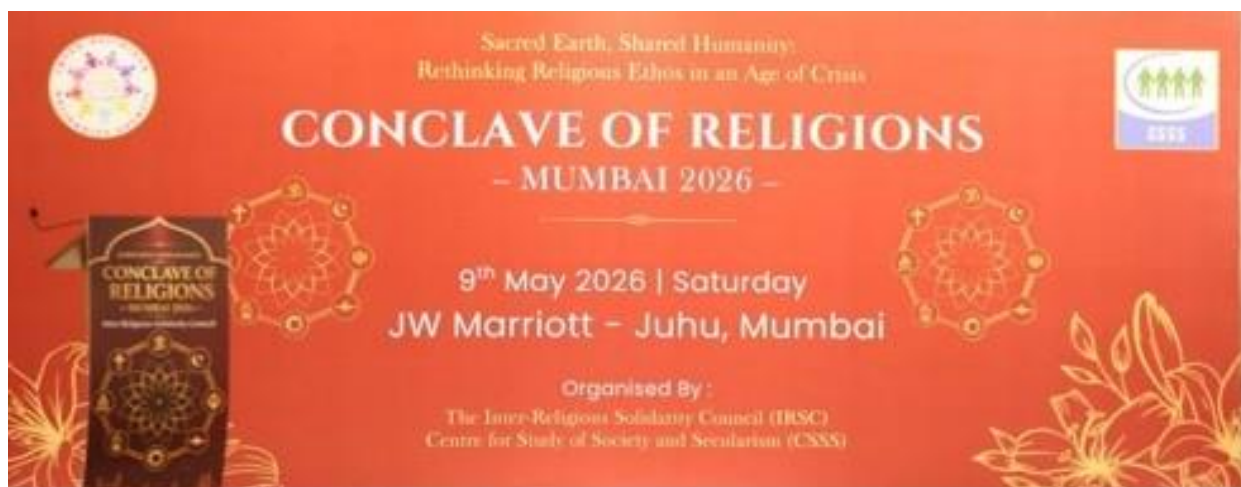


Report of
Sacred Earth, Shared Humanity: Rethinking Religious Ethos in an Age of Crisis
Conclave of Religions
JW Marriott, Mumbai
9th May, 2026



“Religion could help human beings in reaching limitlessness- overcoming barriers of social identities and secondly religion could offer hope to humanity. Religious values hold a mirror that allows reflection and transformation in human beings” said TM Krishna, Magsaysay Award winning vocalist and writer, in his keynote address at the Conclave of Religions titled ‘*Sacred Earth, Shared Humanity: Rethinking Religious Ethos in an Age of Crisis*’ in Mumbai on 9th May, 2026 organized by Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC), Mumbai.

Background

The Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC) organised a landmark Conclave of Religions titled ‘*Sacred Earth, Shared Humanity: Rethinking Religious Ethos in an Age of Crisis*’ in Mumbai on 9th May 2026. The Conclave of Religions was designed to bring together religious leaders, public intellectuals, and civil society members to deliberate on how religious values can help address modern challenges including religious extremism and environmental degradation.

The Conclave comprised thematic sessions dedicated to the two central concerns of religious extremism and environmental degradation. Each session featured panel discussions in which religious leaders, distinguished scholars and practitioners examined these issues in depth through an interactive and dialogic format. The objective was to generate informed insights that could guide civil society actors and policymakers in understanding the diverse perspectives and ethical considerations embedded within these debates. The Conclave also sought to move beyond symbolic interfaith representation by creating spaces for critical reflection, public dialogue, and collective ethical responsibility in response to contemporary social and ecological crises. In addition to these deliberative components, the Conclave included cultural performances by eminent artists, thereby fostering a participatory and engaging environment for all attendees.

The Conclave was attended by over 250 participants. The participants included journalists, scholars of social sciences, philanthropists, religious leaders, writers, artists and members of civil society organizations. These participants were invited due to the influence they exert in society and shaping opinions and narratives.

Conclave Proceedings:



The Conclave opened with a soul stirring performance of Radhika Sood Nayak, who sang *Begumpura*, a Shabad composed by Guru Ravidas Ji, describing a utopian city without sorrow, fear, or taxes, representing a state of spiritual liberation and equality and other compositions of Bulle Shah. These compositions which emphasized compassion, love and equality, reflected the spirit of the Conclave.

Welcoming participants, IRSC Convenor Keshav Chandra Das reflected on the origins of IRSC, established in 2023 to nurture interreligious harmony through dialogue, shared celebrations, and collaborative engagement in increasingly polarised times. Referring to the theme of the Conclave, he framed the ethical choices before society today as *“division or dialogue, exploitation or stewardship.”*

Irfan Engineer, Co-Convenor of IRSC and Director of the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (CSSS), situated the Conclave within India’s pluralistic traditions. Referring to Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, he emphasised the importance of recognising the dignity and truth present across religions.

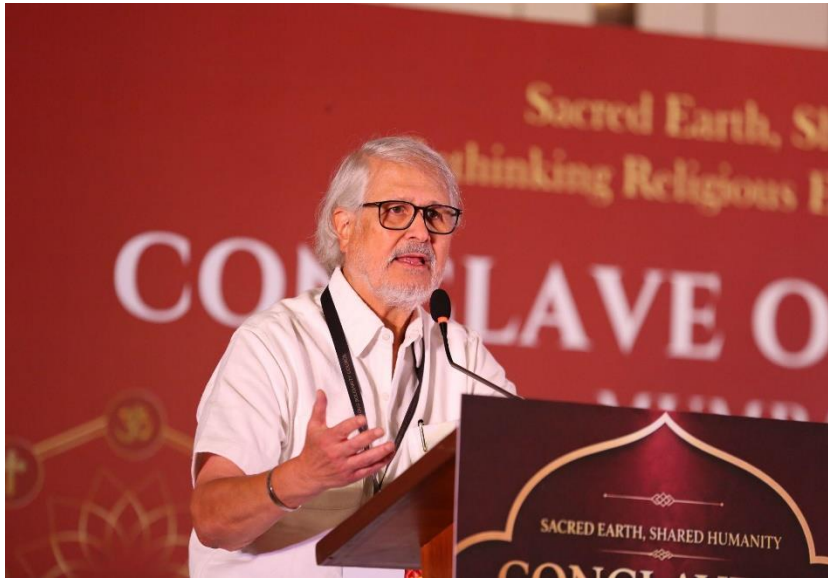
Keynote Speech



The keynote speech at the Conclave was by TM Krishna, well known Ramon Magsaysay Award winning vocalist and writer. Krishna evoked the religious ethos- inclusion, love, dialogue, transformation and truth, steeped in Indian traditions which have shaped India and Indian society historically and gave a framework of understanding current challenges of polarization in religious discourse. This poignant reminder of religious ethos and values resonated throughout the Conclave.

Krishna reflected on religion, identity, nationalism, social justice, and ecological responsibility through history, music, and constitutional discourse. Beginning with references to Rabindranath Tagore's *Jana Gana Mana* and early debates around the Indian flag and Constitution, he explored the layered and evolving imagination of India. He emphasized that the concept of India that was envisaged by the Constituent Assembly and leaders such as Gandhi was an India of equality, fraternity and liberty and of moral responsibility to be inclusive towards all citizens including rationalists/atheists.

The keynote address by TM Krishna was a powerful reminder of the role religion plays in our society and the challenges society navigates with the array of complexities where religion and nationalism entwine. Several participants later reflected that the keynote created a rare space where questions of religion,



constitutional values, social justice, ecology, and culture could be engaged together rather than in isolation.

Najeeb Jung, former bureaucrat, public intellectual and former Lt. Governor of Delhi who was chairing the keynote address recalled Swami Vivekananda's famous speech at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago and highlighted the critical historical role of Sufi and Bhakti saints in providing a voice during times of conflict.

Panel Discussions

The Conclave of Religion had two important panel discussions- one titled '*Building Bridges- Healing Divides*' which focused on



how religious ethos and traditions in all religions should be harnessed for promoting diversity, harmony and inclusion of all communities. The panel discussion was moderated by Fr. Frazer Mascarenhas and consisted of Swami Sarvalokananda from Rama Krishna Mission in Delhi, Bishop Dominic Savio Fernandez from Mumbai, Haji Syed Ambar Chisty from

the Ajmer Sharif Dargah, Dr. Surinder Kaur, lecturer at Khalsa College, Mumbai, Tejashree Ingawale, follower of Warkari Sampradya from Pune and artist, Geshe Tenzin Damchoe, Buddhist scholar from Dharamshala.



The panel had two eminent discussants who added much value to the discussion. Joy Sengupta, prominent actor and public intellectual and Dr. Zarin Shaffi, Sufi scholar at Somaiya College were discussants who highlighted the challenges of religious intolerance, extremism and polarization along religious lines. The audience posed critical questions emanating from religious discourse and conflicts in contemporary society. Questions from

participants touched on difficult themes including coercion, politicisation of religion, exclusion, ecological exploitation, and the challenge of sustaining dialogue in increasingly polarised environments.



The second panel discussion focused on the theme, 'Stewards of the Earth: A Multi-faith Call to Eco-Centrism', where each of the panelists highlighted how religions have perceived earth as sacred and human beings as custodians of nature and aim to protect it against greed, exploitation and degradation. Religions, as the panelists pointed out from their own communities' point of view have taken some concrete steps to arrest

environmental degradation.

Reflective Session

The formal portion of the Conclave ended with a reflective session facilitated by Rukmini Iyer and a valedictory address by Dr. Kala Acharya. The reflective dialogue process invited participants to move from abstract discussion towards personal and institutional responsibility, encouraging reflection on what concrete actions could emerge from the conversations initiated during the Conclave. Radhika Sood Nayak once again mesmerized the audience with her renditions of Bulleshah and gave a fitting end to the insightful and enriching discussions that emerged from the Conclave. The Conclave was very well appreciated by the audience who hailed the critical timing of the Conclave and having an opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue with opinion leaders from different faiths.



The event also consisted of a cultural program in the evening with an enthralling performance of Carnatic music by TM Krishna accompanied by HN Bhaskar and Praveen Sparsh.



Journey of IRSC and the Conceptualization of the Conclave of Religions

Conceived in 2023, in response to the growing climate of distrust, polarization, and instances of hate that increasingly strained Mumbai's social fabric, the IRSC has progressively expanded in both institutional reach and civic relevance. Prior to the Conclave, the IRSC had brought together more than twenty prominent religious and civil society institutions including the Archdiocese of Bombay, Haji Ali Dargah Trust, ISKCON Chowpatty, Ramakrishna Mission, Bahá'í Centre, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Dadar Gurudwara Sabha, and Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind among others.

IRSC undertook a spectrum of activities since its inception and the Conclave was conceptualized to widen this engagement further, particularly among youth, influencers, media and new audiences. The Conclave functioned not merely as a one-day event but as part of a broader process of community engagement and public dialogue.

A series of community meetings were organized in localities such as Bandra and Goregaon, among others. These meetings primarily engaged women involved in livelihood activities within the unorganized sector and brought together participants from diverse religious backgrounds. The sessions were addressed by Salim Khan, Prabhu Chaitanya Das, Mayur Yewle, Seema Indorewala, and Irfan Engineer. These interactions created important grassroots spaces for dialogue on fostering communal harmony in everyday life and critically reflecting on the role of religion in addressing wider societal challenges, including environmental degradation, poverty, and social fragmentation. The meetings demonstrated the significance of localized and community-based engagement in strengthening interfaith understanding and social cohesion.

Outcomes of the Conclave and Path Ahead:

The Conclave successfully achieved two of its principal objectives. First, it significantly contributed to consolidating the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC) as a credible and collaborative interfaith platform. Conceived in 2023, in response to the growing climate of distrust, polarization, and instances of hate that increasingly strained Mumbai's social fabric, the IRSC has progressively expanded in both institutional reach and civic relevance. Prior to the Conclave, the IRSC had brought together more than twenty prominent religious and civil society institutions, including the Archdiocese of Bombay, Haji Ali Dargah Trust, ISKCON Chowpatty, Ramakrishna Mission, Bahá'í Centre, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Dadar Gurudwara Sabha, and Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind, among others.

From the conceptualization of the Conclave to its planning and execution, these institutions played an integral role in shaping and sustaining the initiative. Their support extended beyond financial contributions mobilized through their respective communities and constituencies; they also demonstrated strong moral and institutional solidarity, particularly in the aftermath of the cancellation of the original venue agreement by Taj Lands End, reportedly due to concerns regarding intimidation and potential backlash from extremist groups. The continued commitment of these partner organizations through the contribution of human resources, intellectual inputs, and organizational support reflected a deep investment in interfaith engagement and a growing sense of collective ownership of the IRSC platform. Consequently, the Conclave strengthened institutional solidarity and reinforced the resilience of the IRSC as a sustained space for dialogue, critical reflection, and civic engagement.

The Conclave also resonated strongly with participants and audiences, many of whom viewed it as a rare and necessary opportunity for meaningful dialogue in a context where democratic and solidarity spaces are increasingly shrinking. Feedback from participants indicated appreciation for the manner in which the



Conclave brought together religious leaders, scholars, and members of civil society within a shared framework of dignity, mutual respect, and reflective engagement. While some participants expressed the desire for more critical interventions during panel discussions and greater time for audience interaction, there was broad

recognition of the significance of creating a platform capable of facilitating constructive engagement across differences in opinion, ideology, and worldview. The ability to sustain meaningful dialogue amidst social polarization emerged as one of the Conclave's most valued contributions. Notably, several participants subsequently approached the IRSC Core Committee to express interest in initiating similar interfaith and dialogic platforms in cities such as Pune and Goa.



Second, the Conclave substantially fulfilled its objective of creating a safe, democratic, and inclusive space for dialogue grounded in dignity and mutual respect within a deeply polarized social context. The event witnessed participation from individuals belonging to diverse religious traditions as well as rationalist perspectives, thereby fostering a plural and inclusive environment for engagement. Discussions

addressed, to a significant extent, contemporary social and political tensions that have contributed to widening social fissures.

At the same time, the Conclave was marked by a strong sense of ethical responsibility and sensitivity in addressing the complex intersections between religion, extremism, ecological concerns, and social harmony. Through its deliberations, the Conclave demonstrated the possibility of engaging contentious and deeply contested issues in a manner that prioritized coexistence, critical reflection, and democratic dialogue.

The success of the Conclave may also be gauged through the breadth and depth of its outreach initiatives. Although the Conclave itself was conceived as a one-day event, the IRSC Core Committee strategically utilized the occasion as an opportunity to expand engagement with media platforms, places of worship across Mumbai, youth groups, and diverse faith communities in order to disseminate and deepen conversations around the vision and objectives of the IRSC. In this regard, the Conclave functioned not merely as an isolated event, but as part of a broader process of community engagement and public dialogue.

The IRSC also emphasized youth engagement as a central component of its outreach strategy, recognizing the importance of harnessing the creativity, energy, and critical perspectives of younger generations in promoting dialogue and social harmony. As part of this effort, the IRSC organized an open mic session featuring young artists and poets who reflected on themes of bridge-building, healing social divides, and fostering solidarity through cultural expression. Approximately twenty young artists participated in the event, presenting performances that were widely appreciated for their creativity, nuance, and social sensitivity. The dissemination of these performances through social media platforms further expanded the reach of the Conclave's message and facilitated broader public engagement with its themes.

The Conclave additionally enabled the IRSC to strengthen its institutional outreach to prominent religious organizations and places of worship across Mumbai. Members of the IRSC Core Committee initiated engagement with major religious institutions, including the Siddhivinayak Temple, among others. The positive response received from these institutions opened avenues for future collaboration and signalled the growing legitimacy and acceptance of the IRSC as a platform for interfaith dialogue and civic engagement.

Media outreach also played a significant role in amplifying the visibility and public impact of the Conclave. Leading English-language newspapers, including The Times of India, The Indian Express, Hindustan Times, Mid-Day, and The Free Press Journal, reported on the Conclave both prior to and following the event. Such media coverage contributed to enhancing the public visibility of the IRSC, broadening awareness regarding its objectives, and reinforcing the relevance of interfaith dialogue and social solidarity within contemporary public discourse.

Conclusion:

The Conclave succeeded in mobilizing around 300 participants from diverse sections of society and amplified the message of dialogue, coexistence and inclusion. Participants appreciated the Conclave and many expressed willingness to associate with IRSC and replicate similar initiatives. Media coverage further amplified the visibility of the platform.

The Conclave strengthened the institutional solidarity of IRSC and reinforced its role as a sustained platform for dialogue, reflection and civic engagement. It also demonstrated that religion can hold transformative and liberating potential rooted in ethical and moral values that can help build resilient, non-violent and inclusive societies.

Participant feedback highlighted the significance of creating safe democratic spaces for dialogue while also suggesting deeper engagement with contemporary social challenges in future editions. Several participants expressed interest in developing similar platforms in cities such as Pune and Goa.

Future Action

The Conclave was an important occasion to widen awareness and amplify the reach of IRSC activities and will be followed up with small group activities, larger public events, cultural interventions and community dialogues in the coming months. The Conclave affirmed that interfaith engagement must evolve into sustained civic, cultural, ecological and community-based practice rooted in dialogue, dignity and shared responsibility.

If you are interested in engaging with IRSC activities and staying updated on our initiatives, you may connect with us through our WhatsApp group, website and Instagram page.

Annexures:

1. Statement/Declaration of the Conclave
2. Report of campaign activities
3. Press Note
4. Report of interfaith Iftaar
5. Report of Ram Navami celebrations
6. Media links and photos of coverage

Annexure 1

A Collective Statement Emerging from the Mumbai Conclave of Religions 2026

Convened by the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC), Mumbai

This statement emerges not only from the speakers, artists, and organisers of the Mumbai Conclave of Religions held on 9 May 2026, but also from the reflections, questions, concerns, and commitments shared by participants throughout the day. Through written responses, reflective dialogue, and collective conversation, participants helped shape the spirit and direction of this statement.

We gather at a time marked by deepening violence, ecological destruction, fear, loneliness, and growing polarisation. Across societies, we are witnessing religion being used both as a source of healing and as a tool of division. We are also witnessing the consequences of human greed, indifference, and unsustainable ways of living that are pushing the Earth towards crisis.

Yet throughout this Conclave, a different possibility repeatedly emerged. Participants reflected on the importance of listening across difference “willingly,” of recognising the interconnectedness of religion, social justice, and ecology, and of moving beyond symbolic coexistence towards lived ethical responsibility. Many participants spoke of being moved by reminders that harmony begins not in abstract ideals, but in everyday conduct: in language, relationships, institutions, and systems.

Several participants reflected on the idea that “unity in diversity” must become a lived reality rather than a slogan. Others noted that compassion, dignity, and service lie at the ethical core of all traditions when practised sincerely. Some emphasised the importance of freedom of expression and honest dialogue. Others pointed to the urgent need for ecological action, sustainable living, and institutional accountability.

Participants also voiced difficult but important concerns:

- the politicisation of religion,
- superficial engagement without genuine listening,
- the widening disconnect between belief and practice,
- and the need for religions themselves to engage in deeper self-reflection.

At the same time, many participants expressed hope: hope that dialogue is still possible, that traditions can learn from one another, and that small actions undertaken collectively can create meaningful change.

Emerging from these reflections, we at IRSC affirm the following:

- That no religion should be used to justify hatred, violence, coercion, or the denial of another’s humanity.
- That ecological destruction and social injustice are interconnected crises that require collective moral responsibility.
- That every human being has the right to dignity, belonging, and respectful dialogue.
- That listening across differences is an ethical and civic necessity.

- That compassion, restraint, humility, and care must become visible in everyday practice, not merely in belief.

We also recognise that peace cannot be built only through conferences, declarations, or institutions. It must be cultivated in homes, schools, neighbourhoods, places of worship, artistic practice, public discourse, and political life.

Inspired by the voices that emerged through this Conclave, we invite individuals, communities, and institutions to consider the following actions:

- Create and sustain spaces for interfaith and intercultural dialogue rooted in genuine listening.
- Examine personal prejudices and resist the normalisation of contempt, dehumanisation, and misinformation.
- Adopt concrete ecological practices in homes, institutions, and places of worship, including reducing waste and conserving resources.
- Support art, education, and cultural work that nurtures empathy, plurality, and shared humanity.
- Encourage religious and civic institutions to move from symbolic statements towards measurable ethical action.
- Teach future generations that diversity is not a threat to coexistence, but one of its foundations.

Participants reminded us repeatedly that what we do matters more than what we merely profess. One participant reflected that we have “borrowed the planet from future generations.” Another wrote of the need to “put this feeling of multiculturalism” into creative practice. Others committed themselves to small but meaningful acts of environmental care, interfaith understanding, and compassionate engagement.

We leave this Conclave aware that dialogue alone cannot resolve all conflict. Yet without dialogue, self-reflection, and moral courage, peaceful coexistence becomes impossible.

In a world increasingly shaped by fear and fragmentation, we choose another path. We choose dialogue over dehumanisation. We choose stewardship over exploitation. We choose reflection over hatred. We choose shared humanity over division. And we invite all who resonate with these values to walk this path with us.

Annexure 2

Activities Leading up to the Conclave of Religions 2026

In the lead-up to the Conclave of Religions 2026, jointly organised by the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (CSSS) and the Inter Religious Solidarity Council Mumbai (IRSC), a series of outreach and engagement programmes were conducted across Mumbai to promote the values of peace, social harmony, interfaith understanding, and collective responsibility.

These initiatives included community outreach programmes and an Open Mic gathering focused on art, dialogue, and youth engagement.

Community Outreach Programmes

As part of the outreach initiatives leading up to the Conclave of Religions 2026, jointly organised by the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism and the Inter Religious Solidarity Council Mumbai, three community outreach programmes were conducted in different neighbourhoods across Mumbai.

These programmes were organised in local communities where people from different religions and social backgrounds live closely together while facing everyday challenges such as poverty, overcrowding, insecurity, and lack of resources. The outreach programmes aimed to create spaces where people could speak openly, listen to one another, and strengthen trust and understanding across communities.

A significant aspect of these programmes was the participation of women from the local communities. Many of the attendees were domestic workers, teachers, caregivers, and social workers who took time out from their busy afternoons and daily responsibilities to attend these discussions. Their participation reflected a strong desire within communities to build peace, strengthen relationships, and create safer and more harmonious neighbourhoods.

The programmes focused on the shared values found across religions such as compassion, peace, equality, dignity, and care for one another. They encouraged participants to reject hatred and prejudice and instead strengthen dialogue, empathy, and solidarity within their communities.

More importantly, these programmes created safe and inclusive spaces where women could openly discuss sensitive social and religious issues affecting their neighbourhoods and families. The discussions

allowed participants to share experiences, concerns, and hopes for their communities in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

1. Golibar Road, Santacruz East

Date: 5 April 2026

The first outreach programme was organised at Golibar Road in Santacruz East, in collaboration with Habitat & Livelihood Welfare Association (HALWA), also a part of IRSC. Women and children from the local community gathered for an interactive discussion on peace, coexistence, and shared humanity.

The speakers — Dr. Salim Khan, Ms. Seema Indorewala, and Adv. Irfan Engineer — spoke about communal harmony and the importance of building relationships across religious and social divides. They stressed that all religions teach compassion, kindness, and respect for others.

The programme created an important platform where women from different backgrounds could discuss issues related to prejudice, social tensions, and misunderstandings within communities. Participants reflected on how small everyday interactions between neighbours and families play an important role in maintaining peace.

The discussions also highlighted the important role women play in shaping values within families and teaching younger generations about coexistence and mutual respect. The programme helped strengthen trust among participants and encouraged greater dialogue and solidarity within the neighbourhood.

2. Maharashtra Nagar, Bandra East

Date: 7 April 2026

The second programme was held in Maharashtra Nagar, Bandra East, again in collaboration with Habitat & Livelihood Welfare Association (HALWA) , and brought together residents from different faith communities for discussions on social harmony, spirituality, and collective responsibility.

The session featured Dr. Salim Khan and Prabhu Chaitanyanand Das from ISKCON.



Dr. Salim Khan spoke about India's traditions of coexistence and pluralism. He encouraged participants to move beyond divisive thinking and to respect different faiths and traditions.

Prabhu Chaitanyanand Das spoke about spirituality and environmental responsibility. He explained that caring for nature, cleanliness, and mindful living

are shared responsibilities that connect communities across religions.



The programme encouraged participants to reflect on how religious and ethical values can guide people in dealing with everyday social and community challenges. It also created a space where women could openly discuss concerns affecting their neighbourhoods and explore ways of strengthening peace and cooperation.

One of the important outcomes of the programme was that it brought people together in a spirit of dialogue and mutual understanding. It reinforced the belief that harmony is built through regular engagement and collective responsibility within communities.

3. Mount Mary Tabla, Bandra West

Date: 22 April 2026

The third outreach programme was organised at Mount Mary Tabla in Bandra West and brought together women from the local community for discussions on communal harmony and shared human values.



The speakers — Mayur Yewle, Dr. Salim Khan, and Prabhu Chaitanyanand Das — spoke about how all religions promote values of love, compassion, equality, and brotherhood despite differences in customs and practices.

The programme created a comfortable and respectful environment where women could openly discuss sensitive social and religious issues affecting their communities. Participants reflected on the importance of dialogue, mutual support, and understanding in preventing divisions and strengthening peaceful relationships.

Special attention was given to the role of women in promoting peace within families and neighbourhoods. Many participants shared how women are often the first to address tensions within communities and help maintain relationships across social and religious lines.

The outreach programme strengthened connections among participants and encouraged greater cooperation and understanding between communities. It also reinforced the idea that peacebuilding begins at the grassroots level through everyday acts of care, dialogue, and solidarity.

Through these community outreach initiatives, the vision and message of the Conclave of Religions 2026 reached communities directly at the grassroots level. The programmes helped create spaces for dialogue, trust-building, and peaceful engagement among people from different religious and social backgrounds.

Most importantly, these outreach programmes demonstrated that ordinary community members, especially women, play a central role in promoting peace and harmony in society. By bringing people together through dialogue and shared values, the initiatives helped strengthen relationships across communities and encouraged collective responsibility for maintaining peace in everyday life.

Open Mic for a Cause

Theme: Kindness, Compassion and Humanity Across Divides

Date: 19 April 2026

Venue: Bahá'í Centre, Court Chambers, Marine Lines

Time: 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Attendance: 26 participants

As part of the activities leading up to the Conclave, the Inter Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC) organised *Open Mic for a Cause*, an evening dedicated to fostering unity through poetry, storytelling, music, and artistic expression.

Centered around the theme *Kindness, Compassion and Humanity Across Divides*, the event brought together artists, writers, and young participants from diverse backgrounds to reflect on shared human values beyond religious and cultural boundaries.



The evening featured performances by Anamika Joshi, Avni Katakhar, Jaimala Rai, Aamina Shareef, Souvik Ganguly, Prabhjot Kaur, Sucheeta Basu, Dr. Liyakat Namole “Nachiz,” and Tariq Anwar. Through poetry, storytelling, and personal reflections, the artists explored

themes of identity, coexistence, compassion, and hope.

Ghazal singers further enriched the gathering with soulful renditions of nazms and musical performances that complemented the spoken-word sessions and created an atmosphere of reflection and solidarity.

Stanley Fernandez, Founding Member of IRSC, addressed the gathering and spoke about the vision and objectives of IRSC, emphasizing peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and interfaith understanding. He also invited poets, storytellers, and artists to participate in the upcoming Conclave of Religions and contribute to the larger movement for harmony and dialogue.

The event marked an important step in IRSC's efforts to expand interfaith engagement into the spheres of arts and literature, creating new avenues to connect with youth, artists, influencers, and wider communities. It also provided a platform for young participants to present cultural expressions and social reflections through poetry, music, and performance, helping amplify the message of peace and coexistence through creative engagement and social media outreach.

Open Mic for a Cause concluded as a meaningful and intimate gathering that fostered empathy, connection, and shared understanding, demonstrating the transformative power of art in bridging social and religious divides.

Annexure 3

Press Conference: Conclave of Religions

A Harmonious and Peaceful World: The Conclave of Religions

Date: 29 April 2026

Venue: Bahá'í Centre, Court Chambers, Marine Lines

Time: 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

A press conference was organised ahead of the Conclave of Religions to introduce the themes and objectives of the gathering and to highlight the urgent need for dialogue and peaceful coexistence in increasingly polarised times.



Keshav Chandra Das, Convenor of the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC) and a representative of ISKCON, stated that initiatives promoting social harmony and peaceful coexistence are especially significant in the present social climate.

Irfan Engineer, Co-Convenor of IRSC and Director of the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (CSSS), emphasized that all religions uphold values such as compassion, truth, justice, and service to humanity. He noted that these shared ethical principles must be strengthened to counter hatred, exclusion, and division.

The press conference highlighted the two central themes of the Conclave:

- Rejecting extremism in all religions
- Living in harmony with nature

It was announced that T. M. Krishna would deliver the keynote address, chaired by Najeeb Jung. Panel discussions would feature religious leaders and scholars from diverse faith traditions and institutions, including the Ramakrishna Mission, Archdiocese of Bombay, and Ajmer Sharif Dargah.

Fr. Frazer Mascarenhas reflected on the dangers of ethnocentrism and stressed the importance of religions learning from one another rather than existing in isolation. He also spoke about the need for collective responses to ecological crises and global conflicts.

Surinder Kaur emphasized the importance of understanding and accepting each other's faiths, while Rajni Bakshi spoke about choosing compassion, love, and brotherhood in a world often dominated by narratives of violence and division.

Joy Sengupta highlighted the importance of taking such initiatives beyond conferences and into communities and everyday life. He stressed that harmony and service must remain central to the practice of religion.

The Conclave of Religions brought together religious leaders, civil society members, academics, artists, and public intellectuals in a collective effort to promote interfaith dialogue, social harmony, and peaceful coexistence.

Annexure 4

Report of Interfaith Iftaar

Date: 17 March 2026

Venue: Bahá'í Centre, Marine Lines, Mumbai

As part of the activities leading up to the Conclave of Religions 2026, the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC), Mumbai, organised an Interfaith Iftaar gathering at the Bahá'í Centre in Marine Lines during the holy month of Ramzan.



The gathering brought together religious leaders and members of diverse faith communities in a spirit of unity, reflection, and fellowship. Centered on the theme of sacrifice, self-discipline, and compassion during fasting, the programme explored the

shared spiritual values present across religious traditions.

Sheikh Naseer from the Ahmadiyya community reflected on Ramadan as a period for cultivating righteousness, patience, and compassion. He emphasized that fasting deepens awareness of the struggles of others and strengthens one's responsibility towards both God and humanity. According to him, fasting serves as a means for spiritual growth and personal transformation.

Fr. S. M. Michael from the Indian Institute of Culture spoke about the Christian observance of Lent and its emphasis on reflection, sacrifice, and spiritual renewal. Drawing parallels with fasting practices in other religions, he explained that Lent encourages believers to move away from material attachments and deepen their commitment to faith, compassion, and service.

Swami Braj Mohan Das from ISKCON Chowpatty highlighted the universality of fasting across religious traditions. He noted that fasting is not merely abstaining from food, but a discipline of the body, mind, and speech that helps cultivate empathy, humility, and inner strength. He stressed that the true purpose of fasting is transformation of character and consciousness.

Mr. Salim Khan from Jamaat-e-Islami Hind discussed fasting in Islam as a means of developing taqwa or God-consciousness. He explained that fasting encourages restraint, introspection, honesty, and ethical conduct, while also building resilience and moral discipline.

The final speaker, Mr. Shatrugan Jivnani from the Bahá'í community, emphasized the shared purpose of fasting across faiths as a way to nurture unity, compassion, and spiritual awareness. He spoke about fasting as a symbolic practice of self-discipline and empathy that ultimately strengthens the bonds of humanity.

Adv. Irfan Engineer, Co-Convenor of IRSC, briefly addressed the gathering and spoke about the upcoming Conclave of Religions 2026, which would deliberate on issues such as rejecting religious extremism and living in harmony with nature.

The evening concluded with the breaking of the fast (Iftaar), symbolizing fellowship, shared humanity, and collective reflection. The gathering served as a meaningful platform for interfaith dialogue and reaffirmed IRSC's commitment to promoting peace, solidarity, and mutual understanding among diverse communities.

Annexure 5

Report of Interfaith Ram Navami Celebration

Interfaith Celebration in Mumbai Reflects on “Trials of Faith” and Shared Ethical Values Across Traditions

By Rukmini Iyer

Mumbai, March 28, 2026: The Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC), Mumbai, in collaboration with ISKCON Chowpatty, organised an interfaith celebration on the evening of March 28, 2026, at Bhaktivedanta Hall, Sri Sri Radha Gopinath Mandir, Girgaon Chowpatty. The event brought together



members of diverse faith communities to reflect on the theme “Trials of Faith: Maintaining Character Under Pressure,” in the context of Ram Navami, Lent, Navroz, and Eid.

The gathering opened with an address by His Grace Keshav Chandra Das Prabhu, who welcomed participants and set

the tone for the evening by emphasising the importance of spiritual resilience and ethical conduct, particularly in times of challenge and uncertainty.

This was followed by a dance performance by the children of the Radha Gopal Children’s Committee (RGCC) of ISKCON, celebrating Ram Navami and interreligious harmony. The performance offered a creative expression of devotion while symbolically reflecting unity across traditions.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Himanshu Asnani (Harivamsa Das Prabhu), researcher, translator, and author of *The Forest of Love: A Journey of Awakening*. He reflected on the deeper meaning of faith as a lived ethical practice, noting that moments of adversity serve as tests of inner character and spiritual integrity. Drawing from his scholarship and personal journey, he emphasised that faith traditions, when practised with sincerity, cultivate humility, compassion, and a commitment to truth.

The central panel discussion brought together women representatives from diverse traditions, each offering insights into the significance of the festivals being observed. Sister Kripa spoke from the Christian perspective, highlighting the reflective and sacrificial dimensions of Lent. Hitakshi Shah reflected on the



Jain and Zoroastrian traditions, drawing attention to the values of restraint, renewal, and ethical living. Tahirih Makhija shared perspectives from the Baha'i Faith, emphasising unity, discipline, and spiritual growth. Uzma Naheed spoke on the Islamic understanding of fasting and devotion during Ramadan, underscoring the cultivation of self-restraint and compassion. Nandini, representing the

ISKCON community, reflected on Ram Navami and the ideals embodied in the life of Lord Ram, particularly through his brother Lakshman.

Across the panel, speakers shared stories and teachings that brought religious practice alive, while also highlighting common ethical threads of discipline, empathy, humility, and responsibility that transcend individual traditions.

The event concluded with a theatrical performance by ISKCON youth on the ethical practice of religion, offering a reflective portrayal of how faith can guide everyday conduct.

During the gathering, Irfan Engineer, Co-Convenor of the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council, also announced the upcoming Mumbai Conclave of Religions, to be held on Saturday, 9 May 2026 at Taj Lands End, Bandra. The Conclave will bring together religious leaders, scholars, and civil society voices to engage with the themes of religious extremism and ecological responsibility, and will be keynoted by noted vocalist and Magsaysay award recipient T. M. Krishna.

The interfaith celebration provided a meaningful platform for shared reflection, demonstrating how diverse religious traditions can come together to uphold ethical values and foster solidarity in times of complexity and change.

The Inter-Religious Solidarity Council, Mumbai, reaffirmed its commitment to nurturing dialogue, understanding, and collective responsibility across faith communities.

Annexure 6

Media Links and Photos of Coverage

India: Conclave Of Religions 2026 In Mumbai

Licensable picture: Monday, 11th May 2026, 04:08 PM GMT+5:30

[SIPA USA](#)



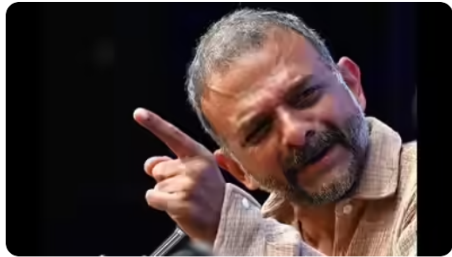
MUMBAI, INDIA - MAY 9: Indian vocalist and author T.M. Krishna and former Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Najeeb Jung attend the Conclave of Religions 2026, Organised by the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council and the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, the theme of the conclave was 'Sacred Earth, Shared Humanity: Rethinking Religious Ethos in an Age of Crisis', at JW Marriott, on May 9, 2026 in Mumbai, India. As religious polarisation and ecological crises continue to test societies across the world, religious leaders, scholars and public intellectuals gathered at the JW Marriott, Juhu, on Saturday for the Conclave of Religions–Mumbai 2026, where speakers repeatedly stressed compassion, coexistence and environmental responsibility as values shared across faiths. (Photo by Satish Bate/Hindustan Times/Sipa USA)

<https://www.reutersconnect.com/item/india-conclave-of-religions-2026-in-mumbai/dGFnOnJldXRlcnMuY29tLDIwMjY6bmV3c21sX01UMVNJUUEwMDBWMEhBRIA>

Diversity, co-existence core of India, says Carnatic vocalist T M Krishna

Mohammed Wajihuddin / May 10, 2026, 12:12 IST

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Mumbai: Carnatic vocalist and author T M Krishna has called upon Indians to shed the fear of the other. Delivering the keynote address at the 'Conclave of Religions' in the city on Saturday, Krishna called diversity and co-existence the core of India. Touching upon several themes like Ashoka's dhamma, Rabindranath Tagore's depiction of Bharat Mata, Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence and ahimsa, Ambedkar's maitreya (social equality), and the word

fraternity in the preamble of India's Constitution, Krishna spoke to the audience at a five-star hotel in Juhu. The event was held by the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council and Centre for Study of Society and Secularism with the support of around two dozen organisations.

Referring to Tagore's painting of Bharat Mata (May 9 was also Tagore's birth anniversary), Krishna said Tagore did not see the country in narrow terms. "Tagore's Bharat Mata is not angry or exclusivist. She is encompassing and is in a state of peace," he said.

Krishna said for a long time India has wrestled with the question of "who has the first right on this land".

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/diversity-co-existence-core-of-india-says-carnatic-vocalist-t-m-krishna/articleshow/130987844.cms>

<https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/india/diversity-co-existence-core-of-india-says-carnatic-vocalist-t-m-krishna/ar-AA22OxP2?uxmode=ruby>

‘Move from words to action to gradually remove current hatred in society’

Speakers at the Conclave of Religions–Mumbai 2026 stressed compassion, coexistence and environmental responsibility as values shared across faiths

Published on: May 10, 2026 5:54 AM IST

By Osama Rawal



<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/move-from-words-to-action-to-gradually-remove-current-hatred-in-society-101778355679328.html>

Conclave of Religions in Mumbai's Juhu urges unity in times of global conflict

Updated On: 11 May, 2026 08:33 AM IST | Mumbai | Hemal Ashar

An inter-faith peace conclave stresses amity amidst diversity; dialogue above divisions



https://www.mid-day.com/mumbai/mumbai-news/article/conclave-of-religions-2026-interfaith-voices-in-mumbai-call-for-bridges-of-love-over-bombs-and-bullets-23629813#google_vignette

Inter-religious conclave on May 9 to call for rejecting extremism

The IRSC is hosting a conclave on May 9 in Mumbai to promote harmony, reject extremism, and foster dialogue among religions amid crises.

Published on: May 01, 2026 3:34 AM IST

By HT Correspondent



<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/interreligious-conclave-on-may-9-to-call-for-rejecting-extremism-101777575576242.html>



Sacred earth, shared humanity: IRSC announces peace conclave

We need to build bridges of love and togetherness, demolish walls built by hate and division, was the message at an announcement about a forthcoming peace conclave in the city. The press conference to announce this was held on Thursday evening, April 30.

The Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC) will hold a conclave headlined 'Sacred earth, shared humanity: Rethinking religious ethos in the age of crisis' at a venue in the Western suburbs on May 9.

<https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/techandscience/sacred-earth-shared-humanity-irsc-announces-peace-conclave/ar-AA22jXKh>

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Mumbai's Taj Lands End To Host Landmark Interfaith Conclave On Religious Extremism And Climate Crisis On May 9

Mumbai's Taj Lands End will host a conclave of religions on May 9, bringing together to discuss religious extremism and environmental challenges. Organised by IRSC, the event will feature thematic sessions, a keynote by T.M. Krishna, and dialogues promoting religious coexistence.

Manoj Ramakrishnan | Updated: Wednesday, April 29, 2026, 12:55 AM IST



<https://www.freepressjournal.in/mumbai/mumbais-taj-lands-end-to-host-landmark-interfaith-conclave-on-religious-extremism-and-climate-crisis-on-may-9>

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Home > Mumbai > Mumbai Interfaith Celebration Brings Diverse Communities Together To Reflect On Trials Of Faith And Character

Mumbai Interfaith Celebration Brings Diverse Communities Together To Reflect On Trials Of Faith And Character

An interfaith event in Mumbai brought together diverse religious communities to discuss ethical values and the theme "Trials of Faith". Organised by the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council and ISKCON Chowpatty, the programme featured talks, panels and performances, emphasising unity, compassion and dialogue during major festivals like Ram Navami, Lent, Navroz and Eid.

Manoj Ramakrishnan | Updated: Sunday, March 29, 2026, 08:04 PM IST



<https://www.freepressjournal.in/mumbai/mumbai-interfaith-celebration-brings-diverse-communities-together-to-reflect-on-trials-of-faith-and-character>

Skyscanner **Mumbai → Manchester** from Rs43,845 **Mumbai → Liverpool** from Rs45,493 **New Delhi → Dublin** from Rs45,449

Home > Mumbai > Ramadan 2026: Mumbai Interfaith Iftar Promotes Unity As Leaders Highlight Shared Spiritual Values

Ramadan 2026: Mumbai Interfaith Iftar Promotes Unity As Leaders Highlight Shared Spiritual Values

IRSC Mumbai hosted an interfaith Iftar at the Baha'i Centre, uniting leaders across religions. Speakers highlighted shared values of fasting, compassion and discipline, reinforcing a collective commitment to peace and unity.

Manoj Ramakrishnan | Updated: Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 07:27 PM IST



<https://www.freepressjournal.in/mumbai/ramadan-2026-mumbai-interfaith-iftaar-promotes-unity-as-leaders-highlight-shared-spiritual-values>

Diversity & co-existence core of India, says vocalist

Mumbai: Carnatic vocalist and author TM Krishna has called upon Indians to shed the fear of the other.

Delivering the keynote address at the 'Conclave of Religions' in the city on Saturday, Krishna called diversity and co-existence the core of India. Touching upon several themes like Ashoka's dhamma, Rabindranath Tagore's depiction of Bharat Mata, Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence and ahimsa, Ambedkar's maitreya (social equality), and the word fraternity in the preamble of India's Constitution, Krishna spoke to the audience at a five-star hotel in Juhu. The event was held by the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council and Centre for Study of Society and Secularism with the support of around two dozen organisations.

Referring to Tagore's painting of Bharat Mata (May 9 was also Tagore's birth anniversary), Krishna said Tagore did not see the country in narrow terms. "Tagore's Bharat Mata is not angry or exclusivist. She is encompassing and is in a state of peace," he said.

Referring to Ashoka's dhamma or principle of non-violence and compassion the emperor adopted after having created a huge bloodbath, the maestro said Ashoka apologised and his edicts speak of the reflections of dhamma and harmony. — **Mohammed Wajihuddin**

Times of India

Civil society members call for dialogue, unity at interfaith conclave

Ishika Gupta
Mumbai, May 9

RELIGIOUS SCHOLARS, artists and civil society members deliberated on rising social divisions, religious extremism and ecological crises at the Conclave of Religions 2026 in Mumbai on Saturday.

Organised by the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC), the conclave was themed "Sacred Earth, Shared Humanity: Rethinking Religious Ethos in an Age of Crisis."

IRSC convenor Keshav Chandra Das framed the ethical

choices before society as "division or dialogue, exploitation or stewardship".

Carnatic vocalist and Ramon Magsaysay awardee TM Krishna spoke on the intersections of religion, identity and social justice, warning of a "crisis of fear" and "crisis of hate." He stressed that ecological concerns cannot be separated from social justice.

Representatives from multiple faiths emphasised on compassion, unity and transformation at panel discussions, with speakers reiterating that religion, at its core, promotes connection rather than division.

Indian Express

”نفرت کو معمول اور شناختوں کو ہتھیار بنا دیا گیا ہے“

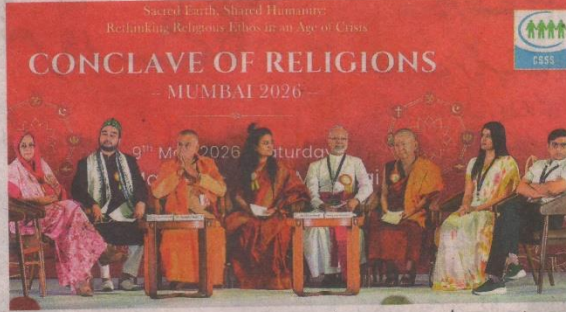
CSSS Inquilab 10/15/26

مذہب کی بنیاد پر برہمتی نفرت کو ختم کرنے کیلئے ایک روزہ کانٹیکو میں دہلی کے سابق گورنر نجیب جنگ، گلوکار ٹی ایم کرشنا اور مختلف مذاہب کے رہنماؤں کا خطاب

شہاب انصاری

shahab.ansari@mid-day.com

ممبئی: ہندوستان میں سیاسی اور مختلف قسم کے ناجائز فائدوں کے لئے مذہب کو بنیاد بنا کر عوام کو تقسیم کرنے اور ان کے درمیان نفرت بڑھانے کے واقعات میں اضافہ کے پیش نظر ان سازشوں کو ناکام بنانے اور عوام کے درمیان سے غلط فہمیوں کو دور کرنے کے مقصد سے تشکیل دینے گئے انٹرنیشنل سالیڈیریٹی کونسل (آئی آر ایس سی) کی جانب سے سنیچر کو جو ہو میں واقع جے ڈبلیو میرٹ ہوٹل میں بروز روزہ کانٹیکو کا انعقاد کیا گیا جس میں ملک بھر سے مختلف مذاہب کے رہنماؤں اور دانشوروں نے شرکت کر کے اظہار خیال کیا اور اس کا بیٹا دیا۔



جے ڈبلیو میرٹ ہوٹل میں منعقدہ کانٹیکو کے شرکاء۔ (تصویر: انقلاب: شاداب خان)

لسلاب سہی تھا کہ ”ہم اس خیال کی لٹی کرتے ہیں کہ مذہب لازمی طور پر انسانیت کو تقسیم کرتا ہے، ان کے مطابق اپنے مذہب پر قائم رہتے ہوئے دوسرے مذاہب کے افراد کو سامان میں اپنے ساتھ جگہ دینے اور انہیں قبول کرنے سے نفرت ختم ہو سکتی ہے۔ مذہب کی بنیاد پر کسی کو اپنے سے کمتر تصور کرنا یا غیر ضروری طور پر کسی طبقہ کے تعلق سے خوف اور دوری پیدا کرنا اختلافات اور دوریوں کو ہوا دے گا۔“

کانٹیکو میں جنوبی ہند کے معروف انعام یافتہ گلوکار اور مصنف ٹی ایم کرشنا کا اہم خطاب تھا اور دہلی کے سابق گورنر نجیب جنگ مہمان خصوصی تھے جبکہ قادیان فریزر مسکرٹس کی نظامت میں امیر شریف سے آئے ہوئے ڈاکٹر حاجی سید منیر چشتی، شری گرو سنگھ سما کی ڈاکٹر سریندر کور، تبت سے آئے ہوئے بودھا ساگر کیٹیہ، جنرل دماچو، راما کرشنا مشن کے سوامی سروالوکانند، وارگری سپر ادائے کی بیجاشری انگاؤلے، ڈاکٹر زین شفیق، اداکار جوائے سین گیتا اور آرک ڈیویسز آف باسے

دہلی کے سابق لیفٹیننٹ گورنر نجیب جنگ نے مسکرت کے اشلوک پڑھ کر ان کا ترجمہ بتایا، آئین ہند تحریر کرنے والوں کے ذریعہ آئین کو لکھنے وقت اس بات کا خیال رکھنے کی مثال دی کہ انہوں نے کسی مذہب کو کسی دوسرے مذہب پر ترجیح نہیں دی۔ انہوں نے شکاگو میں بین الاقوامی اجلاس کے جلسہ میں مجاہد آزادی سوامی دوکیننڈ کے تقریر، علامہ اقبال کے مذہب نہیں سکھاتا آپاس میں بیہ رکھنا، غالب کی شاعری، اولیاء اور صوفی سنتوں کے اقوال کی مثالیں دیں کہ کسی طرح انہوں نے مذہب کو جوڑنے کا ذریعہ بتایا تقسیم کیا نہیں۔

پروگرام کے منتظمین میں شامل عرفان انجیرتے کے مطابق اس جلسہ کے اخیر میں مجموعی طور پر تمام مقررین نے جن باتوں کو اتفاق رائے سے قبول کیا ان کی طویل فہرست میں یہ باتیں شامل ہیں کہ پوری دنیا اور ہمارے اپنے سامان میں نفرت کو معمول اور شناختوں کو ہتھیار بنا دیا گیا ہے اور اس رواج کو بدلنے کی ضرورت ہے۔ ہم اس تصور کی لٹی کرتے ہیں کہ مذہب لازمی طور پر انسانیت کو تقسیم کرتا ہے۔ مزید یہ کہ ہم آج بھی کا مطلب قطعی طور پر یکسانیت نہیں ہے یعنی ایسا نہیں ہے کہ مل جل کر رہنے کا مطلب یہ ہے کہ دوسرے ہمارے جیسے یا ہم دوسرے کی طرح بن جائیں۔ ان کے مطابق بیچتی کے وجود میں آنے کیلئے توح کو ختم کرنے کی ضرورت نہیں ہے۔ ان کا یہ بھی کہنا تھا کہ اگر وقار اور کھلے دل کے ساتھ کسی سے ملا جائے تو ہمارے درمیان جو فرق ہے وہ ہمارے لئے رشتوں کو جوڑنے اور باہمی تہذیبی کیلئے کا ذریعہ بن سکتا ہے۔

Inquilab