

Media Release

META to confer 'Lifetime Achievement Award' on theatre veteran Arun Kakade **Dolly Thakore, Mahesh Dattani, Sachin Khedekar,** **Seema Biswas, Avijit Dutt and Maya Krishna Rao to judge the best of Indian theatre at 12th edition of** **the Festival**

New Delhi, February 22, 2017: At a media event here on Wednesday, the Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) Festival announced that the **META 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award** will be conferred upon veteran Marathi theatre exponent **Arun Kakade, commonly known as 'Kakade Kaka'**. META, which is the most comprehensive awards event for theatre in India, will be honouring the best of Indian theatre across 13 award categories, in addition to the Lifetime Achievement Award.

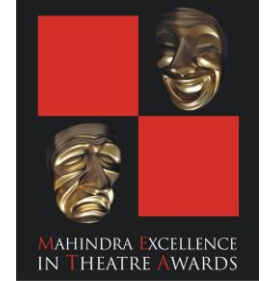
The announcement comes ahead of the week-long META Festival in the national capital which will be held from March 4 – 9, 2017 when the ten nominated plays will be staged. The awards will be presented at a special red carpet 'Awards Night' to be held on March 10 which will celebrate the best of Indian theatre from the past year.

Eighty-five-year-old Arun Kakade is a veteran theatre producer and the man behind the success of the Marathi theatre group, *Aavishkaar*. Starting his career in Pune, he shifted to Mumbai where was associated with theatre greats like Vijaya Mehta and former veterans, Vijay Tendulkar, , Arvind Deshpande, and Madhav Watve.

In past years, the META Lifetime Achievement Award has been conferred upon several stalwarts of Indian theatre, including the Late Zohra Sehgal, the Late Badal Sarkar, the Late Khaled Chowdhary, Ebrahim Alkazi, Girish Karnard, Heisnam Kanhailal and Padmashree Ratan Thiyam.

Speaking about Arun Kakade and his contribution to Indian theatre, the panellists said, *"His contribution to Indian theatre has been immense and META is privileged to confer him with the Lifetime Achievement Award"*.

The Jury members for META 2017 were also announced at the event. It comprises distinguished thespians including actors **Dolly Thakore, Seema Biswas** and **Sachin Khedekar**, playwright and actor **Mahesh Dattani**, along with theatre and film actor **Avijit Dutt** and performer and drama educator **Maya K Rao**.



The launch also featured a discussion on **'The Politics of Theatre'** focusing on how theatre is seminal to social change. A panel moderated by Sanjoy K Roy, including popular theatre artists and playwrights **Arvind Gaur, M.K. Raina, Bishnupriya Dutt** and **V K Sharma** discussed how theatre can be a reflection of the times as well as a catalyst for social change. Through the ages, theatre has effectively held a mirror up to society and its inherent dynamics and politics. In India, theatre has always been reflective of the times, be it in the days of the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA) or the progressive theatre movement or indeed in different parts of the country where it has taken social issues on to the streets.

Jay Shah, Head, Cultural Outreach, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, said, "META remains India's most definitive platform to recognise theatrical talent. For twelve years now, it has brought together the very best of theatre productions from across the country. There is a multitude of talent in this art form which is the source code of all performing arts and the Mahindra Group is proud to present META each year as an inclusive, empowering, and prestigious canvas."

Earlier this month, META announced the 10 shortlisted plays which will be showcased during the festival and judged across various award categories by the esteemed jury. Over 300 entries were submitted this year and viewed by a discerning selection committee comprising eminent theatre practitioners. With the sheer diversity of cultural identities and languages represented in Indian theatre, the 10 nominated plays feature Bengali, Malayalam, Rajasthani and Kannada plays along with Hindi and English productions.

Sanjoy K Roy, MD, Teamwork Arts & Festival Producer, said, "In keeping with increasing focus on the digital medium, we began accepting online entries for the very first time for this edition of META. This has further strengthened our commitment to reflect the artistic diversity of our country and provide opportunity and access to the finest talent out there."

12th META Festival Schedule

Date	Play	Language	Duration	Time	Venue
4.3.17	<i>Lassanwala</i>	Hindi & Khadi boli	1 hr 30 min	8 pm	Shri Ram Centre
5.3.17	<i>Bhima</i>	English	1 hr 10 min	8 pm	Shri Ram Centre
6.3.17	<i>Elephant in the room</i>	English	1 hr	6 pm	Shri Ram Centre
6.3.17	<i>Outcaste</i>	Hindi	1 hr 40 min	8 pm	Kamani Auditorium
7.3.17	<i>Kaali Naadakam</i>	Malayalam	1 hr 15 min	6 pm	Shri Ram Centre
7.3.17	<i>Dhumrapaan</i>	English/Hindi	1 hr 20 min	8 pm	Kamani Auditorium
8.3.17	<i>Mahabharata</i>	English/Hindi	1 hr 10 min	6 pm	Little Theatre Group (LTG)
8.3.17	<i>Awddyo shesh rajani</i>	Bengali	2 hr 5 min	8 pm	Shri Ram Centre
9.3.17	<i>Katha Sukavi Suryamall ki</i>	Rajasthani and Multi-lingual	1 hr 20 min	6 pm	Little Theatre Group (LTG)
9.3.17	<i>I don't like it as you like it</i>	English	1 hr 40 min	8 pm	Kamani Auditorium

*Tickets available on www.metawards.com / www.bookmyshow.com

*Non Hindi/English plays will be subtitled in Hindi.

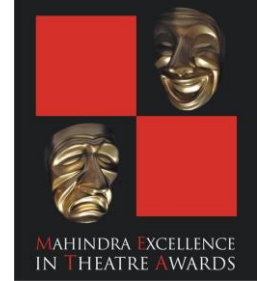
*For more information on the nominees and full list of category wise nominations, please visit www.metawards.com

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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In countries such as Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Israel, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, UK and USA, Teamwork produces over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts and literary festivals across more than 40 cities. Teamwork produces one of the world's largest free literary gatherings, the annual ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival, international festivals, *Shared History* in South Africa, *Eye on India* in the United States of America, *India by the Bay* in Hong Kong, and many more.

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