

'India's richness is due to accommodating views'

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Jaipur: Explaining the exclusivity of the idea of India, former President Pranab Mukherjee recalled that after the nuclear test in Pokhran in 1999, India entered into the elite club of six nations to have nuclear weapon. Still former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee laid the doctrine of 'No first use' of the weapon was in sync with the Indian value system of Vasudev Kutumb, he said.

"The first statement made by Vajpayee soon after the nuclear test was that India will never use it against any state and India will make the construction use of the nuclear energy and will use for ensuring peace was the second commitment," said Mukherjee, while delivering his lecture on 'Youth and nation building' at a private university in Jaipur on Wednesday. This is Mukherjee's first visit in Jaipur after he served as the President.



Former President Pranab Mukherjee lights a lamp at a programme in the city on Wednesday

Taking his idea of India further, he stated that definition of a nation for a country like India cannot be narrow. "The richness of this 5,000-year-old civilization is due to accommodating diverse views and ideas," said Mukherjee who supported his idea while quoting Mahatma Gandhi,

Swami Vivekananda, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Rabindranath Tagore. Mukherjee said, "India as a conglomeration of people

with 120 different languages and 1,600 different dialects, seven major religions and originating and assimilating each other from various places throughout history."

While sharing the idea of India, Mukherjee said that the path of the human civilisation has never set by the conquerors like Changez Khan but it has been shaped by the people like Mahatma Gandhi, Jesus Christ, Gautam Buddha etc.

Underlying the importance of education and vocational skills to the youths, Mukherjee said, "India is one of the youngest nations in the world with 65% of the population under 35 years of age. To reap this demographic dividend, so that it does not become a demographic disaster, it is very important that youngsters are trained and educated properly."

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