

THE WISDOM FOUNDATION

(World Institute of Islamic Studies for Dialogue, Organization of Mediation, Gender and Peace)

Dedicated to the cause of Non-Violence, Confidence-Building, Conflict Transformation, Harmonious Co-existence and Humanitarian Service

Registered under Charity Commissioner Certificate No.E-23132

CELEBRATING INDIA

HUM PANCHI EK DAL KE : AN INCLUSIVE DIALOGUE ON THE INDIAN ETHOS OF TOLERANCE, PLURALISM, AND PEACEFUL-COEXISTENCE AMONG ALL RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND PEOPLE OF INDIA

*Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.
If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.
If you've no sympathy for human pain,
The name of human you cannot retain!*

Shirazi, Saadi; From Gulistan , Chapter 1, story 10. His poem 'Bani Adam' Inscribed On United Nations Building Entrance 51, Saturday, 17 September 2011)

The heritage of India's inclusiveness, its multi-religious, multi-cultural, multilingual and multi-racial diversity, has been forged through centuries. For centuries India has provided a home to very significant number of practitioners of practically every other major religion of the world, be it Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism or the Baha'ism. India is the birthplace of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism.

The remarkable capacity to share, integrate and interweave strands of artistic, philosophical and other achievements of various cultures

fostered an enriched cultural repertoire that has thrived and blossomed over a span of centuries. From early times, these exchanges, laid the foundations for a fruitful engagement between communities.

The history of India, in essence, is a narrative of conversations between different civilizations and, indeed, conversation with nature itself. India is home to scores of languages, hundreds of dialects, thousands of cuisines, a medley of races, colours, landscapes and cultures. This assimilation and accommodation of diversity has contributed to the richness of its composite culture and the durability of its civilization.

The ethos of India's pluralism, tolerance, inclusiveness, the Sacred Tradition of Sarva-Dharma-Samabhava or the Equality of all Religions, seems to be dwindling in the recent past. Religion and insaniyat go hand in hand instilling respect of all human-beings alike. Ekam Sat vipra bahudha vadanti or The Real is one; sages call it by various names is the bedrock of India's civilizational values.

This powerful idea of India stretching across half a century in the midst of spectacular and often turbulent events is the existence of its strong secular, democratic, pluralist ideals. These ideals enshrined in the Indian Constitution set the Nation State on the path to political modernity and national integration.

The Constitution of India upholds equality of all its citizens alike. Any form of leadership in whichever part of the world rests on trusteeship and benevolence. To bring about transformation one needs to be part of the solution. Mere criticism and cynicism may be incentives but they do not provide answers. Factors popularizing communalism and communal politics or violence need to be dismissed. We need to turn challenges into opportunities.

For true dialogue, we have to go beyond tolerance and respect. We must genuinely engage with each other and play a key role in strengthening the network of trust, cooperation and partnerships for sharing ideas, exchanging knowledge, and establishing an enriching dialogue among equal partners.

Swami Vivekananda, in his address at the Final Session (27 September 1893) of The World Parliament of Religions, said, "If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world, it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character....." He continued, "Help and not fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."

*In keeping with this spirit of Unity in Diversity, The Wisdom Foundation invites the respected Religious Leaders of ALL Religious Traditions and Scholars to a Meeting on **PEACEFUL-COEXISTENCE AMONG ALL RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS IN INDIA: AN INCLUSIVE DIALOGUE** to take a lead role in sharing their knowledge, thereby suggesting solutions to resolve the dilemmas facing Indian Communities by constructing a historical narrative based on perspectives that will help all Indians to co-exist with respect, honor and peace.*

Date :Tuesday, 1st December 2015

Venue: Seminar Room, St. Xavier's College

(Autonomous), 5, Mahapalika Marg, Mumbai, 400001

Time : 5.30 pm-8.30pm

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