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Press Release

India, Italy share a similar vision, can be leading Soft Power players: Italian Ambassador



Thiruvananthapuram, Feb. 16: India and Italy share a similar vision on global affairs based on peace and the two countries can be leading players in the international soft power, Italy's Ambassador to India Vincenzo de Luca said here on Friday.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message that 'Now is a time for peace' against the backdrop of a difficult geopolitical situation was the cornerstone of the successful G20 summit," the Ambassador said while interacting with media during the two-day annual conference of the Soft Power Club at Technopark here.

He pointed out that Italy and India are enjoying a period of the best relationship as illustrated by two summits between Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni last year.

The strategic partnership enables the two countries to work together not just in hard power areas like defence and cyber security, but also in soft power areas like heritage, contemporary art, innovation and technology, de Luca said.

Italy and India are among the top countries when it comes to tangible heritage listings on the Unesco list. "Soft power does not mean promoting only one culture. It means creating a bridge between culture, vision, ideas and principles of different societies," de Luca said.



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Francesco Rutelli, former mayor of Rome who went on to become deputy prime minister of Italy in 2006, founded the Soft Power Club in 2020 to define inclusive messages and place itself as a forum for effective multilateralism.

Speaking at the occasion, Rutelli underlined the increasing role of India in global affairs.

“India's soft power would be decisive as in the near future, no multilateral agreement can be done without India's contribution,” he said.

“Kerala is the best place to illustrate soft power of India, for both historical and contemporary reasons, for technological and digital innovation,” said Rutelli.

Chairing the media session, G20 Sherpa Amithabh Kant said the Sherpa meeting held at Kumarakom last year ahead of the G20 summit was a great success.

He revealed that soon after that the Italian ambassador got in touch with him and proposed the annual meeting of the Soft Power Club be held in Kerala. The state Tourism Department readily agreed and Kant expressed his happiness at the swift response from the Kerala authorities.

Indicating the key role Kerala plays in such fields, Sanjeev Sanyal, Member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, said Kerala artisans are playing a lead role in an international heritage project that is meant to showcase India's soft power globally.

A stitch ship – a wooden maritime vessel made without iron nails – is currently being built in Goa and the construction of the 20-metre-long vessel is led by artisans from Beypore, captained by Babu Sankaran.

It is being made with the help of the Indian Navy and Ministry of Culture to document the ancient technology that is dying out.

The ship is expected to sail by the end of 2025 to Oman on its maiden journey and later to Bali. The inspiration for the boat came from a 15th-century painting in the Ajanta Caves, said Sanyal.

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