneness with the Divine. This is the central theme of the dance drama *Shanti* choreographed by celebrated Indian classical dancer and

choreographer Guru Rajendra Gangani, which will be presented to Tunisian spectators during the upcoming International Festival of Carthage.

The essence of India is peaceful co-existence of many communities and religions. In the dance drama *Shanti*, the dancers will depict the underlying oneness of four distinct classical dances of India: Kathak, Bharatnatyam, Kathakali and Odissi, originating from north, south and east India. Through this choreography, Guru Gangani will also attempt to invoke *Brahmanand Sahodara*, a Sanskrit phrase meaning oneness with the Divine element, which is what Sufi thinkers also seek.

Kathak is the dance of north India dating from the ancient period but made more dazzling and fast-paced by being danced in the courts of the grand Mughal empire and by the later courts of Lucknow, Benaras and Jaipur of north India. Odissi is the classical dance of east India made immortal by being sculpted in stone in the Khajuraho temples built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Bharatnatyam and Kathakali are famous dance forms of south India dating from more than 2000 years ago. Bharatnatyam was typically danced in temples while Kathakali was performed in villages; both depicted episodes from famous Hindu epics. Thus, *Shanti* will provide a panorama of India in Tunisia.

Guru Rajendra Gangani is one of the most brilliant performers of Indian classical dance today. Born into a family of hereditary dancers, Guru Gangani performs the Jaipur style of Kathak dance. He has preserved the traditional style of Kathak but has given it a contemporary presentation. He is also a gifted musician who composes the music for his choreographies himself and also plays many Indian musical instruments

*Shanti* will be performed on 28<sup>th</sup> July at the Acropolium at Carthage as part of International Festival of Carthage. The performance is being jointly organised by the Embassy of India in Tunis and the Ministry of Culture of Tunisia. India is participating in the International Festival of Carthage for the first time in many years as a tribute to the people of Tunisia and the non-violent Revolution of Dignity and Liberty that the Tunisian people fought to win their freedom. *Shanti* will, in the words of Indian Ambassador to Tunisia, Nagma Mallick, 'salute the spirit of non-violence with which the Tunisian people have seized freedom and dignity for themselves'.

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