

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar calls for peace in Africa

Indian spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar called for a wave of peace in Africa at a function marking the end of centenary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha (passive resistance) in South Africa.

Sri Sri was the Honorary Guest from India at the meet held in Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was formerly imprisoned.

The event Sunday was attended by Deputy President of South Africa Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Deputy Speaker of Parliament Glen Mahlangu, former president of South Africa De Klerk, cabinet ministers, members of parliament and diplomats, said a press release from the movement.

Hailing the peaceful transformation in South Africa as a model for the rest of Africa, Sri Sri said South Africa could start a wave that can bring peace in Africa.

He took note of Africa's old and evolved philosophies such as Ubuntu, which means - 'I am because you are. You are because I am'.

'This was a heartfelt cry of an evolved human being which recognises that there is but one divinity,' he said, adding that the philosophy was identical to the ancient Indian ideal of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (The world is one family).

'To eliminate terrorism, we need to spiritualise politics, socialise business and secularise religion,' he said.

Stressing that Africa's wisdom needed to be shared with the world, he emphasised the need to amalgamate the values of Ubuntu and Gandhi with modern progress.

Former political prisoners including Ahmed Kathrada, who was sentenced with Mandela to life imprisonment, also attended the event.

The Satyagraha centenary celebrations were hosted by the Phoenix Settlement Trust, a government integrated project near Durban, which serves as an interpretation centre by translating Gandhian philosophy into ethnic languages.

Sri Sri earlier visited the trust and lit the 'light of hope' for peace in Africa at Sarvodaya, Gandhi's erstwhile ashram.

He said that the Gandhian trinity values of satyagraha, ahimsa (non-violence) and sarvodaya (welfare for all) cannot exist in isolation or apart from each other.

Sri Sri was on a five-day tour of the African continent.

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