



Government of Puducherry
Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat

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PRESS RELEASE

"India is a spiritual country and everyone is somehow attached with a form of prayer, a spiritual teacher and/or a place of reflection"

- Dr. Kiran Bedi, Lieutenant Governor

In a first of its kind, over 350 people came together in Raj Nivas today for an Inter faith Prayer for Nation Building with a focus on Swachhta, environment, health, peace and harmony.

Puducherry is blessed not just with its pristine natural resources but also with spiritual resources. It has over 250 places of worship. According to the HRI Commissioner Thiru B Thillaivel "Several of these places are centuries old, the oldest one being the Vedambigai Samedha Moolanadhaeshwarar Temple in Bahour that was built in 9th Century AD."

As per legal provisions, trustees are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the recommendation of the Government of Puducherry. Many of them are learned and influential members of the community and are responsible for the upkeep and overall management of the place of worship.

The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor urged members of all faiths to fulfill their potential for social reform and nation building. She listed a 10-point program that benefits all and rises above caste, creed, colour and affiliation.

This, first of its kind, coming together of heads of faiths, trustees, executives, members can play a vital role in addressing social concerns that will benefit the present and future generations of Puducherry.

1. Sanitation- Toilet construction, use of community toilets, and making Puducherry ODF
2. Water Management- its judicious use, conservation, and harvesting.
3. Alcoholism- its reduction and promoting healthy lifestyles
4. Encouraging sustainable agriculture

5. Value based education with modern technologies including schools of theology
6. Encourage and train youth for skill development
7. Rejection of corruption and rowdyism
8. Preparing people for grassroots leadership
9. Promotion of Shramdaan and spirit of collaborative community service
10. Promote interfaith and inter caste harmony

These 10 priorities may be addressed in their various congregations from time to time.

In the recent appointments made by the office of the Lieutenant Governor of these Trustees certain responsibilities have been expressly listed out to ensure certain standards of accountability in performance of their duties.

She said there was a need to watch and care for inherited lands that many places of worship are blessed with and that serve as a source of income for sustenance for such places.

Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor said that a directory of these places of worship is being compiled and will be released in the next few weeks.

Prayers were offered by Shri Balakrishnan, Reverend Father Antonisamy, Reverend Pastor Steve, Moulvi Mohammad Iqbal, Shri Manthaiyan, Giani Darshan Singh & Bhai Sukhwinder Singh.

To institutionalize this practice, Raj Nivas will hold such get together twice a year namely, on the eve of Independence and Republic Days.