

India is 'Spiritual Capital' of world: Chief Justice

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Justice of High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice Pankaj Mithal, on Sunday said that India has a distinction of being called as the 'Spiritual Capital' of the world.

"India's cultural milieu is the cosmos of pure spirituality which discourages distinguishing humans on the basis of religion", Chief Justice maintained.

The Chief Justice remarked this during an event themed 'Dharma and The Constitution of India' organized by a Delhi based organization Adhikta Parishad, J&K and Ladakh chapter to commemorate the 72nd Constitution Day.

The function was also attended by Advocate General, DC Raina and Additional Solicitor General of J&K High Court and dozens of other advocates and legal luminaries.

In his keynote address,

Army felicitates J&K youth for saving woman from drowning in Chenab

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JAMMU: A Jammu and Kashmir youth was on Sunday felicitated by the army for saving a woman from drowning in Ramban district, a defence spokesman said.

Mehrak Ahmed of Karol village, who is in his 20s, risked his own life by jumping into the Chenab river to save the woman, who was not known to him, on December 2, the spokesman said. He said the man exhibited exemplary courage and swimming skills.

"Without caring for his own life, in a herculean effort of 20 minutes, he could save the girl. Though he had no formal training in swimming, the brave boy did not hesitate before diving in the deep river while many onlookers watched helplessly," the spokesman said. He said the man showed exemplary presence of mind, fearlessness and excellent swimming skills to save the drowning woman. The army felicitated Mehrak at Chanderkot in Ramban in recognition of his act of bravery, the spokesman said, adding his selfless service would remain a source of inspiration for people.

NC pays tribute to party founder Sheikh Abdullah on birth anniversary

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JAMMU: National Conference leaders and workers paid homage to party founder Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, popularly known as 'Sher-e-Kashmir' on his 116th birth anniversary on Sunday, an NC spokesman said.

Leading the party in paying homage to Sheikh Abdullah at the NC headquarters here, provincial president Rattan Lal Gupta said "maintaining the unity and single entity of Jammu and Kashmir will be a befitting tribute to the visionary leader", who fought all his life for well-being of the people and strengthening the bonds of communal amity.

Gupta stressed the crucial need for strengthening and sustaining the time-tested unity, saying no society would progress if its foundations are laid on myopic considerations.

"Secular bonding is the spirit which has all along guided the National Conference," Gupta said as he recalled the slogan of "Hindu, Muslim, Sikh Ittehad (unity) raised by Sheikh Sahib during most turbulent times".

The NC leader said the high point of Abdullah's legacy has been inclusiveness, trans-



Chief Justice of High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice Pankaj Mithal speaking at an event.

Justice Mithal maintained that our endeavor should be to exercise the fundamental duties instead for asking the rights only. He said that religion is synonymous to righteousness and every religion leads to the moral conduct in life. He further defined that religious scriptures acted as a guiding principle in discerning the right from wrong and codal law also enshrines same in it. He asked for for-

mulating laws as per the needs of the society and not after looking up to the west.

Justice Mithal mentioned that Vedas constitute the law of nature and it is morality and good conduct that makes one religious. Elaborating, he said that both the Mahabharata and 'Ahimsa' of Gautam Buddha convinces people to adopt highest articles of faith and virtue. He said that since times imme-

morial under every rule Indian people have upheld the sacred beliefs of spirituality without interfering in personal articles of faith of other individuals.

He said that this secularism has continuously been carried to this day by our nation in its true spirit although the words were added to our Constitution later through an amendment. Advocate General said that religion has not been side-

lined by our constitution instead it has preserved its exercise by people from every sect. He said that Articles 14, 19, 21, 25-29 gives us insights about religious guarantees in our Constitution.

He said that India has the most flexible Constitution that has preserved sensitivities of all peoples of this nation. He said that it is for this fact that it has been amended more than 100 times till now despite being the most voluminous and elaborate one. He said that the Ayodhya verdict, Shah Bano Case, Triple Talaq, Vaishno Devi Temple issue are some of the striking examples where Constitution guided us towards respectable solutions.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Additional Solicitor General of India (ASGI), Srinagar, Tahir Shamsi; ASGI, Jammu, Vikas Sharma and other office bearers of the Adhikta Parishad.

Shahid reviews tribal welfare projects, new schemes

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JAMMU: Secretary, Tribal Affairs, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary on Sunday reviewed the progress on various projects, schemes and initiatives of the department and stressed for expediting the tendering and execution process. A number of new schemes were also deliberated upon.

Director, Tribal Affairs, Mushir Ahmed Mirza, Secretary, Advisory Board, Mukhtar Ahmed, Jt Director Planning, OSDS, senior officers of the department while Deputy Commissioners of various districts along with district and sectoral officers participated through videoconferencing.

Detailed review of villages selected under the Cluster Tribal Model Villages was conducted under which nearly Rs 80.00 Cr have been released by the department for development of infrastructure in various tribal villages in different districts. Sectoral officers were asked to ensure adherence to timelines for execution of works and tangible outcome.

Progress on Milk Villages and mini Sheep Farms being executed through Animal and Sheep Husbandry Department was also reviewed.

Dr Shahid asked the Deputy Commissioners and district/ sectoral officers for active involvement of local stakeholders in the tribal villages and ensuring time-bound execution of projects during current financial year. He also asked for convening of District Planning and Monitoring Committee (DPMC) for formulation of Annual Plan 2022-23 and submission by 15th December in view of ongoing process for budget formulation. Scholarship

schemes, FRA implementation and tribal survey were also deliberated upon.

Department's scheme for post-matric/ graduate scholarship was reviewed under which record number of 8189 applications have been received up from previous highest of around 4200 applications.

Director, Tribal Affairs has been asked to initiate the coordination for institute and district verification process for timely disbursement of scholarship before the end of financial year.

Further, CEOs have been asked to submit compiled list of pre-matric applications latest by 10th December 2021. Pertinently, budget of Rs

30.00 Cr has been provided by the Government of scholarships this year and additional grant will be provided based on requirement.

Steps for implementation of Van Dhan Scheme were also discussed under which each cluster of 15 SHGs is being provided Rs. 15 Lakh. Technical teams are being deputed for community engagement.

Under the tourism plan SHGs of 10 members each are being constituted for providing Rs. 20 Lakh worth infrastructure to create tourist village for Transhumant summer destinations.

Skill Development Plan and Self-Employment initiatives were also discussed in the meeting.

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