

**Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre,
High Commission of India,
Suva**

Press Release

ICCR Foundation Day - 25th April 2023

The Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC) and the High Commission of India in Suva organized the 74th Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Foundation Day celebrations on 25th April, 2023 at the SVCC Cultural Hall. H.E Prof. Biman Prasad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development, and Statistics, Government of the Republic of Fiji graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

2. ICCR was founded on 9th April 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of India with the objective of fostering and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and the world, and to promote cultural exchanges with other countries and with their people.

3. ICCR through its Indian Cultural Centres, conducts a wide range of cultural, academic and intellectual activities as well as providing various Scholarship Schemes to countries all over the World.

4. H. E. P.S. Karthigeyan, High Commissioner of India to Fiji gave the welcome remarks and highlighted the role of ICCR in promotion of Cultural Diplomacy and the key role played by the ICCR in the area of capacity building in Fiji through ICCR Scholarships and also highlighted India as a knowledge destination for students of Fiji and to make full use of the opportunity provided by ICCR to gain World class education at free of cost.

5. The Hon'ble Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics Prof. Biman Prasad in his address shared his experience as a former ICCR Alumni and acknowledged the contributions of ICCR in Fiji and across the world in showcasing cultural diversity and strengthening cultural relations. He thanked HCI and SVCC for strengthening cultural links between India and Fiji and for their contribution in the development of Fiji's education sector through the scholarships.

6. During the celebration, video messages were displayed from ICCR scholars currently studying at Universities in India. Also distinguished ICCR Alumni in Fiji shared their personal experiences on the occasion. Cultural performances by students of Bhangra, Carnatic and Harmonium and Tabla faculties of SVCC were also presented during the event.

7. Senior dignitaries including Assistant Minister of Education, Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu, Pro-Chancellor of University of Fiji, Mr. Kamlesh Arya and Director of Centre for Flexible Learning at the University of the South Pacific, Dr. Rajni Chand and large number of alumni and friends of India attended the event.
