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New Delhi, Oct 31 (PTI) Pune social entrepreneur Vidhya Parshuramkar has bagged the fourth Rohini Nayyar Prize for her contribution in making nutrition more accessible, sustainable and community-driven. The prize, instituted in 2022 in memory of former economist, bureaucrat and Padma Shri Dr Rohini Nayyar, comes with a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh, a [...]

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The prize, instituted in 2022 in memory of former economist, bureaucrat and Padma Shri Dr Rohini Nayyar, comes with a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh, a citation and a trophy.

The 24-year-old Parshuramkar, who is the first woman to bag the recognition, received the award from S Mahendra Dev, Chairman, Economic, Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, at a ceremony here on Friday.

“I am a farmer’s daughter and I was anaemic myself. So, as a food technologist, the inspiration to address the issue and use scientific innovation to transform traditional foods into modern nutritional solutions,” she said while accepting the award.

Parshuramkar leads Agrozee Organics and its flagship initiative, Millets Now, which is guided by a vision to make nutrition accessible, sustainable and community-driven.

An MTech in Food Technology from IIT, Kharagpur, she discovered early in her journey how scientific innovation can transform traditional foods into modern nutritional solutions.

“I wanted to go beyond feeding people to cultivating healthy eating habits and creating brighter, more resilient communities. For me, food is not just about products, but about people-farmers, children and rural families coming together to build a healthier tomorrow,” she said.

Agrozee produces biofortified, ready-to-eat millet products designed to combat malnutrition and iron deficiency anaemia. Through the Nutri Dabba programme, Parshuramkar and her team address nutritional deficiencies among school children by combining sustainable agriculture with community health.

Their initiative delivers nutritious millet-based snacks to schools, empowers women-led self-help groups (SHGs) and supports over 7,000 smallholder farmers, strengthening both livelihoods and food security.

The Rohini Nayyar Prize has been instituted by the family of Rohini Nayyar, an eminent scholar-administrator who spent much of her professional life working on issues related to rural development in India.

The prize is given out annually by the Nayyar Foundation for Social and Economic Purpose, set up by her family, to contribute to social and economic development in India.

The previous winners of the prize are Sethrichem Sangtam from Nagaland (2022), Dinanath Rajput from Chhattisgarh (2023) and Anil Pradhan from Odisha in 2024.

The Directors of the Foundation are Deepak Nayyar, Emeritus Professor of Economics, JNU and former Vice Chancellor, Delhi University; Dhiraj Nayyar, Director, Economics and Policy and Senior Vice President, Vedanta Limited; and Gaurav Nayyar, Lead Economist, World Bank.

“The prize has received great attention in civil society. When we began thinking about the prize, we were somewhat hesitant to contribute in stipulating that candidates must be less than 40 years of age. But this idea was in conformity with Rohini’s commitment to nurture young people, for she believed that what they did would shape our future,” Deepak Nayyar said at the event. PTI GJS GJS KSS KSS

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