

Qutab Minar is 'Vishnu Stambh' build on a temple of Vishnu: VHP leader

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) Sunday claimed that the Qutab Minar was a 'Vishnu Stambh' before some of its portions were reconstructed by a Muslim ruler and renamed as Quwwat-ul-Islam.

VHP national spokesperson Vinod Bansal claimed that the 73-metre-high structure was built on a temple of lord Vishnu constructed during the times of a Hindu ruler.

"When the Muslim ruler came, some of its portions were reconstructed with the materials obtained after demolishing 27 Hindu-Jain temples, and renamed as Quwwat-ul-Islam (Might of Islam)," Bansal claimed, speaking to PTI.

He claimed that Muslim rulers made multiple efforts to rebuild some of the top floors that they had "damaged", but they could not restore it.

Warring as the party's new Punjab chief in place of Navjot Singh Sidhu, and former Rajya Sabha member Pratap Singh Bajwa as the Congress Legislature Party leader.

Sidhu was asked to tender his resignation after the party's debacle in the recent Assembly elections in Punjab.

Sonia Gandhi had also appointed former minister Bharat Bhushan Ashu as the Working President of Punjab Congress and SC leader Raj Kumar Chabbewal as deputy CLP leader in the state assembly.

The Congress received a drubbing in the Punjab assembly polls, winning only 18 seats, as the Aam Aadmi Party stormed to power bagging 92 of the 117 Assembly segments.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi Saturday appointed

"One can see a clear difference in the structure of the first three floors of the tower and the remaining floors towards the top. These floors were superimposed by them as they (Muslim rulers) just wanted to showcase the dominance of Islam," he claimed.

"The idols are currently placed at the most disrespectful place, upside down at the feet level of visitors. The idols should either be removed or placed respectfully inside the Qutub complex," he had told PTI.

Vijay also said that he had raised the issue with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) over a year ago but was yet to receive a response to his letter.

VHP spokesperson Bansal said, "Tarun Vijay ji has raised the issue with the ASI... We hope that the government and its concerned departments do a serious pondering over the issue and restore the honour of the Hindu society."

When asked about the VHP's future course of action on the issue, he said the matter will be discussed by senior leaders and "if the

demands came after a group of VHP leaders, including Bansal, visited the compound of the monument, which was designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1993.

National Monument Authority (NMA) chairman and BJP leader Tarun Vijay

had on Thursday said that Ganesh idols were placed "disrespectfully" in the Qutab Minar complex.

"The website states, "An inscription over its eastern gate provocatively informs that it was built with material obtained from demolishing '27 Hindu temples'."

An advisory body which carried out an evaluation of the monument for its inscription in 1992 had noted that the building of the Quwwatul-Islam congregational mosque had begun in 1192 by Qutubuddin Aibak and completed in 1198, "using the demolished remains of Hindu temples", it said.

"It was enlarged by Iltutmish (1211-36 AD) and again by Alauddin Khilji

need arises, we may also consider taking a legal course of action."

According to the Delhi Tourism website, the Qutab Minar was built with materials obtained after demolishing 27 Hindu temples at the site after the defeat of Delhi's last Hindu kingdom.

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The report also noted the iron pillar in the mosque compound was brought from elsewhere in India.

"It bears a 4th century AD Sanskrit inscription describing the exploits of a ruler named Chandra, believed to be the Gupta king Chandragupta II (375-413)," it says.

(1296-1316 AD). The Qutub Minar was also begun by Qutubuddin Aibak, in around 1202 and completed by his successor, Muhammad-bin-Sam," read the advisory body evaluation uploaded on the website of UNESCO world heritage sites. "It was damaged by lightning in 1326 and again in 1368 AD, and was repaired by the rulers of the day, Muhammad-bin-Tughluq (1325-51 AD) and Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351-88 AD). In 1503 AD Sikandar Lodi carried out some restoration and enlargement of the upper storeys," it notes.

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CHENNAI: Union Minister L Murugan on Sunday said India is poised to become one of the major destinations of animation and visual effects in the world as talents galore in the country.

Addressing an event here, the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting said India was producing the highest number of films, providing "bread and butter" to millions of people in the country.

"Our government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi acknowledges the contribution of the film industry and has taken several policy decisions...," he said at the valedictory session of the two-day conference Dakshin -- South India Media and Entertainment Summit organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Southern Region.

Murugan pointed out that several south Indian films like 'Baahubali', 'Pushpa' and the recently released 'RRR' have received worldwide attention.

"In this era, content is King, and language is no barrier. There is huge opportunity, go and grab it. I will be happy to engage with you all to work collaboratively and collectively", he added.

Earlier, veteran actor and South India Artiste

Association (SIAA) President Nasser urged the Union Minister to reduce the TDS (tax deducted at source) for film industry as several low budget film makers were affected.

"Of the 1,000 movies being made, only 100 are big budget films, while others are low budget. The TDS deducted earlier was 10 per cent and was reduced to 1.5 per cent but now it has been revised again to 10 per cent," he said seeking the intervention of the Union Minister.

Actor and Film Employees Federation of South India (FEFSI), President RK Selvamani also demanded that the Centre accord industry status to the sector.

On the occasion, Double Oscar winner A R Rahman was honoured with the Icon award by Murugan. The award instituted by CII was presented to him for his contribution to the film and music industry.

TN men beat Punjab to win national Basketball title; Railways tops in women's section

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu defeated defending champion Punjab 87-69 in the final to win the men's title in the 71st Senior National Basketball Championship here on Sunday.

The formidable Indian Railways team won the women's title, beating Telangana 131-82 in convincing fashion, riding on Poonam Chaturvedi's 26 points.

In the men's summit clash, Tamil Nadu pulled ahead after a slow start when Punjab kept pace and never looked back. At half-time, the host had widened the lead to 17 with a 50-33 score line.

A Aravind with 26 points and M Arvind Kumar (21) were in fine nick for the home team as they stamped their authority against their arch-rival.

Results: Men: Final: Tamil Nadu 87 (A Aravind 26, M Arvind Kumar 21, P Jeevanantham 14, Muin Bek 12) beat Punjab 69 (Amiyot Singh 33, Amritpal Singh 12).

3rd-4th place: Karnataka 96 (Abhishek Gowda 29, Shashank J Rai 28, Anil Kumar 25) beat Indian Railways 79 (Sahil 15, Kamran Khan 15).

Women: Final: Indian Railways 131 (Poonam Chaturvedi 26, Dharshini T 19, Pushpa 19, Madhu Kumari 16) beat Telangana 82 (Anbarasi 20, Priyanka P 20, Aswathy S Thampi 18).

3rd-4th place: Tamil Nadu 82 (Parthipa Priya 19, S Rajeshwari 16) beat Kerala 70 (Aneesa Cleetus 23, Stephy Nixon).

One-stop centres in NE to receive active support from Centre: Irani

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GUWAHATI: Anganwadis and one-stop centres across the Northeast region will receive active support from the Centre to ensure that geographical and logistical challenges are met expeditiously. Union minister Smriti Irani said here on Sunday.

Speaking about the one-stop centres, the Union Women and Child Development Minister said that collaborative effort is taken up in those facilities where various branches of government come together to ensure that police, psychosocial and legal counsellors under one roof provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces in a phased manner.

Three hundred more such centres will be opened in the country, the minister said.

In the past three years, 70 lakh women have received support from the government in collaboration with women's helplines across the country.

Chairing a zonal conference of all Northeastern states, she discussed various developmental schemes initiated by her

ministry.

Participants from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Sikkim and Nagaland attended the event.

In her address, Irani also highlighted the details of 'Poshan Abhiyan' and other initiatives of the Ministry.

'Poshan Abhiyan' or the National Nutrition Mission is a Central government programme launched with the aim of reducing the levels of stunting, undernutrition, anaemia and low birth weight in children.

The minister said that improving nutrition among women and children has transformed into a 'Jan Andolan' (people's movement) today.

Praising the efforts of various stakeholders for their contribution, she said that addressing the issues of health and nutrition of women and children has been possible because of their cooperation and support.

On the other initiatives, Irani said that there are around 25 crore women benefiting from Jan-Dhan Yojana, while 68 per cent of the beneficiaries of Mudra Yojana are women and

80 per cent of the beneficiaries of Stand-Up India are women.

Union Minister of State for Women and Child Development Munjpara Mahendrabhai Kalubhai highlighted the three major umbrella schemes of the Ministry -- Mission Poshan, Mission Shakti and Mission Vatsalya.

Mission Shakti comprises policies and schemes for protection and empowerment of women such as one-stop centre, mahila police volunteer, women's helpline, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.

The objective of Mission Vatsalya is to secure a healthy and happy childhood for every child in India, foster a sensitive, supportive and synchronised ecosystem for development of children, and assist States/UTs in delivering the mandate of Juvenile Justice Act 2015.

Referring to the zonal conferences held in different states, he said that the Central government is focusing on empowerment of women through various schemes and the objective of these zonal conferences is to sensitise local governments on the three flagship schemes.

25 appointments being made in Debt Recovery Tribunals, AG tells SC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Attorney General K K Venugopal has informed the Supreme Court that all vacant posts of judicial members in the Debt Recovery Tribunals in the country have been filled up as the selection committee has recommended 25 names for appointment.

The apex court has been expressing unhappiness over the non-filling of posts in tribunals across nation.

As on August 5 last year, there were 19 vacancies for presiding officers followed by 110 and 111 unfilled positions of judicial and technical members respectively in 15 types of quasi-judicial bodies ranging from the Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs) to the National Company Law Tribunals in the country.

According to records, in DRTs, which were set up to recover bad loans of banks, there are 15 posts presiding officers are vacant in the country as on August, 2021.

Venugopal, in February this year, had said the Centre was working on it and the vacancies in most of the tribunals were filled except in the

National Green Tribunal, Central Administrative Tribunal and some Armed Forces Tribunals (AFTs).

The top law officer on Friday told a bench of justices L Nageswara Rao and B R Gavai that now appointments of the DRT members to the vacant posts are complete.

The Selection Committee has recommended 25 names for all the vacancies and the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet had accepted all the names recommended in two tranches, he said.

The first list comprised 18 members who have already joined and for the rest seven names, which were there in the second list, the appointment letters have been issued.

The top court was hearing a plea of the DRT Bar Association of Delhi, challenging the provisions of the Tribunal, Appellate Tribunal and other Authorities (Qualifications, Experience, and other Conditions of Service of Members) (Amendment) Rules, 2021 relating to the appointment of advocates from being considered for appointment in DRTs and DRATs.