

Indian Council for Cultural Relations

Azad Bhavan, New Delhi

Press Release

**Unveiling of Portrait of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji
at ICCR headquarters**

ICCR is organizing an event in the memory of late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, former Prime Minister of India on 16 August, 2020 by unveiling Shri Vajpayee's portrait at ICCR premises. The event is being organized on Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji's 2nd death anniversary remembering him and his contributions towards the building of Nation.

The event on 16 August will commence with the unveiling of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji's painting by Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Hon'ble President of India in a virtual mode in the presence of Shri V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs and Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President of ICCR and Member of Parliament. The painting has been created in oil-on-canvas by Shri Vasudeo Kamath, an eminent and well-known painter in Mumbai, a gold medalist who has received several awards both nationally and internationally.

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee served as the ex-officio President of ICCR from March 1977 to August 1979 when he was Foreign Minister in the post-Emergency Janata government. During his tenure as Foreign Minister, Vajpayee ji became the first person in 1977 to deliver a speech to the United Nations General Assembly in Hindi. It was his vision and guidance which saw ICCR further expand and propagate Indian culture worldwide.

As Member of Parliament, as Minister of External Affairs and finally as Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee left a distinguishing and lasting impression on ICCR's activities.

ICCR was established on 9 April 1950 to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India's external cultural relations; to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries and to promote cultural exchanges with other foreign countries and people. ICCR has 19 Regional Offices in various states in India and 38 Cultural Centres abroad to implement its programme globally. Over the years, ICCR has grown in size and its activities, and is today the Cultural Diplomacy arm of the Ministry of External Affairs with a mandate to project India's soft power abroad.
