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City must show the way in religious tolerance

Staff Reporter

BANGALORE: There is a need to change the attitude among the "intelligentsia and the academia towards religion," member of Parliament and Chairman of the World Inter Faith Movement Karan Singh said here on Monday.



Karan Singh

He was delivering a lecture at the National Institute of Advanced Studies here.

He said this group was guilty of dereliction of duty as it ignored religion.

"They are either hostile or disdainful of religion. This attitude has resulted in religion landing in the hands of fundamentalists," he said.

"There is a strong need for a change in people's attitudes. This change should start from Bangalore," he said.

Giving details of the Inter Faith Movement, Singh said it was designed to bring about better understanding between different religious traditions in the world and create a meaningful dialogue.

"The Inter Faith Movement has begun to gain momentum but is still in the periphery of human consciousness. There is a need for the momentum to move to the centre of human consciousness like the environment movement," he felt.

Commenting on the destruction of Buddha statues in Afghanistan, Singh said it was unfortunate that despite the initiatives for peace as propagated by all religions, such incidents continued to occur.

At his book release function on Sunday, Singh rued that fundamentalist forces had gained in strength referring to Taliban's decision to destroy the Bamiyan Buddha statues in Afghanistan.

However, he expressed confidence that India would be able to combat this effectively.

"The world is in the midst of a disappearing past and an uncertain future. The increasing crime and violence shows that the world has been unable to adapt to change. Humanity has knowledge like never before to build a better and saner life. It is contradictory that the wealth of knowledge is not being channelised properly," he summarised.