



FOUNDATION FOR
UNITY OF RELIGIONS AND
ENLIGHTENED CITIZENSHIP



ALL YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT FUREC

Q 1. What Is FUREC?

FUREC is a Non-profit organization set up by 15 spiritual leaders to sustain human spirit on the basis of acceptance of, and respect for, all religions, spirituality, economic well being and on the practice of Non-Violence (Ahimsa).

Q 2. When was FUREC launched?

FUREC was launched by Hon'ble President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam on the birthday of H.H. Acharya Mahaprajna, the 15th June 2004 at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

FUREC was registered as Society with Registrar of Societies, Delhi Government on 21 October 2004.

Q 3. What is the genesis of FUREC?

The Hon'ble President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has always been perturbed by divisive forces and religious fundamentalism disturbing the Unity and bonhomie among our countrymen as well as state of 'underprivileged segment' of our society. His vision for a fully developed beautiful India with prosperous and harmonious life for its citizens, especially the youth, motivated enlightened spiritual and religious leaders who organized a Conclave under the aegis of H.H. Acharya Mahaprajna the spiritual leader of Jain Community at Surat on 15th October 2003 also the birthday of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of India. The Action Plan discussed during the Conclave was documented and is known as 'Surat Spiritual Declaration' (SSD).

The SSD Action Plan envisages Five Garland Projects. The emphasis of four projects was on celebration of inter religious festivals, multi religious projects, healthcare and employment, imbibing value based education in schools and encouraging interfaith dialogue among religious/spiritual heads. In order to pursue the above in sustained manner and to coordinate all activities, a national level independent and autonomous organization managed by religious/spiritual leaders as well as scholars and Enlightened Citizens was set up. This organization was named "Foundation for Unity of Religious and Enlightened Citizenship' (FUREC).

Q 4. Who are the signatory of FUREC?

15 Spiritual/Religious Leaders belonging to nine religions followed in India, are the signatory of FUREC. They are, Archbishop Stanislaus Fernandez, Bishop Dr. Thomas Dabre, Brahma Kumari Sudesh Didi, Dr. Homi B. Dhalla, Dr. J.S. Neki, Jagadguru Sri Sri Shivaratri Deshikendra Mahaswamji, Mahathero Rahul Bodhi, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Prince Husaifa Moyiduddin, Rev. Ezekiel Isaac Malekar, Sadhvi Kanakprabha, Sri Sri Balagangadharanatha Swamiji, Swami Jitatmananda ji, Syed Jilani Ashraf and Yuvacharya Mahasraman.

Q 5. What are the activities of FUREC?

FUREC functions at three levels of Human Existence. At the level of the individual, it seeks to develop a common agenda for the development of a violence free individual or the Enlightened Citizen; at the level of the Society, it seeks to eradicate poverty through economic upliftment, harnessing the teachings of spirituality; at the collective level, it seeks to bring about better understanding between the different faiths/religions and bring about amity between them.

Q 6. Where is FUREC located?

The Registered Office of the FUREC is situated at 2nd Floor, Nehru House 4 Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, New Delhi 110 002. Regional chapters of FUREC are launched by the Signatories.

Q 7. How can we assist / participate in FUREC?

FUREC invites all like minded people to join the Support Group to start a Project especially in rural and underdeveloped areas anywhere in India, and offer their support in terms of their ideas, their time and their influence. Every Project for alleviating poverty requires a Patron. FUREC values its PROJECT PATRONS and hails them for its effective working.

For more details contact FUREC Secretariat at the above given address or contact us on:
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Email: info@furec.org Website: www.furec.org.

NEIGHBOURS MEET



The picture shows the Member Secretary, FUREC Ms. Sudhamahi Regunathan inviting HE General Parvez Musharraf, President of Pakistan in the presence of HE Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam and Muni Lok Prakash Lokesh to the International Conference 'Spirituality in Action' to be held at Delhi in Nov, 2005. Both the Presidents evinced interest and President Musharraf expressed his desire to know more about FUREC. He said he would give the invitation due consideration.

President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam who is the inspiration for FUREC had hosted a lunch in honour of the President of Pakistan where the above meeting took place. The huge hall with a fully carpented floor, exquisitely painted ceiling was the venue where dignitaries like the Vice President, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhavat, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and other dignitaries gathered before adjourning to the sit down banquet.

READER'S WRITE...

*A letter received by FUREC
from a school girl in Jammu
is reproduced below:*

I am a student of a well named school DPS which informed me that there is an association which wants to inculcate morality in children like me, so I decided to join this particular association. But before that I would like to know more about FUREC, an organisation which has invited many schools like ours to take part in Essay competition on Morality In Daily Life and Understanding of Work Ethics.

– Bonita Güpte

PROGRESS IN FUREC ESSAY COMPETITION

One of the important objectives of FUREC is motivate youth to participate in nation building so that we have a beautiful prosperous and fully developed India by 2020, where countrymen may live in a harmonious environment free from ethnic groupism and religious fundamentalism.

It was with this background in mind, that FUREC has made an effort to encourage school children to express their candid and undiluted views in an informal forum addressing a number of issues which require Youth participation and their subsequent enlightenment.

Accordingly FUREC has initiated the conduct of two nationwide Essay competitions for the students of 9th and 11th classes during April/May 05. To this end FUREC has tapped all resources at its disposal viz. contacting educationist, Resource persons and schools in most of the states; even NCC Directorates in the states have been requested to motivate students to take part in these competitions.

The response so far has been good and FUREC hopes that by July 05 a large number of entries will be received, A jury of eminent educationist/social activists is being formed who will determine 10 best entries and 55 other deserving written work in each of the subjects. These will be compiled in to a book. All students taking part in this competition will be given Certificates of Merit.

I VISITED...

HH DALAI LAMA



The invitation seemed too good to be true. A film of sixty-minute duration exploring the world of the Dalai Lama. What could be more pleasurable than to receive an invitation to the premiere of such a film?

It was titled Impermanence.

The morning dawned and as the invitation card said seats would be available on a first come first served basis, we went much in advance and took vantage positions so that we could get a full view of the HH Dalai Lama who was to be present at the premiere.

We flicked through people as people do television channels as we allowed time to pass. The only exercise we did along with it was to wish everybody well for if we were to prepare for the presence of the Dalai Lama there could be no better way to do so.

The moment arrived and the wonderful man exuberating love came on the dias. That has always been a source of wonder to me. How does he look so genuinely happy and concerned for each one of us? No, he did not talk to me or even look at me and yet I felt we had a special rapport- a feeling that all the three hundred odd people in the hall shared! I realized it is not so much what he says or what he does, it is the years of penance and depth of compassion that makes him so attractive, makes us want to keep looking at him.

He seems unaware of it as he jokes about always carrying a peppermint in his bag for it is a good thing to share. He recollected an incident when a lady

sitting next to him during long meetings in Tibet would share sweets with him. He says today he carries it so that he can share it with people. I wonder if he really needs a peppermint – he seems to share his very being.

In one shot in the film he jokes saying Om mani pemme hum, the Tibetan chant is repeated in way that it sounds like we are repeating money, money, money! Money is the current obsession. He says the chant should be repeated with right thought, which will lead to inner strength. Inner strength is made with love and compassion and non-violent thought and action.

To make a film on a man of such greatness is not easy. So perhaps it should not have been surprising that the film was a disappointment. The film began by showing a child being extracted from the mother's womb by a surgeon, to mark the birth of life. That one scene set the tone and tenor of the film. It dwelt on the visible, on the gross and had unrelated shots of Osama Bin Laden, shots of 9/11 and extreme violence meted out during times of war in different places. Even these shots were neither contextual nor moving. They hurt. They repulsed. And I do not know how they found a place in a so called "life story" of a man full of nothing but compassion.

Even the Dalai Lama commented on the film, when he spoke at the end saying that his life had never been used for violence and that the birth portrayed in the beginning was an unnatural birth while his was a perfectly normal one! Our life, reflected the Dalai lama originates in pain, in suffering. Why? What is the origin? Is there an origin? These are thoughts that have to be investigated. Maybe with deeper meditation we may find answers to such questions.

Commenting on the issue of Tibet, he said that it is a complex issue and that he believes in the long run this struggle will prove very important to China. He talked on the importance of preserving Tibetan culture and said that while Tibet is materialistically poor, the people of Tibet have a lot of compassion in them and that is why he is proud to be Tibetan. One event the film recorded was his fleeing from Tibet and here there came a very poignant scene of how the monks were treated to violence as they tried to run away.

The film had just two or three shots of the Dalai Lama as a child and a younger person, which made me think age sits well on him. There was no further information about either his growing up, his family or a conversation about his experiences in life... The film could not bring tears to your eyes, tears of joy or gratitude for his universal love, could not make you feel life was beautiful in spite of all the suffering, could not show you the many dimensions of this monk who lives for the world.

I guess it is always easy to find fault and particularly so with a work on a man who is larger than life. In fact as you get to know a great man or woman more and more, as is essential to produce any work on him or her, one gets lost, not knowing where to begin, not knowing where to end. It seems like facing the macro question of whether at all there is an origin, whether at all there is an end.

Our gratitude to the director, Goutam Ghose, researcher, Renuka Singh, Producer Sergio Scapagnini for giving us an opportunity to be in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the occasion of the premiere of their film, Impermanence.

Inshamali Reguaman