

Justice A. P. Shah to inaugurate seminar on *Strengthening Democracy: Role of Judiciary at The International Centre Goa*

Former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court and Madras High Court, Justice Ajit Prakash Shah will inaugurate the seminar on '**Strengthening Democracy: Role of Judiciary**' on Saturday, 13th November 2010 at The International Centre Goa – Dona Paula. Justice Shah will deliver the Keynote Address on Accountability v/s Independence of Judiciary. The two-day seminar is organised by The International Centre Goa, Media Information and Communication Centre of India & Friedrich Ebert Foundation - India in association with the Goa High Court Bar Association.

Justice Shah is known for bold rulings, especially his testimonial judgment on Judges' assets case where in he declared that it is essential for the larger interest of people that judges of high courts and Supreme Court should declare their assets. His judgment on gay issue will always get a place in the annals of Indian Law. As the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court in the Naz Foundation case, the central government, which had opposed the argument for decriminalizing S377 of the IPC, accepted the High Court's reasoning decriminalizing adult same sex consensual sex. He has been a stalwart in putting constitution and social-economic values above all. A liberal judge, Shah showed sensitivity towards the socio-economically under privileged.

Justice Shah did his graduation from Solapur and went on to the Government Law College, Mumbai for his law degree. After a short span of practice at the District Court in Solapur, he shifted to the Bombay High Court in 1977 and joined the chambers of the then-leading Advocate Shri S.C. Pratap. He gained experience in civil, constitutional, service and labour matters. He was appointed as an Additional Judge of Bombay High Court on 18 December 1992 and became the permanent Judge of Bombay High Court on 8 April 1994. He assumed charge as the Chief Justice of Madras High Court on 12 November 2005 and was transferred as the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court on 7 May 2008.

Now post retirement, he has not sat back on his laurels and is still working towards social causes. He is on the Select Committee of the Torture Bill. He is also on the panel of Narmada Kandal, fighting for the rights of displaced tribals along the Narmada River.

Shri. Ramakant Khalap - Hon. Chairman, Law Commission of Goa and **Adv. Prashant Bhushan** - Eminent Lawyer, Supreme Court of India will be the Special Guests. **Shri Pratapsingh Rane** - Hon. Speaker, Goa Legislative Assembly and President, ICG will preside over the Inaugural Session.

Adv. Prashant Bhushan is a noted civil liberties lawyer of India. He has been actively associated with NBA, Enron, Jain Hawala cases and is a member of the Committee on Judicial Accountability. He is son of Shanti Bhushan, senior advocate and former Union law minister. He has been one of the strongest voices in the movement for judicial accountability, and is spearheading the campaign for public declaration of Judges' assets. Recently, he has claimed in his interview in Tehelka magazine, that half out of the last 16 to 17 Chief Justices of India had been corrupt. His perceptions were based on documentary, oral and circumstantial evidence, material and information that he had.

The sessions of the seminar include the following:

- Relationship between Judiciary and Parliament
- Accountability v/s Independence of Judiciary
- Judiciary: Partner in Societal Development?
- Judiciary and Media in India
- Translating Dream of Zero Pending Cases into Reality: Need for Faster dispensation of Justice

The attendance to this seminar is by prior registration only. For registration contact: Arjun Halarnkar, Programme Manager, ICG at 9765404391/ 2452805-10/ prog@incentgoa.com.