

## **Maa Tujhe Salaam**

**“Maa Tujhe Salaam”, the Function Organised at Hotel Swosti Premium, Bhubaneswar on 15.08.2011 at 11.30 A.M.**

Today is 15<sup>th</sup> of August, the most glorious day in the Indian history. It is our Independence Day, a sacred day. On this day, we got freedom from the British Rule after a long battle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhiji. How can I forget the day which is the most special and memorable day in my life? The atmosphere was filled with joy and happiness. It was a happy occasion everywhere. The national anthem resounded all around. Tears rolled down on my cheek and these were of course tears of joy. As every Indian I do feel proud to be the citizen of free India. I hold my head high with pride and salute the tricolour proudly fluttering in the wind. Today, I join millions of Indians in paying homage to our freedom fighters and soldiers who have sacrificed their today to achieve independence and for defence of unity and integrity of the nation and also for making our tomorrow bright. On this auspicious occasion, I extend my hearty greetings to all of you.

To mark the day various programmes are organized across the country and I am happy to note that “Maa Tujhe Salam” is such an initiative, a song and dance programme of patriotic songs to make everyone soak in patriotic spirit and the celebration memorable. It is difficult to discount the emotional power of patriotic songs. Legend has it that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had tears in his eyes when Melody Queen, Lata Mangeskar sang ‘Ai Mere Watan Ke Logon’ at Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi on Republic Day in 1963. We have many songs where eloquent tributes are paid to supreme sacrifice of our martyred souls and where we recall the values of nationhood in a more subtle patriotic way. These songs be of films or non-films sung beautifully by our singers are an expression of love and gratitude to the nation. Songs fill our heart with joy and elevate our spirit. I am given to understand that renowned singers of Bollywood with others from the state will be performing in this programme most

appropriately named "Maa Tujhe Salaam". I am sure artistes will move our heart and soul and leave lasting impression on everyone. Today, I have the honour to felicitate family members of our martyrs. The country is proud of their supreme sacrifice. Their sacrifices will never go in vain rather it will inspire generations to rededicate to the cause of motherland. I commend the effort of the organizer, 'The Odisha Bhaskar', the leading Oriya daily. I have been to its another initiative that is Orissa Youth Icon Award last year. I am sure, it will continue to organize such events to ignite the spirit patriotism and provide entertainment at the same time.

India is a country with glorious history, rich culture and tradition. It is home to people of different faiths, languages, cultures and manners. The diversity is our greatest strength. This is the Indian legacy. This is why I am proud to be a part of this legacy and this country. We have to contribute in our own way to the legacy.

The main aim of today's celebration is to revive and instill a sense of pride and valour in everyone. All the patriotic hearts rejoice on the sacrifice and triumph of thousands of martyred souls. On this occasion we need to take a moment and just savor the beauty of this democracy and the freedom we all cherish.

So, just being proud of freedom will not make our motherland the country of our dreams. We have to utilize the freedom to make this dream possible. But has this freedom got any significance if we do not utilize it for our improvement? 64 years have passed since our Independence, yet our country is still gripped under poverty, illiteracy and malnutrition. We have to remove all kinds of problems that obstruct the development of our country and eliminate threats that threaten the unity and integrity of the country. It is true India is riding high in the world as a fastest growing economy. We have achieved remarkable success in different fields but still we have to achieve more and ensure that fruits of development reach all. Let us remember that each one of us is an ambassador and representative of this great nation and a

partner in progressing the history and tradition of our motherland. We have to do more that will make a difference to the country.

May I conclude with the famous speech given by former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in the midnight of 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947. He said and I quote, "The past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now. That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we might fulfill the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard to give reality to our dreams." India's freedom came not by the efforts of a few, but with the united support of multitudes, those millions of unknown and unsung champions of our freedom. So, let us promise together that from now on we will dedicate ourselves to the development of our country and fellow countrymen and women and make it a better place in every possible way. We will dedicate ourselves to the cause of upholding our age old values of freedom, tolerance, justice, equality and harmony and pledge to build a strong, modern and developed India in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Mera Bharat Mahan.

Jai Hind.