

First Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative Is Held

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New Delhi, India—The inaugural conference of the Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative (IIPI) was held on the theme of “India’s Contribution to Global Peace, Sustainable Development and Interfaith Harmony.”

Interfaith harmony is not an option for India. If left unchecked, religious and communal violence can spread like wildfire and easily escalate out of control. In fact, the very survival of India as a nation depends on religious concord.



At a time when India is witnessing increased religious tensions, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris on April 10, saying, “We will defend and protect the rights and liberty of every citizen. We will ensure that every citizen, of every faith, culture and creed has an equal place in our society.”

The conference was held on April 11, 2015, at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, in the auspicious presence of Dr. Jitendra Singh, minister of state for the Indian prime minister's office, as the chief guest.



At the opening of the conference, leaders from various faiths offered an invocation to Heaven with the Water of Harmony ceremony. This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Robert Kittel, director of education of UPF-Asia, on the vision of UPF Founder Dr. Sun Myung Moon.

In his address, Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that each person must become true to their own religion, be it Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Sikh or any other faith. He added that a healthy fear of God would help us to resist doing things that are harmful to ourselves or society.



Dr. Man Ho Kim, director general of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification-International, a sister organization of UPF, acknowledged the great traditions of India. He also highlighted Dr. Moon's vision for interreligious harmony and the need for an interfaith council at the United Nations.

Dr. Thomas Walsh, the president of UPF-International, emphasized the need for interfaith dialogue and harmony in order for the post-2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to be fulfilled.

Dr. Chung Sik Yong, regional chair of UPF-Asia, said that cooperation among religions could be established, beyond any barriers, by practicing the true love of God, and he expressed his great happiness at the successful inauguration of the IPI project.

Interfaith leaders of various faiths shared their insights on the theme of the event and expressed their solidarity for the future activities of IPI. At the conclusion of the conference all the speakers signed a joint declaration as the future guidelines of the IPI project.

The conference was also the occasion for UPF International to confer the honor of Ambassador for Peace on Dr. Jitendra Singh and Shri Shyam Jaju.