The S.T. Lee Endowed Lecture Series

Dr. Seng Tee Lee | Donor

India-U.S. Relations

Her Excellency Nirupama Rao
The Ambassador of India

Saturday | October 19, 2013 | 5:30pm
John E. Simon Hall | May Auditorium
The S.T. Lee Endowed Lecture

Created in 2009, The S.T. Lee Endowed Lecture Series offers unique opportunities for students at Washington University to learn about issues of global leadership. The series has been made possible by a generous gift from Dr. Seng Tee Lee, through his establishment of The S.T. Lee Endowed Lecture Fund to the McDonnell International Scholars Academy. The series hosts distinguished guest speakers in business, academia, government, and the nonprofit sector from around the world.

PROGRAM

5:30pm  INTRODUCTION
Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton

5:45pm  LECTURE
Her Excellency Nirupama Rao
“India-US Relations”
Simon Hall | May Auditorium

6:30pm  RECEPTION
Simon Hall | Lopata Courtyard
Mrs. Nirupama Rao assumed her responsibilities as ambassador of India to the United States in September 2011. On completion of her university studies, and with an M.A. in English Literature, she joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1973. In a diplomatic career spanning over three decades, she served in various world capitals, including Washington, Beijing and Moscow. 

She acquired extensive experience in India-China relations, having served in the East Asia Division of the Ministry at policy-level capacities for several years, and later serving as India’s first woman ambassador to China from 2006 to 2009. Her other ambassadorial assignments include Peru and Bolivia, and Sri Lanka (where also she was India’s first woman high commissioner). Mrs. Rao has served previously in Washington in the capacity of minister for press and cultural affairs at the Indian Embassy from 1993 to 1995. She has also served in Moscow as deputy chief of mission at her country’s embassy there, in the late nineties. On return to New Delhi, she was designated as spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2001, the first woman Indian Foreign Service officer to hold this post.

On completion of her ambassadorial tenures in Sri Lanka and in China, she was appointed foreign secretary, the highest office in the Indian Foreign Service, where she served a two-year term until July 2011. Ambassador Rao was a fellow at the Centre for International Affairs (now the Weatherhead Centre) at Harvard University in the early 1990s. She was also a distinguished international executive in residence at the University of Maryland at College Park in 1999-2000. Ambassador Rao was conferred the degree of doctor of letters (honoris causa) by Pondicherry University at its Annual Convocation on May 19, 2012.

Ambassador Rao is married to Sudhakar Rao, a distinguished civil servant and former member of the Indian Administrative Service who retired as the chief secretary of the State Government of Karnataka. They have two sons, Nikhilish and Kartikeya.
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