

PRESS RELEASE – JIT PAUL AUDITORIUM INAUGURATION

EMBARGOED TILL JANUARY 18th 6.30 PM

Alliance française du Bengale doubles footprint French Ambassador opens auditorium in memory of Jit Paul New educational courses on anvil in 2020 to mark 80 years in Bengal.

Ambassador of France in India, H.E. Mr Emmanuel Lenain and Chairperson Emeritus, Apeejay Surrendra Group, Mrs. Shirin Paul today inaugurated the Jit Paul Auditorium set in a spectacular new Alliance française du Bengale space in Park Mansions. Alliance française du Bengale has doubled space to meet the rising demand for learning French, a language now being used in research, technology, sciences and international business. The inauguration kicks off Alliance française du Bengale's 80th birthday celebrations and will be followed by a year full of events and announcement of new educational courses.

"Alliance française du Bengale has extended its premises in response to their growing number of students and audience over the past 3 years. Reaffirming its status as a premier cultural hub in the City of Joy for 80 years, it now comes equipped with upgraded infrastructure to fulfil the ever-growing aspirations and desires of young Kolkatans for international academics and culture." - **Emmanuel Lenain, Ambassador of France to India**

Chairperson Emeritus, Apeejay Surrendra Group, Mrs Shirin Paul who joined the French Ambassador in the inauguration of the Jit Paul Auditorium said, *"We are delighted that Park Mansions is home of Alliance française in Bengal. Their facility is an integral part of our community. I know that Jit Paul smiles at us, happy that we continue to add beauty to Park Mansions, his passion project. Kolkata is Apeejay's Home since 1948 and we will continue our focus of adding value here as our Labour of Love! Alliance française du Bengale work is integral to our objective that Park Street, a street we all love, becomes and remains the home for art, culture & heritage as envisioned by my children, especially my daughter Priti Paul."*

Jit Paul Auditorium will be one of a kind space on Park Street. The Alliance française doubled space allows it to reinforce its position as a culture hub in Kolkata, to make French and Indian artists interact and meet on the cultural scene of Kolkata. By doing so, it aims to bring back part of the lost art and culture back on Park Street. Delighted with the new space, **Mrs. Kanchana Mukhopadhyay, President of the Committee of the Alliance française du Bengale**, said, *"Alliance française du Bengale has new life like Phoenix and it continues with its indomitable spirit, its journey towards the future."*

Kolkata can look forward to an exciting 2020 as Alliance française will mark its 80th anniversary with events that remember the past, celebrate the present and prepare for the future that beckons a growing Alliance française du Bengale.

Mr. Fabrice Plançon, director of the Alliance française du Bengale, said, *"French is seen as beautiful and also useful language today, so we expand to meet the new expectations of our students, followers and*

partners". The 80th year celebrations will spotlight the closeness between Bengal and French culture in fields of literature, cinema, philosophy, gastronomy, art and heritage. Alliance will also expand its courses such as a new opportunity for children to learn French, more educational activities with 'les ateliers' and cultural events. Today, with the French language representing a vector of international opportunities for Indian youth and the French-speaking world opening the doors to the academic and professional mobility, the demand for learning French is growing. French is not only the language of Molière, Hugo and Sartre. It is also a language used in the fields of research, technology, sciences and international business.

From using natural materials such as bamboo from Sundarban for thermic isolation and soundproofing or using mud chai tea cups to use as less plastic as possible, Alliance française du Bengale is creating a sustainable and eco-friendly space. **Mr. Laurent Fournier, architect in charge of the creation of the new spaces in Alliance française du Bengale said,** *"We are in the 110 year old heritage building, Park Mansions, and our new spaces on the 3rd floor have been created with innovative and eco-friendly methods"*.

Today's inauguration was followed by long service awards and a Psychedelic concert in Bengali, English and French by Tritha & friends on the rooftop of the Park Mansions with stunning views of the Park Street, the high street of Kolkata. French author Mrs. Irène Frain was seen in discussion about her connections with the Orient with Mrs. Christine Cornet from the Institut Français en Inde under the aegis of the Apeejay Kolkata Literature Festival on from Jan 17 – 19th.

About Alliance française du Bengale :

The Alliance française du Bengale exists with the endeavour to induce and inculcate the rich inter-cultural and intellectual exchange between India and France. The organization is considered as one of the prominent cultural centres, a space for documentations and a French language institution.

For Media Related Information Contact

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**Date
Time
Venue**

Saturday, 18/01/2020 (6:30 PM to 10:00 PM)

Park Mansions, Gate 3 (Roof Top)

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Thus, Alliance française du Bengale has doubled its space, enabling it to strengthen its position as a culture hub in Kolkata, and help French and Indian artists meet and interact in Kolkata's cultural scene. By doing so, Alliance française contributes to reinvigorating art and culture on Park Street, Kolkata. In step with India's aspirational generation, the Alliance française du Bengale is developing to offer more courses, such as the new opportunity for children to learn French, more educational activities with 'les ateliers' and even more cultural events.