

**Indian Council for Cultural Relations
Azad Bhavan, I P Estate, New Delhi – 110 002**

Press Release

**“Spirituality as Soft Power”
9 November 2021**

Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President, ICCR held an interactive session on the theme “Spirituality as Soft Power” with the representatives of the internationally acclaimed Indian spiritual organizations engaged in values and traditions of Indian spirituality and vedic knowledge. This is part of ICCR’s ongoing initiatives to create synergy with the organizations engaged in promoting various aspects of Indian culture and traditions abroad.

2. Many organizations, in India and abroad, are dedicated to spreading awareness about Indic spiritual and yogic traditions globally. They are helping to create a deeper and wider understanding about these Indian traditions in their own unique ways and their efforts are complementary to the aims and objectives of ICCR. It is, therefore, felt that contributions made by them in promoting Indian civilizational values, ethos and thought traditions during the last 75 years need to be recognized and felicitated as part of **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**.

3. In order to deliberate on the way ahead in this regard, Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President, ICCR, held an interactive session with prominent spiritual organizations having global presence, today on **9 November 2021** with the objectives -

- i) To share information on the role and activities of these organizations globally in the field of spreading India's cultural heritage with regard to Yoga and other spiritual traditions.
- ii) To provide a platform for various organizations to share best practices and experiences from their rich experience in this field at an international level.
- iii) To suggest ways in which ICCR and these organizations can work together to promote Indic spiritual and yogic traditions
- iv) Invite suggestions for the activities under the ongoing **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav** that may highlight Yoga and Indic traditions internationally through various events and awareness campaigns in all countries of the world.

4. The interactive session was attended by the representatives of the.Patanjali Yogpeeth, Art of Living , Isha Foundation, Parmarth Niketan Foundation, Geeta Parivar, Shri Ramakrishna Mission, Heartfulness Institute, Dev Sanskriti VishwaVidyalaya. S-VYASA, Mokshayatan Yog Sanstha, The Yoga Institute, ICYER, Sivananda Ashram India, The Chinmaya Mission, Vivekananda Yoga University, ISKCON Kaivalyadham, Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), Hindu Mahasabha and United Consciousness

5. In his remarks, Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe said that Indic spiritual traditions have a definitive feature about “relationship”. Relationship with the Almighty or the Supreme element, relationship with Mother Nature and relationship with each-other, that is mutuality and interpersonal relationship.

6. Representatives of the spiritual organizations welcomed the idea of working together with ICCR and its global network of Cultural Centres and Indian Missions abroad for strengthening and enhancing the engagement of people all over the world through Indian spiritual values.

7. While summing up the session, Director General, ICCR, Shri Dinesh K Patnaik stressed upon the need to work together to achieve ICCR’s goal of promoting India as a country of cultural ethos and values. People across the world are looking for happiness, self-healing and finding a purpose in life and Indian spirituality traditions provide great solace and comfort in these difficult times. DG, ICCR proposed a Global Conference on Spirituality and to have a single website/platform which brings together all Spiritual/Yogic organizations. It was decided to have further meetings to take this initiative forward.

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