

Conservation, Culture and Community Participation Mark Second Day of Black-Necked Crane Festival

Tsokar, Changthang, August 12: The second day of the Nation's First Black-Necked Crane Festival of Ladakh, was organised under the theme "Celebrating the World's Only Alpine Crane," featured conservation, cultural and community activities at the Tsokar Ramsar Site.

The programme was organised by the Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment, UT Ladakh in collaboration with Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC), Leh,

The program was attended by Shri S. Rajesh, IFS, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (APCCF) and Chief Wildlife Warden, UT Ladakh; Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena, Founder, MIMC; Rinpochoy Jigmet Yashi, Karzok; and Shri Vishal V. Surve, IFS, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Leh, besides other dignitaries and participants.

The community members set up traditional stalls showcasing the rich cultural heritage, customs, traditions, handicrafts and local products of Changthang. The stalls provided visitors an opportunity to experience the region's traditional way of life and learn about the close connection between local communities, their culture and the natural environment.

Shri S. Rajesh, IFS, along with other dignitaries, visited the stalls and interacted with students, artisans and community members. He appreciated the efforts to promote awareness about the Black-Necked Crane, wetland conservation and community participation through nature based entrepreneurship.

Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena highlighted the importance of strengthening the relationship between people, culture and nature, and encouraged collective efforts towards environmental conservation.

The programme included the "Meet the Black-Necked Crane" activity, Community Knowledge Circle, Art for Conservation and Students' Nature Camp featuring a Bird Race, Bird Treasure Hunt and Painting Competition. Members of the Bird Watching Club also participated in bird-watching and nature-based activities, encouraging greater appreciation of Ladakh's rich avian diversity by the festival guests.

Adding a cultural dimension, students of MIMC Leh and students from Bhutan presented a Black-Necked Crane-themed dance performance, conveying a message of conservation through cultural expression.

Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena also presented mementos to Shri S. Rajesh, IFS, and other officers and dignitaries.

The programme was also attended by Dr. Rinchen Chosdon, CMO Leh, Shri Deskyong Namgyal, Range Officer, Khaltsi; Stanzin Gelik, Range Officer, Durbuk; officers and officials, local residents, students, visitors, Indian Army personnel, a medical team and members of Bird Watching Clubs.

