

# International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 kick starts with Focussed Activities being undertaken by Central Ministries, State Governments and Indian Embassies

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- **DA&FW aims to promote cultivation and consumption of Millets at a larger scale and bring it to the entire globe through IYM**
- **Central ministries, states and Indian embassies allocated a focussed month in 2023 to carry out various activities for promotion of IYM and increase awareness about benefits of millets**
- **January 2023 is the focussed month for the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of India and States of Chhattisgarh, Mizoram and Rajasthan for conducting events/ activities for IYM**

Spearheaded by the Prime Minister, the Government of India sponsored the proposal for International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 which was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The declaration has been instrumental for the Government of India to be at the forefront in celebrating the IYM. The PM of India, Shri Narendra Modi has also shared his vision to make IYM 2023 a 'People's Movement' alongside positioning India as the 'Global Hub for Millets'.

'Millets' were among the first crops to be domesticated in India with several evidence of its consumption during the Indus valley civilization. Being grown in more than 130 countries at present, Millets are considered traditional food for more than half a billion people across Asia and Africa. In India, millets are primarily a kharif crop, requiring less water and agricultural inputs than other similar staples. Millets are important by the virtue of its mammoth potential to generate livelihoods, increase farmers' income and ensure food & nutritional security all over the world.

Recognising the enormous potential of Millets, which also aligns with several UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Government of India (GoI) has prioritized Millets. In April 2018, Millets were rebranded as "Nutri Cereals", followed by the year 2018 being declared as the National Year of Millets, aiming at larger promotion and demand generation. The global millets market is projected to register a CAGR of 4.5% during the forecast period between 2021-2026.

On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, organized an opening ceremony for the International Year of Millets – 2023 at Rome, Italy. The event was attended by a delegation of senior government officials from India. Next in the series, prior to the year-long celebration of 'International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023', the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare hosted a special 'Millet Luncheon' for the Members of the Parliament at the Parliament house.

The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has taken a proactive multi-stakeholder engagement approach (engaging all the central government ministries, states/UTs, farmers, start-ups, exporters, retail businesses, hotels, Indian Embassies etc.) to achieve the aim of IYM 2023 and taking Indian millets globally. Ministries, states and Indian embassies have been allocated focussed months in 2023 to carry out various activities for promotion of IYM and increase awareness about benefits of millets for the Consumer, Cultivator and Climate.

Among central ministries, the activities related to IYM for the month of January 2023 will be kick started by the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, Government of India. The ministry has planned 15 activities over

15 days in January which include engaging sports persons, nutritionists and fitness experts through video messages, conducting webinars on millets with leading nutritionists, dieticians and elite athletes, promotion amplification through Fit India App, etc. Some of the other ministries which have planned events in January are Ministry of Food Processing Industries which will be organizing Millet Fair-cum-exhibitions in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh; FSSAI will organize Eat Right Melas in Punjab, Kerala and Tamil Nadu etc.

With respect to states, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram and Rajasthan have been allocated the month of January for carrying out specific activities for sensitization and promotion of IYM. The states will be conducting millet centric activities including mahotsavs/ melas and food festivals, training of farmers, awareness campaigns, workshops/ seminars, placement of hoardings and distribution of promotional material at various key locations in the state, etc. Other states that are organizing similar activities in the month of January include Maharashtra, Uttarakhand and Punjab.

During January 2023, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) and DA&FW will be participating in the Trade Show in Belgium wherein a multi-stakeholder delegation with representatives from DA&FW, APEDA, start-ups, exporters and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) will showcase the diversity of Indian millets through RTE and RTC millet-based products marketed by Indian companies, B2B, B2G interactions etc.

Moreover, Embassies of India across more than 140 countries will be participating in celebration of IYM during 2023 by conducting side events on IYM involving the Indian Diaspora through exhibition, seminars, talks, panel discussions, etc. In January, Embassy of India in Azerbaijan and Embassy of India in Belarus will be conducting activities such as B2B meeting with the participation of local chambers, food bloggers, importers of food items and local restaurants etc. Cooked Millets dish exhibitions/ contests will be organized with the help of Indian diaspora and Millets dishes will be served as part of the Republic Day celebrations. The High Commission of India in Abuja and Consulate General of India in Lagos, as part of promotion of IYM, have planned a Millets Food Festival and a Millets Food preparation competition in January 2023. The Millets Food Festival would be held at the High Commission premises and provide stalls for preparation with invitees including both Nigerian dignitaries and Indian community.

Towards this endeavour, through a collaborative approach, the DA&FW urges everyone including the International Organizations, Academia, Hotels, Media, Indian Diaspora, Start-up communities, Civil Society, and all others in the Millets value-chain to come forward and join hands to revive the forgotten glory of 'Miracle Millets' through the grand celebration of International Year of Millets - 2023.

Millets are also an integral part of the G-20 meetings and delegates will be given a true millet experience through tasting, meeting farmers and interactive sessions with start-ups and FPOs.

The spirit of the whole of government approach is truly being seen in the celebration of the International Year of Millets 2023.

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