

PRESS RELEASE

Religious Leaders felicitated on the occasion of Shiv Ratri

The true spirit of oneness was experienced today evening at the Brahma Kumaris, Om Shanti Retreat Centre which saw a gathering of religious leaders from five different faiths come together on the occasion of Shiv Ratri. These leaders were honoured and felicitated by the Brahma Kumaris for their very valuable services offered to humanity. The programme started by a devotional song and moments of meditation which was then followed by a talk show on **Religious Leadership in Global Times** in which there was opportunity for all religious leaders to express their opinions on various common issues faced by the society. Sis. BK Asha, Director, Om Shanti Retreat Centre started off by stating that religion is might. She said when light is concentrated it gives might but if it gets scattered it does not bring joy. Hence there is great strength in religious unity.

Swami Mahamantra Das, President, ISKCON

Just like water is called by different names in different languages but its core value is to quench thirst similarly the core value of every religious philosophy or every religion is upliftment and empowerment of mankind. The youth of this nation need to be motivated towards religion, he stated.

Fr. Thomas, National Dean, Commission of Religious Harmony

Spirituality and religion are a way of life. It is not just restricted or limited to a few rituals but it has to go deep into a persons understanding. Fr. Thomas also talked on bringing about a mass awareness and awakening stating that the role of media in this is very important. The media must publicize good things. Instead of taking support from materialism the media must support and seek support from spirituality, he stated.

Acharya Dr. Sadhvi Sadhna Ji, Jain Sampradaya

Speaking on non violence Acharya Sadhvi Sadhna ji commented that any action done to fulfill our selfish desires is violence. Actions performed for God and in his remembrance provided they do not bring sorrow to anybody is non violence. She also added that if we do not perform actions based on the core values of the self we will never be satisfied and our inner conscience will always keep hurting and disturbing us.

Mohd. Iqbal Mulla, Asst. Secretary General, Jamat Islami Hind

Speaking on the subject of religious equality Mohd. Mulla remarked that innately we are all the same and all children of one God and hence there should be no differentiation between rich and poor. The law should be one for everyone and those disobeying the law must be punished. Hell and heaven cannot co exist and hence for heaven to come on earth the hell has to be destroyed, he opined.

Dr. A. K. Merchant, Trustee and Convenor, National Spiritual Assembly Bahais' of India

Talking about human values and their application Dr. A.K. Merchant said, due to the nuclear family system today everyone is busy and children in the family are no longer educated about moral values or religion. The values of love and forgiveness should be practiced in families and it is also necessary to reach out to schools and introduce special programmes on moral education and human values. He also mentioned that since 70% of the country's population are youth it is essential to educate and empower youth spiritually.

Bro. BK Brij Mohan, Principal Secretary, Brahma Kumaris

Bro. Brij Mohan expressing his views on true global leadership said that only one God who is supreme can transform the world and bring heaven back on earth. He said that when God created this earth it was new and very pure but we humans through our actions have polluted and degraded everything including the nature and our own minds. Now God has come down to help us transform and bring us back to who we originally were and so understanding and embracing one God and appreciating the oneness in every human is what true globalization is all about, he mentioned adding that spirituality brings all religions together and this is what God has descended for – to unite us all and take us back home and it is this descend of the almighty which is celebrated as ShivRatri - The descend of Shiva –The Supreme ever beneficial on earth.

All the leaders came together to light the Deepam thus symbolizing the lighting and awakening of the spiritual light – the soul. This beautiful ceremony was followed by the felicitation of all the leaders. Brahma Kumari sisters felicitated the leaders on the dias by offering flowers, tilak, garland, a basket of fruits, Prasad and gifts. This was done as a mark of special respect and honour for their invaluable contribution to the society.

Dadi Rukmani, Addl. Chief, Delhi Zone Brahma Kumaris, in her concluding address remarked that ultimately the true meaning of religion is inculcation and the true religion of every soul is peace and purity. Only when we connect with our supreme father will the soul become pure and complete and will be able to play its part fully and completely, she stated.

Photo captions

Pic 1 :

Swami Mahamantra Das, President ISKCON speaking during the talk show on “ Religious Leadership in Global Times” at BrahmaKumaris Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurgaon.

Pic. 3: Mohammed Iqbal Mulla, Asstt. Secy. Jamat- Islame – Hind speaking during the talk show on “ Religious Leadership in Global Times” at BrahmaKumaris Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurgaon. Below are audience from Delhi and NCR .

Pic 4 : Candle lighting Ceremony :From R to L Jain Sadhvi Dr Sadhvi Sadhna ji, Jain Sampraday, Dr AK Merchant, Trustee and Convener, National Spiritual Assembly, BAHAI's of India,.Bro. Brij Mohan, Principal Secretary, BrahmaKumaris, Father Thomas, National Dean, Commission of Relegious Harmony and Hon. Dadi Rukmani ji, Addl. Chief, Delhi zone, BrahmaKumaris at BrahmaKumaris Om Shanti Retreat Centre during talk show on “ Religious Leadership in Global Times”