

# **VARIOUS RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND PRACTICES ARE PREVALENT IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF OUR COUNTRY, BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE BELIEF AND THAT IS TO WORK FOR THE WELFARE OF ALL CONSIDERING THE ENTIRE HUMANITY AS ONE FAMILY: PRESIDENT KOVIND**

Relevant for: null | Topic: Famous personalities & institutions attached to Indian culture

Various religious traditions and practices are prevalent in different parts of our country. But there is only one belief and that is to work for the welfare of all considering the entire humanity as one family, said the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind. He was speaking on the occasion of inauguration of the three-year long celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupad, the founder of Gaudiya Math and Mission in Puri, Odisha today (February 20, 2022).

The President said that God is worshiped in all its forms. But the tradition of worshiping God with Bhakti-Bhav (devotion) has been significant in India. Here many great saints have practiced selfless worship. Even among such great saints, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has a special place. Inspired by his extraordinary devotion, a large number of people chose the path of Bhakti.

The President said that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu used to say that people should remember God with a humble attitude considering themselves to be smaller than grass. One must be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of any sense of ego and must give respect to others. One should always be remembering God. He noted that this feeling is found in all the followers of the Bhakti-Marg. The President said that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's constant love for God and his drive to connect the society with the thread of equality gives him a unique reputation in Indian culture and history.

The President said that saints of Bhakti-Marg were above the prevailing discrimination of that time based on religion, caste, gender and rituals. Therefore, people of all classes were not only inspired by them but also took refuge in this path. Guru Nanak Dev ji tried to build an egalitarian society while walking on the Bhakti-Marg.

The President said that the Bhakti-Marg's speciality of complete devotion to the God is witnessed not only in the spiritual side of life but also in the day to day life too of every individual. Serving the needy has been given a top priority in our culture. Our doctors, nurses and health workers displayed this spirit of service during the COVID pandemic. They were also infected with the coronavirus, but even in such extreme circumstances, they did not lose courage and were engaged in the treatment of people. Many of our corona warriors sacrificed their lives but the dedication of their co-workers remained unwavering. The whole country would always be

indebted to such warriors.

The President said that apart from Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, other great personalities of Bhakti movement too, strengthen the unity in our cultural diversity. The saints of the Bhakti community did not contradict each other in their teachings, but were often inspired by each other's writings. Swami Vivekananda, while presenting the spiritual message of India to the world community in his speech in 1893 in Chicago, said that just as the rivers originating from different places eventually join the sea, in the same way man chooses different paths of his own will, these paths may seem different, but in the end all reach God. This principle of India's spiritual unity was propagated by Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda which was also adopted by the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi.

The President expressed confidence that the Gaudiya Mission would be successful in its resolve of spreading the message of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to the world, keeping its objective of human welfare as paramount.

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