



*Jehlum Post News/Srinagar/March 31, 2015/Minister for Finance, Culture and Employment, Dr. Haseeb Ahmad Drabu Tuesday urged all the stakeholders to defend their ethnicity and culture. The Minister was speaking on the inaugural function of 3-day International Conference on "Literary Legacy of Indo-Central Asia, Afghanistan and Iran" held at University of Kashmir*

*in collaboration with Bedil International Foundation, New Delhi. The Minister for Finance, Dr. Haseeb Ahmad Drabu was the chief guest while as Ambassador of Turkmenistan in India, Mr. Parakhat H. Durdyev was guest of honour. Dr. Drabu said that Kashmir has a rich and fascinating cultural heritage which needs to be revived and promoted for posterity. He underlined the need for saving the losses occurring to culture and language by regular modernization and other allied things. The Minister said that Central Asian countries including Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan subsumed their rich cultural ethos. He said that since Kashmir's and Central Asian countries share many cultural similarities and both need to make joint effort to preserve and promote their rich cultural heritage. He called for encouraging people to people contact between these countries to exchange the richness of culture and language. Dr. Drabu lamented the loss of ethnic and cultural moorings of Kashmiris who are losing a bit of their culture every day by being driven by hunger for modernizing their everyday life. He said that we are fast losing our language and culture which is our identity as an ethnic group and great nations never sacrifice their culture at the altar of trends. The function was attended by various renowned dignitaries of neighbouring countries and other states of the country, besides a galaxy of scholars, social scientists and intellectuals. The welcome address was delivered by Director of Centre of Central Asian Studies (CCAS), Prof. G. N. Khaki, while key note address was delivered by former Vice Chancellor Az-Zahra University, Iran, Prof. Hakimeh Dabiran besides Presidential remarks were given by Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Mohammad Ashraf Wani and special address were given by Director Academy Sciences, Tajikistan, Prof. Mirzo Mulloahmad and Chairman Bedil International Foundation, New Delhi, Mr. Mohammad Shafi Pandit. Later, the Minister released four books regarding Central Asian Studies.*