

4th Namaste Vietnam Festival Celebrates Culture, Creativity and Collaboration

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The 4th Namaste Vietnam Festival 2025 concluded on a high note in Ninh Binh on 20 November 2025, marking the end of a four-day celebration of cultural diplomacy, tourism promotion, and cinematic collaboration between India and Vietnam. Jointly organised by the Provincial Government of Ninh Binh and Innovations India, the festival—curated by internationally acclaimed filmmaker Captain Rahul Bali—drew an impressive lineup of dignitaries, cultural leaders, diplomats, business heads, and film personalities from both nations, reflecting the deepening warmth and cooperation between India and Vietnam under India's Act East Policy.



Rahul Bali with Actors Riya Sen, Donal Bisht, Divya Agarwal, Niharica Raizada & Filmmakers Aashish Singh, CK & Abhishek

The grand red carpet opening ceremony, held at the state-of-the-art Versak Hall in the Tam Chuc Complex, was attended by a distinguished panel of VVIPs, including H.E. Mr. Ho An Phong, Deputy Minister of Culture, Sports & Tourism of Vietnam; Mr. Tran Song Tung, Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Ninh Binh; Ms. Pham Thi Thanh Huong, Head of the Cultural Department of UNESCO in Vietnam; Dr. Monica Sharma, Director of the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre at the Embassy of India in Vietnam; Mr. Chau A Nguyen, Director of Oxalis; Mr. Nguyen Khanh Luan, Chairman of Dragon Distillery Company; and Mr. Ngo Minh Quan, Director of Vietravel among many others. Their collective presence underscored the festival's growing stature as a premier platform for strengthening bilateral cultural and economic relations.

During the ceremony, three major Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were signed to further strengthen India–Vietnam cooperation. The first MoU, between Innovations India and Ninh

Binh authorities, confirmed that an important portion of the upcoming Bollywood film SILAA produced by Captain Rahul Bali will be shot in Ninh Binh in January 2026, opening new cinematic collaboration avenues. The second MoU, signed between Indian travel company Destination Planners and Ninh Binh, aims to actively promote Ninh Binh as a preferred destination for Indian tourists. The third MoU, between the Indian wedding planning firm Global Access and Ninh Binh, focuses on showcasing the province as a premium destination for Indian destination weddings. These agreements represent a significant step forward in leveraging the festival as a platform for long-term partnerships.



Vietnam's Culture & Tourism Minister Mr. Ho An Phong with the Delegation from Mizoram and other dignitaries

Speaking at the event, **H.E. Mr. Ho An Phong** stated, *"The Namaste Vietnam Festival has become a powerful symbol of the growing cultural affinity between Vietnam and India. Each edition brings our peoples closer through shared artistic expression, mutual respect, and a celebration of our rich traditions. We are proud to host this festival and look*

forward to deepening our cooperation with India across culture, tourism, and creative industries."

Echoing his view, **Mr. Tran Song Tung** added, *"Ninh Binh is honoured to host the Fourth Namaste Vietnam Festival, which beautifully highlights the harmony between our two nations. Through this festival, we not only showcase the cultural treasures of Ninh Binh but also build bridges of cooperation in tourism, trade, cinema, and people-to-people engagement. We warmly welcome our partners from India and look forward to shaping many more shared successes."*

A major highlight of the festival was the glamorous presence of film personalities from both India and Vietnam. The Indian delegation included well-known Bollywood actors Riya Sen, Divya Agarwal, Donal Bisht, and Niharica Raizada, along with noted filmmakers Chandrakant Singh, Tariq Khan, Zeba Sajid, and Abhishek Ankur. Representing Vietnam's vibrant entertainment industry were celebrated actress and filmmaker Mai Thu Huyen, actor Trinh Tu Trung, and filmmaker Van Ha. Their participation added significant star power and reinforced the festival's growing role in bridging the two nations' entertainment industries.

The festival also welcomed representatives from India's top film production houses: Dhruv Sinha of Reliance Entertainment and Aashish Singh of Red Chillies Entertainment (owned by Indian superstar Shah Rukh Khan). Their presence is expected to catalyse new Indo-Vietnamese collaborations in film production, location shooting, content development, and talent exchange.

Vietnam Airlines, the national flag carrier, continued its legacy of support by serving as the Official Airline Partner for the third consecutive year, reaffirming its commitment to strengthening tourism, trade, cultural exchange, and people-to-people ties between India and Vietnam.

This year's festival also saw the participation of India's leading tour operators and wedding planners, who explored the picturesque landscapes of Ninh Binh—including Tam Chuc, Trang An, Bai Dinh, Tam Coc, and Hoa Lu Ancient Town. Their curated visits aim to promote Vietnam as a preferred destination for Indian travellers, particularly in the fast-growing segment of destination weddings and luxury tourism.

A major milestone in the 2025 edition was the first-ever participation of a high-level delegation from the Indian state of Mizoram. Known for its natural beauty, organic produce, and cultural similarities with Vietnam, Mizoram's involvement is expected to unlock new opportunities for cooperation in tourism, trade, and organic products—particularly bamboo and ginger, for which the state is renowned. The delegation also met H.E. Mr. Tshering Wangchuk Sherpa, The Ambassador of India in Hanoi and deliberated upon the same.

Throughout its duration, the festival featured a rich array of Indian and Vietnamese cultural performances, interactive seminars on film cooperation, tourism collaboration, and industry networking sessions. Delegates from India were given immersive tours of Vietnam's scenic and cultural heritage sites, reinforcing the festival's role as an engine for people-to-people connectivity and bilateral engagement.

Launched in 2022 by Innovations India under the aegis of the Embassy of India in Vietnam, the Namaste Vietnam Festival has rapidly evolved into a significant annual platform celebrating the friendship between India and Vietnam through cinema, culture, tourism, business opportunities, and creative partnerships. Led by Captain Rahul Bali, Innovations India continues to play a key role in conceptualising and executing international initiatives that highlight India's cultural and creative excellence.

From dazzling red carpets to the scenic charm of Ninh Binh, the 4th Namaste Vietnam Festival 2025 unfolded as a spectacular celebration of cinema, culture and camaraderie, gathering Bollywood and Vietnamese stars, esteemed dignitaries and festival guests, and heralding three key MOUs to deepen partnerships in film, tourism and destination weddings.

