

FAREWELL TO DR. VINAY SAHASRABUDDHE: REFLECTING ON HIS JOURNEY AS PRESIDENT, ICCR



ICCR bid a fond farewell to the outgoing President, Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe after the completion of his two terms at the organization. Dr. Sahasrabuddhe served as the President of ICCR from 2018 to 2023. His tenure in the office was characterized by his out-of-the-box approach towards the promotion of the 'Idea of India' across the globe. Under his leadership, ICCR undertook some historically important new initiatives, added new dimensions, and enhanced the quality of India's footprint in academia across the globe.

Following are some key initiatives which were taken up by ICCR during his tenure:

i. Digitisation of ICCR: Launch of various online portals for smooth functioning and greater efficiency in ICCR's activities. Online platforms like the Admission 2 Alumni (A2A) Scholarship Portal, India Alumni Portal, Universalisation of Traditional Indian Knowledge Systems (UTIKS) and the Gyan Setu App were introduced.

ii. Celebration of the International Day of Yoga: By adding a new annual feature in the year 2018 to celebrate the International Day of Yoga (IDY) on June 21 every year, ICCR has started conducting an international conference/ seminar on Yoga/ Yoga Studies, every year at some key academic centres abroad.

iii. Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Memorial Oration: In observance of the World Culture Day which is celebrated on May 21 every year, ICCR has instituted an annual oration on the subjects pertaining to India's cultural influence/ soft power. From 2018, a total of five orations have been organized by ICCR.

iv. Launch of Gen-Next Democracy Network programme: In 2021, ICCR launched this programme to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM). Under this initiative, ICCR hosted young, emerging, social and political leaders of democratic countries across the globe. Eleven batches of this programme with 269 delegates from 77 countries (155 male and 114 female) visited India.

v. Pratibha Sangam Competition: During AKAM celebrations, ICCR launched Pratibha Sangam Competition in 2022. This was the first ever global competition for performers from around the world in the categories of classical Indian music and dances which will be held every year.

vi. 'Bharatiyam' or School Connect Fortnight Programme: This programme was organised in 2023 at Indian Cultural Centres (ICCs) abroad. This programme helped establish a strong connection with local schools by raising awareness about India and its culture among foreign students, and increase the presence of India-related books in school libraries.

vii. Institution of Annapurna Certificate: To boost India's soft power, ICCR had instituted the 'Annapurna Certificate' to recognise restaurants promoting Indian culinary and cuisine traditions abroad. Six restaurants from the US, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Costa Rica, Oman and Mongolia were the inaugural recipients of this prestigious award in 2023.