



Indian Council for Cultural Relations



सत्यमेव जयते
Government Of India



अन्तराष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद्
Indian Council for
International Co-operation

**Ministry of External Affairs
and
Indian Council for Cultural Relations
and
Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad
(Diaspora Research and Resource Centre)
present**

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference

**ROLE OF DIASPORA IN PROMOTION OF
INDIAN CULTURE ABROAD**

SEGMENT I : Eastern Region
(Gulf, Africa, South, South East Asia & Far East)

DATE: 9 December 2020

TIME: 12.00 - 14.00 IST

SEGMENT II : Western Region
(Europe, Americas and the Caribbean)

DATE: 9 December 2020

TIME: 19.30 - 21.30 IST

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वी. मुरलीधरन
V. Muraleedharan



विदेश राज्य मंत्री एवं
संसदीय कार्य राज्य मंत्री
Minister of State for External Affairs &
Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs
Government of India



Message

The proposed Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Conference on “Role of Diaspora in Promotion of Indian Culture abroad” is a lead-up to PBD 2021 Convention. This Mini conference is being organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Overseas Indian Affairs Division of the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Diaspora Research and Resource Centre, Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad. The sessions conducted during this conference will deliberate issues and an agreed pathway will be presented at PBD 2021.

The conference aims at creating cultural bonds and an ecosystem for cultural propagation among the diaspora. Indian diaspora and various diaspora organizations have played a very important role in spreading Indian culture in different parts of the world. This conference would bring together eminent diaspora personalities and associations involved in propagation of Indian culture to discuss innovative ways of leveraging the diaspora to enhance India’s soft power. Our partnership with Indian diaspora for cultural preservation and promotion has worked very well. Building on this strength, it is high time to explore the new ways of enhancing the diaspora’s role in further deepening and expanding the Indian culture abroad and also establish a better connect with the millennials.

Indian diaspora represents valuable bridges of goodwill for strengthening the Indian connect with the world, as full partners in the process of growth and development for wider well-being and prosperity. With its civilizational values of peace, plurality and universal fraternity in the true spirit of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, India has traditionally been a

pivot of soft power exercise for promoting global peace and progress, and the diaspora has played that role to its true meaning.

Today, the Indian cultural presence abroad is wide, varied and deep, be it the popularity of Indian festivals, Bollywood, performing arts, cuisines, or the scholarly appreciation of philosophy, yoga, traditional knowledge system or medicine or languages. Government programmes have played an important role, but, much of the credit for on-the-ground promotion and propagation of Indian culture abroad rightly goes to the efforts of Indian diaspora. Diaspora organisations operate numerous worshipping and spiritual centres, schools of performing arts, yoga and languages, restaurants and organise major festivals with local friends and families. They host professional and popular cultural groups from India.

We wish to build on this strength. Let us explore the new ways of further enhancing the diaspora's role in expanding promotion of Indian culture abroad through this virtual conference.

My best wishes to all for the success of this conference.



(V. Muraleedharan)

**New Delhi
2-12-2020**



सत्यमेव जयते

सांसद

राज्य सभा

Member of Parliament
Rajya Sabha

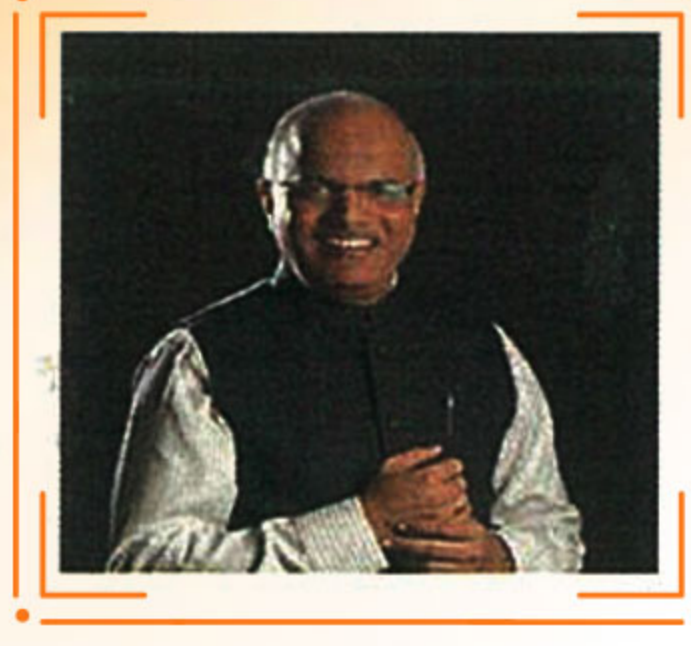
डॉ. विनय सहस्रबुद्धे Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe



अध्यक्ष

भारतीय सांस्कृतिक सम्बंध परिषद्

PRESIDENT
INDIAN COUNCIL FOR
CULTURAL RELATIONS
(ICCR)



Message

The Indian Diaspora maintain strong spiritual ties with India which is evident in the way they have been instrumental in promoting Indian culture in their host countries, be it through cultural festivals, celebrating their cuisines, promotion of art, music, dance etc. Diaspora communities represent and maintain a unique culture which often retains strong ties with their country and culture of origin (real or perceived) and with other communities of the same origin in order to preserve that culture.

ICCR in its role in promoting Indian Culture and Cultural Ties abroad recognizes the important role which our diaspora plays and has been making consistent efforts through its International Cultural Centers, Scholarship; Fellowship and Academic Programmes.

This year, the theme for this very important event in the run-up to the Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas Convention to be held on 9 January 2021 is "Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian culture abroad" which stresses upon the importance of diaspora in propagating and disseminating our rich culture.

Today, the Indian diaspora is more prosperous than before and its involvement in India's cultural promotion is increasing. Diaspora has contributed greatly by way of remittances, investment, lobbying for India, promoting Indian culture abroad and building a positive image of India by their intelligence, industry and sheer dint of hardwork. We look forward to further enhance their role and create a mutually beneficial partnership. It is also important that the young generation, especially the millennials remain engaged with Indian culture and traditions, and become a strong votary of traditional Indian culture abroad.

I am sure with a galaxy of participants joining us from across the world will inspire us to take the road ahead and strengthen our image further in the cultural scenario of the world.

Best Wishes!

Vinay Sahasrabuddhe

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Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference on **ROLE OF DIASPORA IN PROMOTION OF INDIAN CULTURE ABROAD**

Ministry of External Affairs has entrusted the responsibility to Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) for organizing the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) Conference on **“Role of Diaspora in Promotion of Indian Culture Abroad”** in collaboration with the Diaspora Research and Resource Centre (Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad) on **Wednesday, 9 December 2020** in virtual mode. The Conference will be held in two zones namely Eastern Region (Africa, South, South East Asia & Far East) from **12.00 hrs to 14.00 hrs** (Indian ST) and Western Region (Europe, Americas and the Caribbean) from **19.30 hrs to 21.30 hrs**(Indian ST).



Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, **Shri V. Muraleedharan** will be the Chief Guest at the Conference and address the Inaugural Session. **Dr. Vinay Sahasrabudde**, President, ICCR will deliver the Welcome Address. The virtual conference will have eminent speakers from more than 15 countries from all over the world along with speakers from India who will share their experiences and suggest ways and means for

- (i) promoting Indian culture abroad and role of diaspora
- (ii) improving cultural exchanges between India and other countries
- (iii) projection of India's soft power abroad
- (iv) engaging the youth.





Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference on ROLE OF DIASPORA IN PROMOTION OF INDIAN CULTURE ABROAD

Indian cultural features are strongly embedded world over – be it philosophy, languages, performing arts, Indian traditional knowledge systems, cuisine or Indian films. ICCR in its role in fostering and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries and promoting cultural linkages and people-to-people contacts, the role of Indian diaspora as India's cultural ambassadors can hardly be over-emphasized. The purpose of this PBD conference is, therefore, to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the contribution of diaspora in cultural preservation, promotion and propagation abroad and also identify a roadmap for furthering these ties with greater synergy and renewed vigour. It would also provide the opportunity to brainstorm and explore avenues of strengthening the role of diaspora to respond to 21st century challenges and emerging matters of importance.



PROGRAMME

SEGMENT - I

Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

Eastern Region (Gulf, Africa, South, South East Asia & Far East)

Date : 9 December 2020

Time : 12.00 - 14.00 IST

INAUGURAL SESSION (30 mins)



Chair/Moderation/Introduction – **Amb. Virendra Gupta**, President, ARSP

Welcome Address - **Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe**, President, ICCR

Guest of Honour - **Mr. Avinash Teeluck**, Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage, **Mauritius**

Chief Guest - Keynote Address by

Shri V. Muraleedharan, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs

Vote of Thanks - **Shri Dinesh K Patnaik**, Director General, ICCR

TECHNICAL SESSION (80 mins – 6 mins each intervention)



Chair/Moderator: **Amb. Shashank**

Pandit Bhuwan Dutt, Patron, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji & member of UniFiji Council, **Fiji**

Mr Premchand Boojhawon, President, Human Service Trust, **Mauritius**

➤ **Mr. Surya Ambati**, Member of the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests' Multicultural Advisory Group, Government of Western Australia, **Australia**

➤ **Dr Gauri Krishnan**, Founding Director, Indian Heritage Centre & Founding Partner of DMBG Consultants, **Singapore**

Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

- **Mr. Shankar Kandasamy**, Head of Bharatanatyam Section, Temple of Fine Arts, Kuala Lumpur, **Malaysia**
- **Mr. PVS Rao**, Pravasi Samman Awardee, reputed Entrepreneur & Spiritual thinker, **Kenya**
- **Swami Vedananada Saraswati**, Spiritual head of Arya Samaj, **South Africa**
- **Prof. Ajay Dubey**, Chairperson, Centre for African Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, **India**
- **Shri Narayan Kumar**, Linguist and Cultural Activist, Hon. Director, Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad, New Delhi, **India**
- **Rapporteur:** Prof Gopal Arora, Secretary, Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS (20 mins)

CLOSING SESSION (5 mins)

Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

Western Region (Europe, Americas and the Caribbean)

Date : 9 December 2020

Time : 19.30 - 21.30 IST

INAUGURAL SESSION (30 mins)



Chair/Moderation/Introduction – **Amb. Virendra Gupta**, President, ARSP

Welcome Address - **Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe**, President, ICCR

Guest of Honour - **Dr. Vindhya Vasini Persaud**, MP and Minister of Human Services and Social Security, Government of Cooperative Republic of Guyana, **Guyana**

Chief Guest - Keynote Address by

Shri V. Muraleedharan, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs

Vote of Thanks - **Shri Dinesh K Patnaik**, Director General, ICCR

TECHNICAL SESSION (80 mins – 6 mins each intervention)



Chair/Moderator: **TBC**

- **Prof. Bal Ram Singh**, Founder, Indic Centre, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, **USA**
- **Ms. Lata Pada**, Founder & Artistic Director, Sampradaya Dance Creations, Mississauga, **Canada**
- **Dr M N Nandakumara**, Director, Bhartiya Vidhya Bhawan, London, **UK**
- **Mr Rabin Baldewsingh**, Former Deputy Mayor of Hague, The **Netherlands**

Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

- **Dr. Arnold Norman Thomas**, Retired Diplomat and Professor of Political Science, **Suriname**
- **Dr Satnarine** Balkaransingh, Founder and Director, Kathak Kala Sangam & author, **Trinidad & Tobago**
- **Prof. Chandrashekhhar Bhat**, Founder and Former Director of Indian Diaspora Studies, Hyderabad University, **India**
- **Ms. Rama Vaidyanathan**, Bharatnatyam artist, one of the Directors of Ganesha Natyalaya, **India**
- **Rapporteur:** Amb. Anup Mudgal, Chairperson, Diaspora Research and Resource Centre

DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS (20 mins)

CLOSING SESSION (5 mins)

Brief introduction

Participant speakers in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference On Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

SESSION I



Shri. Pandit Bhuwan Dutt

Pandit Bhuwan Dutt is the Patron of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji & member of UniFiji Council, Fiji. He has diploma in land surveying and in development studies from University of Otago, New Zealand and Cambridge University, U.K. He has joined Lands and Survey Department as a Land Surveyor. He has held various senior positions until promoted in 1979 to Permanent Secretary, thereafter served in several Ministries in Fiji Government, until retirement in 1998. He has served as a member on several statutory Boards and Committees of Fiji Government such as Housing Authority, Fiji Indian Cultural Council etc. He also served as the Pro-Chancellor of the University of Fiji, Chairman of University of Fiji Council (2005-2013), Chairman of A P Sabha School, and Board of Governors Justice of the Peace (current). He also served as President of Hindi Parishad-Fiji (2015-18). He was awarded "Order of Fiji" by Fiji's President.

Premchand Boojhawon M.S.K, C.S.K. also called (Munshi) is the Founder member, President and Trustee of Human Service Trust, Mauritius. He is the Founder member and former treasurer of Seva Shivar Mauritius. He served as the Chairman of Mahatma Gandhi Ayurveda Hospital Board, Krishnanand Seva Ashram, and Lady Sarojini Jugnauth Women's Home & Old Couples' Ward, Calebasses. He is the Director of ACTReSA (Ayurveda Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abuses), Mahatma Gandhi Ayurved Hospital and adjacent centers. He serves as Vice-President of GOPIO (Global Organization of People of Indian Origin), Mauritius. He is also the Founder member of Indo-Mauritius Friendship Foundation (IMFF). He was awarded Honorary Citizenship by Moka Flacq District Council through Lallmatie Village Council. He was conferred Commander of the order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean (C.S.K) insignia and Member of the order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean (M.S.K.), insignia by the President of the Republic of Mauritius. Human Service Trust has been playing an important role in preservation of the Indian cultural roots in Mauritius.



Shri. Premchand Boojhawon



Shri. Surya Ambati

Surya Ambati is the Member of the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests' Multicultural Advisory Group, Government of Western Australia, Australia. Surya comes with over 30 years of Engineering, Operational, Technical and Management of Railway Infrastructure experience. Strong team management, leadership, and social skills combined with the ethos of perseverance, commitment, and communication always keeps him challenged to find innovative ways to resolve any issues. Surya's greatest strength is his "Can do" attitude and its done! He is an active member in the Indian community and immediate past president of the Indian Society of Western Australia (ISWA) and is seen as an integral reason of the community's integration, visibility, and success. He led the team by example and always available for any help. He is the man behind the new ISWA Constitution, Creating ISWA Council, making ISWA the peak umbrella body of all Indian origin associations of Western Australia and instrumental in purchasing the first Indian Community Centre of Australia in Perth.

Brief introduction

Participant speakers in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference On Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

SESSION I



Dr. Gauri Parimoo Krishnan

Dr. Gauri Parimoo Krishnan is an art historian, independent curator and museum consultant based in Singapore and India. Her major contribution is the development of the Indian Heritage Centre. As Senior Curator, she developed the South Asian galleries of the Asian Civilisations Museum at its inception in 2003. Gauri had been Director, Research at the Culture Academy of MCCY, Singapore and taught Indian Art History at the National University of Singapore. At present she teaches Museum Studies and Curatorship at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Gauri is a recipient of the Commendation Medal and Public Administration Medal (Bronze) for her contribution to the arts and heritage sector by the government of Singapore. Her major publications include Naina Dalal: Cotemporary Indian Printmaker, The Power of the Female: Devangana Sculptures on Indian Temple Architecture, Ramayana in Focus: Visual and Performing Arts of Asia, The Divine Within: Art & Living Culture of India and South Asia, and Nalanda, Srivijaya and Beyond: Re-exploring Buddhist Art in Asia among others.



Shri. Shankar Kandasamy

He is a heads the department of Bharata Natyam at the Temple of Fine Arts, Malaysia. Trained in the multi-disciplines of Odissi, Kathak, Western Classical Ballet and contemporary dance, Shankar has also learnt folk dances of India and Malaysia's Malay and Chinese dances. He holds a Masters in Dance from the Bharathidasan University and is currently enrolled for a PhD with the Tanjore Tamil University. He has been a major choreographer for all of the Temple of Fine Arts productions and has conducted and trained over ninety Arangetrams till this date. As a soloist he has performed extensively in India, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, and major cities in the USA. He is the recipient of the prestigious International Arya Bhatta Award. He has a strong working knowledge of Tamil and Sanskrit and his early training in Carnatic violin under the Lalgudi Bani makes him a much sought after resource person in the Bharata Natya dance circles.



Shri. PVS Rao

He has immense role in promoting business ties with India in the field of Leather, Pharmaceuticals and spiritual works. He was awarded Pravasi Bharatiya Samman in 2019 for his contribution to the field of Leather Technology in Kenya. He was awarded International President's Medal by Dr. Naresh Aggarwal (Lions President) for successfully training 40,000 underprivileged youth through CAP Kenya - a vocational training NGO founded by him. Rao is the first Indian and Asian to receive Kenya Elder of the Order of the Golden Heart (EGH) award in history. He was honored by Kenya's South Indian community for his valuable and outstanding services rendered to society. He has received United Graduate Collage & Seminary Honorary Doctorate in Humanities for his humanitarian contributions to society. He is the founder of the first Venkateswara (Balaji) temple in East Africa. He is currently the Board of Director of Kenya Leather Development Council Nairobi.

Brief introduction

Participant speakers in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference On Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

SESSION I



Swami Vedanand Saraswati Ji

Swami Vedanand Saraswati Ji spiritual journey began when he served as a member of the Veda Dharma Sabha Pietermaritzburg as a youth scholar and was inspired by the teachings of Maharishi Swami Dayanand Saraswati (Founder of the Arya Samaj). His journey took him to India and on 14th of June 2016 Swamiji was initiated into the Sannyasa Order by H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji, Spiritual Head and President of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, India, and was named 'Swami Vedanand Saraswati'. Upon arrival in South Africa, Swamiji was elected as the Spiritual Head of the Arya Samaj South Africa. His vision and mission finds him working closely with the youth inspiring them to grow as young dynamic individuals. Swamiji has been actively engaged in many projects and programmes the world over. He has also authored and co-authored three books with Divesh and Kamal Cassiram.

Prof. Ajay Kumar Dubey is the Director of Internal quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), Director, Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Study, (JNIAS), Chairperson, Special Centre for National Security Studies (SCNSS), Chairperson, Centre for African Studies, School of International Studies, and Director of Energy Studies Programme, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has authored and edited more than dozen books and published several research papers in journals/books. He has been invited as a visiting faculty in numerous international universities. He was the Principal Investigator of a Major Research Project Team under UPE II on 'Diaspora in Development: Comparative Assessment of Harnessing Globalisation'. He has also completed a UGC Major Research Project as Principal Investigator on 'India and Indian Diaspora in Africa'. He also has research collaboration with Department of Economics, Kansai University on 'State of African Studies in Asia' and with Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany on 'Africa's Asia Option' (AFRASO) project.



Prof. Ajay Kumar Dubey



Shri. Narayan Kumar

Narayan Kumar is the Hon. Director of Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad. He is a Linguist and Cultural Activist. He has also served as Visiting Professor in the Department of Linguistics and Foreign Languages, University of Guyana. Shri Kumar has also held diplomatic position in the Dept. of Culture and languages at High Commission of India, Georgetown and Acting Director of Indian Cultural Centre of Georgetown. He is the recipients of prestigious awards such as Bhasha-Bhushan Samman and Hindi Sevi Samman. He has also been awarded by Hindi Academy Delhi, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Hindi Academy of Kolkata for propagation of Hindi. He has authored and edited many publications including 'Democracy on Trial in Fiji', 'Roma in Search of Identity', 'Hindi Ki Vishwa Yatra', 'Hindi Sab Sansar', and 'Diaspora and Nation Building'.

Brief introduction

Participant speakers in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference On Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

SESSION II



Shri. Bal Ram Singh

Bal Ram Singh, PhD, has been a professor since 1990 and Henry Dreyfus Teacher-scholar since 1997 at UMass Dartmouth (until 2014). He has been visiting professor at Georgetown University, Harvard Medical School, Yang Ming University (Taiwan), and Jawaharlal Nehru University (India). He is currently the President of the Institute of Advanced Sciences, and also the founder of Prime Bio Inc., a biotechnology based company. Dr. Singh is the Founding Director of the Botulinum Research Center at Institute of Advanced Sciences. He is also the Founding Director of the Center for Indic Studies at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. He is currently an adjunct professor at the School of Sanskrit and Indic Studies, JNU, Delhi. He has been conducting research on botulinum and tetanus neurotoxins, and also on Ayurveda, yoga, mind, and consciousness. He has published 14 books and over 325 articles and he is also the editor/associate editor of four journals, including Biochemical and Biophysical Research Reports (Elsevier), Ayurveda Journal of Health (UMass Dartmouth) etc.

Lata Pada is the Founder and Artistic Director of SAMPRADAYA Dance Creations, an award-winning institution at the forefront of Indian dance in Canada. She also heads the SAMPRADAYA Dance Academy, Canada's premiere bharatanatyam training organization. Lata has trained under India's eminent gurus Kalaimamani Kalyanasundaram and the late Padmabhushan Kalanidhi Narayanan, and has had an extensive, international career as a bharatanatyam soloist. She holds an MFA in Dance from York University (1996) and is an Adjunct Professor on the Graduate Program of Dance at York University. Lata is also a recipient of the Order of Canada (2009) and has the distinction of being the first South Asian artist to receive this prestigious national honour. Lata has also received the Pravasi Bharatiya Saman (2010) by the President of India for her outstanding contribution to the Indian arts in Canada and several other prestigious awards.



Lata Pada



Dr Nandakumara

Dr Nandakumara, a pioneer in Indian classical arts and a well-known scholar on the ancient Sanskrit language, literature and philosophy, holds a PhD from the University of London and has dedicated the last four decades to teaching, lecturing and propagating Indian arts and culture in the UK in his role as the Executive Director of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's UK Centre. An accomplished public speaker, he has given talks at prestigious events around the world, including the Westville University in Durban, South Africa, the Houses of Parliament, and Cambridge University. As well as heading The Bhavan, the largest Indian arts organisation outside of India, he has also extensively travelled the globe performing Hindu ceremonies at principal occasions.

Brief introduction

Participant speakers in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference On Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

SESSION II



Rabin S. Baldewsingh

Rabin S. Baldewsingh is former Deputy-Mayor of the City of The Hague, in The Netherlands. He is of Indian descent and was born in Suriname, South America, as a grandson of Indian indentured labourers. Now, Mr. Baldewsingh is one of the leading figures in The Netherlands concerning the history and cultural developments of the Indian Diaspora in The Netherlands. He is a renowned speaker and lecturer on the Sarnámi language and on the Girmitiyá Migration History. Mr Baldewsingh is one of the pioneers in the preservation and development of the Sarnámi Bhojpuri language and culture. He is also known as a writer and poet and has written several books. He is also writer/editor of many articles on Surinamese Indian culture, language and history. He has produced documentaries on religion, culture, literature, archaeology, architecture, Indian fine arts, Indian cinema and history, and has worked on a documentary sequel on the Indian Diaspora community in several countries. In 2014 he was awarded the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman. He is the first Surinamese Indian in The Netherlands to be bestowed with this prestigious award.

Dr Arnold Thomas is a retired diplomat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Embassy in Brussels. In academia he was Professor of Political Science at Brooklyn College, New York and lecturer in Caribbean History at Thames Valley University, London and other institutions. He also spent several years at the CARICOM Secretariat in Guyana as Chief of the Technical Assistance Section. Other than the focus on national development Dr Thomas has done extensive research and publications on the history of Indians in St. Vincent and has spoken at several regional and international conferences on the Indian Diaspora. He is a founding member of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) Indian Heritage Foundation, a Life Member of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin, SVG Coordinator of the International Indian Diaspora Council, and member of the SVG UNESCO Committee on International Memory of the World Programme. He is currently the SVG President International Indian Diaspora Council.



Dr Arnold Thomas



Dr. Satnarine Balkaransingh

Dr. Satnarine Balkaransingh, a Trinidadian of Indian origin, has studied in Trinidad, UK and India through scholarships. A published author, he has articles in journals and peer-reviewed chapters in several books. Balkaransingh co-founded Nriyjanjali Theatre of Trinidad and Tobago Inc. (1977), and founded the Kathak Kala Sangam of T&T (2009). A creative and performing artist, he has scripted, choreographed, and directed over 65 stage and television productions, including several dance-ballets, and has danced in most of them. He has performed internationally; his work has been featured on Radio, TV and on social media. A former senior public servant in the government of the Republic Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT), he is a consultant-economist in Policy, Strategic and Project planning for socio-economic development. A member of several organisations; recipient of commendations and awards, including recognition as a 'National Icon' by the GORTT (2002 and 2019), Balkaransingh is an international speaker on diverse topics, including issues of the Indian Diaspora.

Brief introduction

Participant speakers in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference On Role of diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad

SESSION II



Rama Vaidyanathan

She is one of the foremost Bharatanatyam dancers of her generation. She trained intensively under the legendary dancer Yamini Krishnamurthy and the celebrated Guru Saroja Vaidyanathan. In a performance career spanning more than 30 years, Rama has developed her own individual style without forsaking the core principles of her dance form. Her technique is grounded and yet there is a fresh approach to the innumerable dance compositions that she has added to the Bharatanatyam repertoire. Having performed at every major dance venues of the world, she has been awarded with several titles, the "Kalaimamani" by the Govt of Tamil Nadu and the "Kalashree" by the Govt of Kerala. Other notable awards are the Kumar Gandharv Puraskar from the Madhya Pradesh Govt, Nandanamamani from Kartik Fine Arts Chennai, Vani kala Sudhakara from Tyagabrahma Gana sabha Chennai, Nritya Choodamani from Krishna Gana Sabha Chennai. Rama is the recipient of the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar for the year 2017. As the Director of Ganesa Natyalaya New Delhi, she has been actively engaged in teaching for more than twenty five years. Rama balances a hectic performance schedule while conducting workshops and master classes all over the world, inspiring a whole generation of dancers.



Prof. Chandrashekhar Bhat

He is an Independent Researcher on Diaspora Studies and has been a Professor of Eminence at Department of Sociology, Tezpur Central University till 2014. He is a former Professor and Head, Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad and the Founder-Director of the Centre for the Study of Indian Diaspora, the first UGC sponsored academic and research centre, established in 1996 at the University of Hyderabad. He was an Invited Professor at the University of Rouen (France) to pursue an inter-university collaborative project on 'Diaspora, Identity and Locality'. He has published several papers on social movements, urbanization and diaspora studies in various national and international journals and edited books. His work on Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) and other overseas Indian associations - "Indian Diaspora and Global Organizations: Communities and Contested Boundaries"- has been recently published in India Beyond India, Göttingen University Press (2018).



Indian Council For Cultural Relations



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of Independent India, founded the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) on 9th April 1950.

The objectives of the Council are to participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations; to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries; to promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people; to establish and develop relations with national and international organizations in the field of culture.

ICCR is about a communion of cultures, a creative dialogue with other nations. To facilitate this interaction with world cultures, the Council strives to articulate and demonstrate the diversity and richness of the cultures of India, both in and with other countries of the world. The Council prides itself on being a pre-eminent institution engaged in cultural diplomacy and the sponsor of intellectual exchanges between India and partner countries. ICCR's activities are aimed at reaching out to the hearts and minds of the people through a dissemination of its heritage, values and philosophy to create an endearing and everlasting image and promote India's soft power overseas.



अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद्
Indian Council for
International Co-operation

Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad



To address the long felt need for an organization devoted to engaging with the large number of Overseas Indians (OI), both NRIs & PIOs, some like minded intellectuals initiated a forum to discuss the issues pertaining to Pravasi Bharatiyas. Thus, the Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) or the Indian Council for International Co-operation was established in 1978 as a non-profit, non-governmental and non-political organization to promote universal brotherhood and harmony, embodied in its motto, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or 'the world is one family'

One of the key guiding spirits behind the establishment of the ARSP was Shri Baleshwar Agrawal, a veteran journalist and social activist. He was a founder member of ARSP, serving as its Secretary General from 1983 to 2013, and he contributed to bringing diaspora issues into India's foreign policy formulation. Shri Agrawal's contribution, inter alia, to the L.M Singhvi Committee Report on Indian Diaspora led to the introduction of a number of new diaspora related initiatives like Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and the PIO/OCI schemes.

Since its inception four decades back, the ARSP has emerged as an important non-governmental organization connecting the people of Indian origin across the world. The ARSP acts as a voice for the diaspora with the relevant Indian Ministries, departments and institutions.

The wide ranging activities of ARSP include programmes on cultural, educational, social and civilizational matters, economic links; interactions with think tanks, opinion makers like Parliamentarians, media, etc and linguistic and literary promotions.

In recognition of the diaspora as an important strategic asset, ARSP decided to set up a Diaspora Research and Resource Centre (DRRC) in the year 2017 which is also supported by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Diaspora studies has become a subject of serious academic research and scrutiny in recent times. Being an important global phenomenon, a sizeable body of literature on diaspora has evolved world over both in the form of folklore and scholarly works on the historical, anthropological, sociological, cultural, demographic, political and economic aspects.



अन्तराष्ट्रीय सहयोग परिषद्
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However, there is still a serious need of scholarly work on various aspects of Indian diaspora. DRRC has been set up keeping this purpose in mind and to undertake comprehensive and systematic studies on multifarious issues concerning diaspora in an integrated, inter disciplinary and holistic framework.

The priority objectives of the DRRC are as follows: i) Creation of detailed and interactive online database of institutions/ organisations working on diaspora themes within India and abroad. ii) Outreach and networking including through conferences/seminars/roundtables/ exchange of visit, iii) Engaging the diaspora youth through focused programme, iv) Publications/research by way of support for publications of books by reputed authors on diaspora themes and publication of a quarterly research journal.

DRRC has launched a number of sustained initiatives and organized a series of activities to promote interaction and connectivity with the diaspora including hosting KIP delegations, diaspora delegations, special lectures. It has acted as voice for diaspora to articulate their views and opinions and a vehicle of communication with the government of India for articulating the diaspora concerns in the relevant policy initiatives. Currently, the ARSP is headed by Amb Virendra Gupta, President and Shri Shyam Parande as its Secretary General. Amb Anup Mudgal guides the work of the DRRC.

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