

ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY

(Accredited with “A+” Grade by NAAC (CGPA:3.64) in the Third Cycle & Graded as Category-I University and
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KARAIKUDI - 630 003

Date: 22-04-2019

Under the “Distinguished Lecture Series” sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs, Shri Suresh K.Goel, Former Indian Ambassador to Lao People’s Democratic Republic, delivered a special lecture on the topic “Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam, The Source of India’s Cultural Diplomacy” at Alagappa University, Karaikudi on 22.04.2019.



Presiding over the programme Prof. N.Rajendran, Vice-Chancellor, Alagappa University said that Cultural Diplomacy is recognised as an important instrument of foreign policy in establishing broader international linkages among peoples and countries. The role of diplomat in today’s world is very crucial and he should have a deeper understanding and knowledge about the civilization and culture of the countries besides a thorough grasp of the foreign policy of the nation. In a world fragmented by strife and terrorism, the practice of the ideal of Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam is very essential for maintaining peace, harmony and inter-connectedness of the world for the progress of humanity. Today the foreign policy has changed and the cultural diplomacy is given importance and it is playing a major role in strengthening the ties between countries. India has signed 126 bilateral cultural agreements and is implementing 58 cultural exchange programmes with other countries. Culture is indeed a significant aspect of foreign policy and India has all along been giving a prime place to promote culture. Foreign policies of various countries based on wars have disappeared after the war, but the policies based on culture will have a permanent and deeper impact and the countries have understood the importance of cultural diplomacy.

Shri. Suresh K.Goel, Former Indian Ambassador to Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Former Director General – Indian Council for Cultural Relations (*ICCR*), New Delhi in his special address described Cultural Diplomacy as the civilizational gift of India to the world much like zero or the concept of infinity. “The concept of the cultural diplomacy is that the cultural inclusiveness should become central to the global dialogue so that different identities do not interrupt the international order but interact with each other and aggregate into a common idea to encourage a dialogue in a non-intrusive and non-competitive manner to ensure transformation of the current chaotic order into an actively connected global world in which human interests and the idea of a world as family drive the global forces” he added. He further said that the idea of organising cultural performances and festivals abroad is not just to project Indian culture but to encourage interaction between the Indian cultural ideas and the local cultures. Indian Cultural Centres established abroad aim at creating the cultural dialogues between the countries.

He observed that the human civilisation is not static. “With evolution of human race and rapid technological revolution new ideas and new structures take shape. Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber are all as much a reality today as they were part of mythological imaginations yesterday. They need to find expression in the cultural dialogue today. Youth is not just participant in today’s conversations. He is the initiator and creator of this phenomenon”. He concluded his speech by saying that “cultural diplomacy can create a huge platform for the success of our traditional diplomacy. At the same time, caution needs to be exercised since it does not substitute the hard core negotiations for competitive national interests”.

In an interactive session that followed the lecture programme Shri. Suresh K. Goel provided interesting answers to a series of questions posed by the students on India’s foreign policies and other related matters. Earlier he declared open a mini library established at the official residence of the Vice-Chancellor.

Members of the Syndicate, Deans of various Faculties, Teaching and Non-teaching staff and students participated in the programme.

Prof. H. Gurumallesh Prabu, Registrar, welcomed the gathering and Prof. K. Uthayasuriyan, Controller of Examinations, proposed a vote of thanks.

Prof.H.Gurumallesh Prabu
REGISTRAR