

Samvad II Speech : Shri Narendra Modi

Friends it is a matter of great honour for me to address this distinguished gathering of religious scholars and thinkers from across the world representing various religions and traditions for Samvad on the theme of Dialogue for peace, harmony and security.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that over the last two years SAMVAD has grown from strength to strength. It has brought together diverse, scholars and thinkers from all over the world to reflect on challenges that confront humanity today.

Societies across the world facing several questions today:

1. How to avoid conflict?
2. How to address global challenges like climate change?
3. What lessons do Asian values, democracies hold for the world?
4. How to live with peace and harmony and secure our lives?

All these questions aren't only timeless and deeply philosophical there also relevant to our contemporary world. It is only natural that the search for answers to be led by humanities longest traditions of thought rooted in various religions, civilisations and multiple streams of spirituality.

Friends I am a product of the ancient Indian tradition that humbly believes in dialogues on difficult issues. The ancient Indian concept of Tarkshastra is founded on dialogue and debate as the model for exchange of views and avoidance of conflicts.

In Indian Mythology, Krishna killed Kansa and Prince Shiddhartha who later became Lord Buddha saved a dog hurt by an arrow shot by his brother. Also Lord Rama obeyed his father while Bhakta Prahlad disobeyed his father. On the surface this may appear contradictory but the purpose of each action was to uphold Dharma which has sustained Indians from ancient to modern times. It is only through deep and prolonged dialogue Samvad that we may discover hidden synergies and resolve contradiction.

Samvad is also the only way to cut through deep rooted religious stereotypes and prejudices that often arise due to misconceptions and divide communities across the world and so seeds of conflicts between nations and societies.

Friends, the Hindu-Buddhist philosophies also see nature and its entire creation as one whole. They advocated living in harmony with nature.

If man doesn't nurture nature, then nature reacts in the form of climate change. Environmental laws and regulations well essential in any modern society, efforts only an inferior protection to nature. What is needed is harmonious environmental consciousness. Man must relate to nature. Men must revere nature not merely considering it resource to be exploited.

Friends Asia, the world's most populous geography is imagining complex and wonderfully variable. It is also home to incredible diversity of spiritual and philosophical traditions as the interconnected and interdependent world of 21st century battles a number of global challenges from terrorism to climate change. I am confident that the solutions will be found through Asia's oldest traditions of dialogue and debate.

My best wishes are with you, as you discuss, deliberate and debate many issues both practical and philosophical over these two days. I also like to convey my heartiest congratulations to Sitagu International Buddhist Academy, Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International studies, Vivekananda International Foundation, The Japan Foundation and Government of Myanmar for organising this edition of Samvad.

Thank You!!

Namaste.