

**GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
ITANAGAR**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Governor graces the Indigenous Faith Day celebration at Itanagar**

Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Lt. Gen (Retd) Nirbhay Sharma graced the Indigenous Faith Day celebration as Chief Guest at Indira Gandhi, Itanagar on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor said that Arunachal Pradesh is a cultural mosaic of different indigenous faiths, practices followers of Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity and other religions. The State is home to 26 tribes, more than 100 sub-tribes, different faiths and is truly a Mini India. Celebrations like the Indigenous Faith Day provide opportunity for better understanding of different faiths of the State and motivate all, for honest and positive engagement between people from different faiths and belief. He added that celebration will also reinforce the distinctive Indian cultural characteristic of 'Unity in Diversity'.

Addressing a huge gathering Governor called upon the people of the State to preserve their own culture as it gives them an individual the identity of their own. Stating that language is the critical factor in preserving the culture and preservation of language in the world of globalisation is a major challenge in promoting and maintaining cultural identity, he advised the parents to speak with their children in the mother tongue. Conveying his appreciation for documentation and codification of indigenous language of the State, Governor suggested that the indigenous people should develop books, Lullabys, folk tales and multimedia for the children in their own language and devise reward system to make learning mother language competitive amongst children. One of the best ways would be listening to songs in the mother tongue, he added.

Governor appealed to the tribal communities to create consciousness and awareness about the religious practices, reasoning and linkages to other indigenous faiths. He said that indigenous people of the world possess an immense knowledge of their environments, based on centuries of living close to nature. Living in and from the richness and variety of complex ecosystems, they have an understanding of the properties of plants and animals, the functioning of ecosystems and the techniques for using and managing them that is particular and often detailed. This traditional knowledge is based on teachings and experiences passed on from generation to generation. It is holistic and cannot be compartmentalized and cannot be separated from the people who hold it. It is a way of life. This traditional wisdom of our elders, in every sphere, agriculture, craftsmanship, synchrony with mother earth should be documented and preserved.

Underscoring the important role of institution of priests in preservation of indigenous faiths, Governor called for streamlining the institution amongst the indigenous faiths group and ensuring that access to these institution and the remedies offered by them are rational, scientific and affordable.

Reiterating that youth are the future of the country, Governor said that they are the one, who have the responsibility to carry forward the rich cultural heritage. He said that their energy and dynamism need to be channelized in preserving our treasured indigenous cultural heritage. Quoting Jamaican Politician Marcus Garvey, who said that people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots, Governor said that the youth have to be convinced that their identity lies in the strength of the cultural uniqueness and distinctiveness.

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, who said that No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive, Governor advised that indigenous people that they should embrace development and inculcate scientific spirit. Effort must be there to create a pan humanistic approach and outlook for indigenous faiths.

Stating that preservation of one's own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures, Governor advised all for peace and harmony in the society. He also called for an all faiths' centre in the Capital, where all the religions can practise their own faith.

Governor congratulated members of Indigenous Faith and Cultural Society of Arunachal Pradesh, who have been working tirelessly in preserving the cultural identity of every indigenous faith of the State. Governor also paid tribute to Golgi Bote Late Talom Rukbo, founder of the indigenous movement on the occasion.

Guest of Honour Tamiyo Taga, MLA said that indigenous people has huge responsible in preservation of their own culture. He urged upon the people for peaceful coexistence and to develop their own faith.

Special guest of the occasion and advocates of preservation of indigenous culture and faiths in America and Canada, Sequoyah Trueblood, internationally respected Native American Elder, healer, ceremonialist and teacher, appealed to the indigenous communities not to let anyone take them away from where they belongs to. Stressing on preserving their environment along with their culture, he said that if they take care of their land, she will take care of them.

Earlier, IFCSAP President Y.D. Thongchi in his key note address briefed the people on the celebration. He thanked the State Government for declaring the day as gazetted holiday. Thonchi said that for the first time Indigenous Faith Day is observed all over the State on the day. Stating that all religion is equal and culture is inherent part of the faith and religion, he urged upon all the believers of indigenous faith to strive forward to protect, preserve and promote their own faith.

President of IFCSAP declared Dr. Tai Nyori as the recipient of IFCSAP Ratna Award 2013. The award, which carries a citation, a shield and cash amount of Rs. One lakh will be presented to Dr. Nyori on the IFCSAP foundation day on 28<sup>th</sup> December. IFCSAP Secretary also spoke on the occasion.

The daylong celebration started with prayer song by Kargu Gamgi, Naharlagun, which was followed by lighting of inaugural lamp by the Chief Guest. A colourful cultural programme, depicting the cultural mosaic of Arunachal Pradesh was presented on the occasion by artists and children from different parts of Capital complex. School band of Government Higher Secondary School, Tezu, which has been selected for next year's Republic Day celebration presented a synchronised band display. As part of the programme Governor gave way the certificates to priests.

PRO to Governor  
Arunachal Pradesh  
ITANAGAR, December 1, 2013