

## MEDIA RELEASE

## Mahindra Kabira Festival Ends on a High Note with Performances by Azeem Ahmed Alvi, Pt. Debashish Dey, Prahlad Tipanya & Kabir Café

**Varanasi, 6 November, 2016:** Set against the serene backdrop of the sacred river Ganga, the first edition of the Mahindra Kabira Festival concluded successfully in Varanasi. The three days brought together diverse music traditions including classical, traditional and contemporary forms, discussions, talks and visual arts reflecting the diversity and richness of India's cultural heritage.

Azeem Ahmed Alvi opened the concluding third day at the Mahindra Kabira Festival with his *sitar* seamlessly fusing the serenity of the morning sunrise with the flow of the river. This was followed by Pt. Debashish Dey's riveting performance in the Benaras Gharana tradition.

It was an enriching forenoon for literature enthusiasts when renowned author Amish Tripathi brought alive the myths associated with the city of Varanasi which has existed across millennia and is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world established around the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC. After the food-for-soul music and literary sessions, it was time to once again view the city's tangible built heritage through a walk that took one through temple courtyards and the myriad ghats that reflect daily life.

The evening began with a soul stirring performance by Kabir expert, Prahlad Tipanya. He enthralled the audience with his trademark singing while simultaneously discussing the works of the 15th-century mystic poet in the Malwi folk style rooted in Madhya Pradesh.

With their aim of making Kabir's verses accessible to all, the five-member contemporary band, Kabir Cafe presented their interpretation through music filled with pop, reggae, rock, folk fusion and Carnatic flavours. This was followed by Shabnam Virmani and Vipul Rikhi of the Kabir Project. The legendary Pt. Ajoy Chakrabarty concluded the festival and the evening with his exquisite and awe-inspiring *taans*, leaving the listeners craving for more.

Held from November 4 to 6, 2016, the Mahindra Kabira Festival witnessed a fabulous feast of performances by Kabir stalwarts on the ancient *ghats* of Varanasi and in its stately palaces. The first two days of the festival featured artistes such as Atul Shankar, Shabnam Virmani, Vipul Rikhi, Nathoo Lal Solanki, Mir Mukhtiyar Ali, Pt. Rajan-Sajan Mishra, and many more.



With its magic of music on the *ghats*, the aroma of food stalls, varied craft traditions and much more, the festival added to the prevailing spiritual ambience of Varanasi in a significant way and is poised to return next year from December 10 - 12, 2017 with an even bigger show.

“The purpose of the Mahindra Kabira Festival is to make the works of the mystic poet-saint accessible to a new audience through unique interpretations encompassing music, poetry, art and culture. Over the past three days, both connoisseurs and enthusiasts have been treated to a variety of performances and educative sessions, bringing alive the true flavour of Kabir in one of India’s holiest cities and with performances by Kabir virtuosos like Prahlad Tipanya, Shabnam Virmani, Mir Mukhtiyar Ali and Pt. Rajan & Sajan Misra, the Festival could not have ended on a better note,” said **Jay Shah, Head, Cultural Outreach, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd.**

**Sanjoy K Roy, Managing Director, Teamwork Arts** said “The continuous movement of humanity on the river is reflective of life itself – Ma Ganga is truly magical as it veers north and passes along the banks of the Varanasi – a city that has seen life for over three millennia. What an honour to have been welcomed by its people in this incredible coming together of music, literature and heritage, celebrating life itself.”

## NOTES TO EDITOR

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Website: <http://www.teamworkarts.com>

**For further information on Mahindra Kabira Festival, please visit:**

<http://mahindrakabira.com/>

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