

## ***Mega Millet Mahotsav 2023: A Report***

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Ministry of Culture in collaboration with Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, Ministry of Agriculture and Awasar Trust organized the *Mega Millet Mahotsav 2023* at Gandhi Darshan campus, Rajghat, Delhi from 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023. The Millet festival started with the National Anthem and followed by lighting of lamp by Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, Dr. R K Sinha, Former Rajyasabha MP, Padmashri Dr. Khadar Vali, renowned food scientist, Shri Surya Pratap Shahi, Minister of Agriculture, Uttar Pradesh, Vijay Goel, Vice Chairman, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti. Prof. P. Jha, Dean (Acad), IGNCA and Prof. Sudhir Lall, HoD of Kalakosa Division, IGNCA were also present. The day long three days workshop attracted audience and participants from different corners of the country, and the participants were from different professions including medical science, agricultural science and agriculturists, social scientists, politicians, and the common people. Millet/Shri Anna or Trina Dhanya food was served to the audience on all the three days and the participants experienced and appreciated the value and taste of Shri Anna Bhojan.

It was a great opportunity for anyone who was a learner and a responsible citizen to know more about Trina-dhanya which are of great significance to the human life. People attended the lectures on the history of crops from a diet-ecological point of view in the workshop on Millets and their use for healthier and wealthier life. Dr. Khadar Vali, also known as the Millet Man of India, was the chief resource scientist. Dr. Khadar Vali emphasized that Shri Anna have been a part of our dietary culture since the Vedic age, and they are still in our everyday life. Unfortunately the millets consumption has taken a hit in the last 100-50 years, owing to a deliberate and broad based “corporatization of food”, in which many state and private agencies played a role. Now it is time for us as Indians to revisit the regain the tradition of eating millets.

On the sidelines of the workshop, the Kalakosa division of IGNCA put up a small exhibition which became a center of attraction. It focused on types of millet produces that have been a part of Indian lifestyle since ancient time. The

exhibition showcased verses from different texts such as *Yajurveda*, *Atharvaveda*, *Taittiriya Upanishad*, Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, and Vagbhat's *Ashtanghridaya* etc. and also showed the significance of Millets in Indian culture and festivals.

Padma Vibhushan Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, former Minister of Home Affairs, Human Resource Development and Science & Technology, GoI, Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, Hon'ble Governor of Haryana, Dr. Arun Kumar Saxena, Minister of Environment & Climate Change, UP Govt., Padamshree Dr. Khader Vali, Dr. Mahesh Chand Sharma, Former Minister, GoI, Shri. Kamal Taori, IAS (Retd.), Dr. Buddhinath Mishra, a senior Poet, Padmashree Ram Bahadur Rai, Chairman, IGNCATrust, Shri Govind Mohan, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, GoI, Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNCATrust, Shri Subodh Kant Sahai, Former Union Minister, GoI, Ms. Uma Nanduri, Joint Secretary (Ac), Ministry of Culture, GoI and others were our dignitaries for day three on 07<sup>th</sup> November, 2023.

There were several spectacular programmes including musical and folk dance performances by Yusuf Khan Mewati, Seema Kalbeliya, Chetan Devagan and Nidhi Chaurasia. There was a huge crowd which witnessed and enjoyed the performances. Visitors toured the Millet stalls and interacted with the Shri Anna experts.

In the festival, 30 plus stalls from FPOs, NGOs, SHGs were put up at site. Social media promotion of Mega Millet Mahotsav 2023 with the slogan "Ye Diwali Millet Wali" was a great hit. Adya trust, Kheti Virasat Mission and Mera Millet Magic etc. collaborated in the successful organisation.