

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

PRESS RELEASE

ICCR plans to use Indian cuisine as soft power and take its food diversity to the world.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) on 21st May, 2021, the World Culture Day presented its yearly Lecture series, the 4th Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Memorial International Oration. This year's Oration was about, "Insights into India's Culinary Traditions", focusing on the multi-dimensional aspects of Indian culinary traditions and its diversity. It laid emphasis on the possibility of opening avenues for culinary diplomacy to showcase India's soft power and its culinary heritage on the world stage. India has more than a billion kitchens, each of which has a long history of culinary methods and values that have passed from one generation to the other. The Oration was delivered by eminent international expert and a skilled writer on the history of Indian cuisine Dr. Colleen Taylor Sen. The Chair Remarks were delivered by Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President, ICCR.

DG, ICCR in his opening remarks deliberated upon the need of entailing cuisine and culinary heritage of India as an important part and tool of cultural diplomacy. Ambassador Banashri Bose Harrison expressed her thoughts on the rich and robust culinary traditions of India and the role of policymakers in propagating the same throughout the world. She emphasized upon the recognition needed for the promotion of Indian dishes and its cookery throughout the globe.

The keynote speaker of the event, Dr. Colleen Taylor Sen gave a tour de horizon of Indian culinary traditions in history and talked about how Indian spices and ingredients travelled the world and left a footprint for generations to follow calling it the 'culinary voyage' of India. She mentioned that "vegetarianism was first introduced in India and became popular in many countries like Greece and the UK". President, ICCR spoke about the importance of food for Indians and how it's a sacred ritual for any Indian to consume food. He asserted that the recognition to Indian chefs and restaurateurs will help create a sustainable ecosystem for the promotion of Indian cuisine. He also floated the idea of decorating Indian restaurants

and chefs with *Annapurna Award* for their contribution towards the promotion of Indian food and cuisine.

The Oration was followed by a panel discussion of renowned Chefs, restaurateurs serving or promoting Indian cuisine in India and around the world. They talked about the role of Indian food in the dissemination of Indian culture abroad and how the Indian restaurants have evolved over the years. Their discussion mainly revolved around the rise of Indian cuisine in the world and the impact it left on the lives of millions of people across the world.

The participants in the Panel were Ms Priya Paul, Chairperson, Apeejay Park Hotels, Vineet Bhatia, first Indian chef-restaurateur to be awarded a Michelin star, Manish Mehrotra Corporate Chef, Indian Accent, Sarah Todd, international TV show host, author of *My Indian Kitchen*, and co-owner of Antares, restaurant and beach club in Goa, Sujan Mukherjee (Chennai), multi-award-winning Executive Chef of the Taj Coromandel, Sanjoo Malhotra, co-founder, Tasting India Symposium. Mr. Sourish Bhattacharyya food writer and co-founder, Tasting India Symposium moderated the panel discussion.

DG, ICCR said that ICCR proposes to take the deliberations and interventions of this event forward to look at creating a global strategy on promotion of Indian cuisine worldwide including the idea of having gastronomical events, awards, demonstrations and possible certification and ratings of restaurants and food places serving Indian cuisine across the world.

The recorded video of the event can be seen at –
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aruNAoPLXXk>

Connect with us at –

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ICCROfficial>

Twitter - https://twitter.com/ICCR_Delhi

YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUO39Cx_FoYI5RL0HNsmU2Q

Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/iccr_delhi/

New Delhi
21-05- 2021