

# Diwali in Yokohama 2018

Publicity

## Diwali brings us happiness

By Sujan R. Chinoy  
 Ambassador of India

It gives me immense pleasure to extend my congratulations to the esteemed members of the Organizing Committee for organizing Diwali, the Indian Festival of Lights, in the historical Yamashita Park in



Sujan R. Chinoy

Yokohama for the 16th consecutive year. Diwali is a festival that is greatly cherished and celebrated by Indians and others all over the world, including in Japan. The lighting of lamps during Diwali brings happiness and prosperity to all. It also marks the victory of good over evil. On this auspicious occasion, I convey my best wishes to all fellow Indians and Japanese friends for their good health, prosperity and happiness.



The Diwali festival in Yokohama at Yamashita Park, Yokohama

## Celebrate Festival of Lights in Future City Yokohama

By Fumiko Hayashi  
 Mayor of Yokohama

Congratulations on holding Diwali in Yokohama 2018!

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Executive Chairperson Jagmohan Chandrani and all the people involved for their contribution.



Fumiko Hayashi

Ever since Yokohama's port opened in 1859, setting off the growth that made it the city it is today, many people from India have made Yokohama their home, establishing businesses and trading companies, and contributing to eco-

nomix exchanges. Yokohama could be called India's first economic base in Japan. This year marks the 53rd anniversary of the sister-city relationship between Yokohama and Mumbai, the first such partnership between Japan and India. In addition, the City of Yokohama is promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are the theme of this year's Diwali. Yokohama was also selected as an "SDGs Future City" by the Cabinet Office in June this year. We will continue to engage in international exchange aiming for the sustainable growth of our city. I hope that participants in the Yokohama edition of Diwali will experience the charm of India and gain an interest in the friendly exchange between Yokohama and Mumbai as well as India.

## Diwali, celebrated in India and abroad, symbolizes power, light

By Ryuko Hira  
 Chairman of the Indian Commerce and Industry Association Japan

Festivals bring people, nations and the world together. Lord Buddha, Lord Krishna and Lord Christ have originated festivals for people to experience and enjoy the delight of the Creator and the Creation. Festivals of every nation contribute their best culture for the enjoyment of all humanity. Diwali is the single most



Ryuko Hira

important and largest festival of India, fervently celebrated by its 1.2 billion people. Thirty million overseas Indians have embraced citizens of all countries in the powerful and magnetic festivities of Diwali. With India's growing presence, Diwali is now joyously celebrated around the world. Diwali, the festival of lights, means collection, or "Samoocha," of lights. Wisdom is symbolized as light. Churches, shrines, temples and altars often light lamps and candles that are symbolic of the supreme Godhead. God is love. Love is expressed through lamps and candles on birthdays, weddings, and ceremonies. No other element in this world is as

significant as light. Diwali represents a personal celebration of overcoming the darkness of ignorance. It originates from two of India's greatest epics in the world: the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. In the Mahabharata, the victory of Lord Krishna over the demon Narakasura is celebrated on Diwali, as is the coronation of exiled King Lord Ramachandra in the Ramayana. Diwali symbolizes the power of light. If there is no darkness, the value of light cannot be appreciated. Hence, darkness is necessary to realize the greatness of light. People do not relish darkness in any way. Indian spiritual guru Sri Satya Sai

Baba said, "Darkness invokes fear. It also breeds evil-minded persons. No good-intentioned, righteous persons will welcome darkness. Darkness is a valuable ally for thieves and rogues." The guru also said: "A lamp has a unique power, which is not possessed by any other object. It dispels darkness. For this reason, [Indians] have always worshipped lighted lamps. Before commencing any event or festival, the ceremonial lamp is lit. Another notable quality of the lamp is that the flame only goes upward, toward the heavens. The sinful path leads downwards. However, the light of the lamp can only dispel the darkness outside but

cannot remove the darkness that envelops the heart as a result of attachments and aversions." In Japan, Diwali began with Indian homes in the Meiji era and today marks the 16th anniversary of public celebration jointly with the municipal government of Yokohama, the Embassy of India in Japan, the government's India Tourist Office, Air India and other prestigious partner institutions. Fifty traditional vendors of fresh and delicious festive Indian foods, Indian wines, spirits, sweets and handicrafts will offer their best wares. The colorful live stage performances from classic to modern Indian Bollywood dances coupled

with traditional Indian music performances stir the soul with India's cultural diversity. A wide selection of Indian clothing, fascinating travel and tourism with a hearty welcome await the annual participation of about 200,000 visitors. Admission is free; all are cordially invited to the joys of dance and music at India's largest outdoor festival "Diwali in Yokohama" at seaside Yamashita Park to be held on Oct. 13-14. We express our deepest gratitude to Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi and the city office for their continued support to deepen Yokohama-India friendship. Wishing all a happy, happy Diwali.

**BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY DIWALI!**

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