

Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence example for int'l community: Ban Ki-moon

03/10/2015 13:47 by admin

United Nations: Invoking Mahatma Gandhi on his 146th birth anniversary, UN chief Ban Ki-moon today said in the current times of escalating conflicts, rising extremism and massive displacement, the Indian leader's dedication to non-violence is an "example" for the international community.

"I continue to admire his (Gandhi's) courage and conviction. Gandhi proved that non-violence, the principle and the practice, can change history. He was strongly committed to social justice," UN Secretary General Ban said at a special event organised by the Indian Permanent Mission to the UN, marking the International Day of Non-violence commemorated on Gandhi's birth anniversary.

Ban said at a time of escalating conflicts, rising extremism, massive displacement and rapidly growing humanitarian need, Gandhi's dedication to non-violence remains an "example for us all.

"On this International Day, let us recall the achievements of Mahatma Gandhi. And let us renew our commitment to non-violence and lives of dignity for all," he said.

Gandhi's teachings can be applied across a very wide spectrum of human activities. As India embarks on a new era of change and development, Gandhi's legacy of peace and non-violence serves as a guiding light, India's Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar said at the event attended by UN General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Asoke Mukerji among others.

"India's diplomacy is focussed today on a broad range of global issues that serve the broader interests of humanity," he said adding that through India's humanitarian operations in Yemen and Nepal, the country helped those in distress irrespective of nationality.

"...We are living up to the internationalism that Mahatma Gandhi championed. When we advocate disarmament and peaceful resolution of disputes, we are taking into the contemporary world his philosophy of active non-violence," Jaishankar said.

He said Gandhi's emphasis on upliftment of all and sustainable development is being implemented through a variety of national campaigns such as 'Swachh Bharat', 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao', 'Make in India' and 'Digital India.'

He added that growth of religious bigotry and intolerance has directly fuelled support and sponsorship of terrorism.

"Unfortunately, the world has often looked away when terrorists have attacked innocents, assuming that it is not their problem. As a believer in the indivisibility of the world and the importance of moral courage, Gandhiji would ask us all to stand up and be counted. We have faith that day may yet come," Jaishankar added.

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