

**High Commission of India
Windhoek**

**Special Joint Event Commemorating the International Year of Millets held on 21
November 2023**

The High Commission of India in Namibia, in collaboration with the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (MIRCO) of the Government of the Republic of Namibia organised a joint event to commemorate the International Year of Millets on 21st November 2023 at the Multi-purpose Hall of High Commission of India, 97 Nelson Mandela Avenue, Klein Windhoek at 1800 hrs. Several Namibian dignitaries, including Ambassador Penda Naanda, Executive Director, MIRCO, Ms. Ndiyakupi Nghituwamata, Executive Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reforms, Mr Sikongo Haihambo, Executive Director, Ministry of Industrialization and Trade, Members of Diplomatic Corps, representatives of Government bodies & agricultural agencies, business and industry, media, members of Indian community and guests from various walks of life attended the event.

The event began with a short film on millets, which was followed by welcome remarks by High Commissioner Mandarapu Subbarayudu, welcome address by co-host Ambassador Penda Naanda, Executive Director, MIRCO, talk by Ms. Ndiyakupi Nghituwamata, Executive Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reforms and expert talks and presentations on “The Millets: Future Super Food To Address Global Food Security and Nutrition Security by Dr. Satyen Yadav, Chairman, India Millet Initiative; “Role of Millets in Achieving Food Security and ways to promote their production and consumption by Dr Victor Afari-Sefa, Director, Global Research, ICRISAT’; Farming of Millets in Namibia with the help of ICRISAT by Dr Robbie Harwa, Director, ICRISAT Africa Programme and “Nutritional value and health benefits of Millets” by Ms. Mari-Louise Jeffery from Namibia’s Ministry of Health and Social Services.

Renowned Namibian Chef Terry Jenkinson of the Silver Spoon Academy in Windhoek also discussed about the various possibilities Mahangu (pearl millet) presents to a chef. Live cooking demonstration of millet dishes was also organised and the event ended with a reception where millet delicacies were served to the gathering.

The United Nations declared 2023 as the “International Year of Millets” which was sponsored by the Government of India and supported by more than 70 countries. The goal is to highlight the enormous potential of millets to diversify food systems and enhance food security across the globe. Grown and consumed in India, Namibia and

other countries, Millets are an important component of the efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being).

An important staple cereal crop for millions of smallholder dryland farmers across Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, millets offer nutrition, resilience, income and livelihood for farmers. They have multiple untapped uses such as food, feed, fodder, biofuels and brewing. Therefore, millets are Smart Food as they are Good for Consumers, Good for the Farmer and Good for the Planet.

Within the ambit of the International Year of Millets, the joint event sought to raise awareness of the importance of millets, benefits of consuming millets and thus encourage production and consumption of millets. Millets are nutritionally rich, climate resilient and offer great health benefits. Let us make millets as part of our daily diet.
