

ONE GOD - ONE PEOPLE - ONE FAITH

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Ladies and gentlemen! On this auspicious occasion of the coming together of *Ramadan* and Christmas this year, I would like to convey you a message this evening.

God of all peoples, the Almighty, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and all the creation, the Law-Giver, the Gracious, the Benevolent and the Loving would naturally expect that the human race would, while making use of the capabilities inherent in it, establish societies in various parts of the world where peace and progress will reign, where justice and fairness will prevail and where one will help the other live in ease.

For this to happen we will have to uphold the principle of "One Lord, One People, One Faith", both individually and collectively. We will have to understand that 'faith in God and service to humanity' is the real message of 'faith' conveyed through the Prophets. It should, therefore, be preferred to 'religion' - a concept developed by men on their own, centred on the different ways of worshiping God, which they say will give them salvation in the hereafter. We should certainly gain inspiration by worshiping God, in whichever way we may, but such worship should propel us to purposeful action in life. The divergent concepts of God-ordained "faith", and the man-tailored "religion", when applied to life give different results; the former unites people whereas the latter divides them. Humankind is thus divided broadly into two components – the believers and the non-believers. The believers continue to work for building a humane, benevolent and productive society while the non-believers busy themselves constantly in putting hurdles in the way of believers and corrupting the society. A struggle to gain mastery thus prevails between the believers and the non-believers. The believers' job is to

proceed with their holy assignment in a tolerant and pleasant way, without thrusting their views on others.

If we concentrate on keeping the purpose of our lives well defined before us, the importance of 'faith' becomes all embracing and other notions take secondary positions. The purpose of life, as understood by a purposeful person, is to build oneself as a knowledgeable, cheerful, cooperating and sharing human being dedicated to a cause, and living a purposeful life. We should never be satisfied with the *status quo* in which we were born and have grown up. We should always be desirous of, and working for, changing the life-system and improving the ways of governance inherited by us, which the vested interests and the monopolists control. We should be constantly engaged in self-development as well as improvement of the society in which we are placed. Man is essentially endowed by nature with the two characteristics of love and creativity. Hence one should be constantly engaged in spreading the message of love and creating new things that are beneficial to humanity.

Now, in order to change the system of governance a sound leadership will have to be established, especially among the youth, that is honest, hardworking, willful and abreast with understanding of the problems faced by the people. Politics, practiced through such a process for bringing forth sound leaders, becomes an 'act of worship'. It ceases to be a 'dirty game'. It is now time that dirty politics be converted into clean politics by strengthening faith in God and reposing confidence and trust in the leadership of men who are above board. The "believers" should now shed their complacency, frustration and cowardice and take on courage to enter the political field for displacing the wrongdoers.

Such an understanding of the concept of life, and the intense desire to contribute usefully for the betterment of humanity, is possible only if all the components constituting a nation, to whichever caste, creed or colour they may belong, are trained in the democratic way and brought into the political mainstream. For this purpose adoption of joint-electoralates as a system of election for the assemblies is necessary. Not only that, it has to be accepted in

principle that even a person belonging to a minority community can become the head of a State, provided he or she is a believer in One God and has the will to serve humanity in an unprejudiced manner.

In this way, the followers of all the Prophets – the Christians, the Muslims and all others professing various creeds - can come together rather than be at loggerheads with one another, destroying each other's lives, properties and environments, and denying them progress and prosperity in this world. The hereafter of every individual too can be made secure, and salvation guaranteed, only by adopting such a "way of life".

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