

Ethiopia warms up to Indian spirituality during Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's visit

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His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar was on a two-day visit to Ethiopia from 6 – 8 December 2007, on invitation from Members of the Ethiopian Parliament. Large crowds of people including youth, diplomats and business leaders came to hear his message of a peaceful and stress-free world at various events in Addis Ababa.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar held discussions with the President of Ethiopia, the Honorable Girma Wolde Giorgis, at the Presidential Palace. He also addressed the House of People's Representatives and met with Deputy Speaker of the House, Honorable Shetaye Menale and Speaker of the House of Federations, Honorable Degife Bulla. He also met Princess Mariam Senna Asfa Wossen, the Mayor of Addis Ababa, Mr Berhanu Deressa. and several senior diplomats.

His Holiness held an interfaith dialogue with the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council, represented by its vice-president Sheih Alias Redwan Seid. Later, he met the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Abune Paulos, the Archbishop of Axum, Echegue of the Sea of St Tekle Himanot and President of the World Council of Churches.

Diplomats and special invited guests attended a lecture given by His Holiness entitled 'Preserving Human Values in the Process of Development'. He later addressed city administrators on the theme 'The Role of Integrity in Public Life'. His Holiness also met with Mr Abdoulie Janneh, the Executive Secretary of the United National Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and explored the possibilities of partnership and cooperation between the two organizations across Africa in areas such as good governance and youth empowerment.

Currently, the Art of Living is active in over 28 countries in Africa. His Holiness was invited to the country in recognition of the important work being done by the Art of Living with youth and parliamentarians.

Over 150 Members of Parliament participated in the special programmes for decision makers conducted by the Art of Living. Approximately one third of the Ethiopian Parliament has taken the Art of Living's healing breath workshop.