

Embassy of India
Budapest

PRESS RELEASE
International Year of Millets 2023

An exhibition cum seminar event was organised to commemorate the International Year of Millets 2023 on 23rd May 2023. Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Mr. Istvan Jakab opened the Exhibition on Millets at the iconic Hungarian Agriculture Museum along with the Ambassador Shri Partha Satpathy, Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, UN FAO Regional Programme Leader, and Deputy Director of the Agriculture Museum. The Museum located at a picturesque venue and built a 100 years ago to celebrate the 1000th birth year of the Hungarian state, houses some of the treasures of Hungarian agriculture and is popular among the locals and tourists. Millet varieties from India and millet products were displayed alongwith posters and write ups on millets, health benefits of millets and some millet recipes. The Agriculture Museum and the MATE Agriculture University also exhibited varieties of millets grown in Hungary as well as some literature relating to the cultivation of millets.



After the inauguration of the Exhibition, a conference on theme of International Year of Millets was organised. The Deputy Speaker delivered the keynote speech at the event following the opening remarks of the Ambassador. The Ambassador in his speech brought out the long history of millet traditions in India and also the need for the world to address the issues of food security and climate change in which millets could play a crucial role. He said that it was at the initiative of India that UN had adopted 2023 as the International Year of Millets and in this regard, the government of India was organising events throughout the world through its Embassies and the Embassy of India is also organising this event to promote the awareness of millets as alternate sources of food and how this could enhance food security in the world which is important given that nearly 800 million people are still in need of proper nourishment. He recalled what tPrime Minister Modi had said at the opening ceremony of the International Year of Millets in Rome “there is a need for diversity on the land and on our tables. If agriculture becomes monoculture, it impacts our health and the health of our lands. Millets are a good way to increase agricultural and dietary diversity. Raising awareness to create 'Millet Mindfulness' is an important part of this movement. Both institutions and individuals can make a tremendous impact.”

Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly Mr. Istvan Jakab drew attention to the challenges caused by climate change and stressed that Hungarian agriculture should adapt to these challenges by adopting new technologies as well diversying the genetic resources. He said that millets have a 1000-year old history in Hungary and in the drier seasons they have the potention to be an essential food source. He celebrated the Indian researchers developing new types of millets and emphasised the need for furthering cooperation between India and Hungary in the field of agrilcultural research.

Mr. Raimund Jahle also stressed that given the challenges posed by climate change, a comprehensive approach is needed to strengthen the vulnerable food systems and pointed out that millets are important element in these endeavours because of their climate resilience and adaptability. He underlined that the International Year of Millets provided a perfect opportunity to recognize the values of millets and pointed out the importance to improve the diversity of the international food market.

Mr. Tamas Tarpataki the Deputy State Secretary from the Ministry of Agriculture spoke about the practical aspects of millets and given the supply chain disruptions created by Covid 19 pandemic and the recent Russia-Ukraine war, it was crucial to have a resilient food supply network and diversified basket of goods. As millets need less fertilizers and less pesticides and can grow in arid conditions and do not need rich soil, they can be easily and widely cultivated. He conveyed that Hungary is producing millet-based baby food, pasta and extruded crispbread etc.

The discussions were then followed by expert level presentations made by Professors from MATE, UN FAO and Budapest Business School. A presentation on millet recipes was also given and also millet based food items both Indian and Hungarian were served to the large audience.

Raw millets, millet products and posters were put up in the Exhibition giving details of the millets grown in India and Hungary as well as some millet-based recipes and health benefits of millets.



