

Let Muslims defuse Babri crisis: Dayananda

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By a Staff Reporter,
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"The Ram Janmabhoomi issue should not be politicized by either the Hindus or the Muslims but our Muslim friends should recognize that the place has a traditional sentiment for the Hindus, and respect this", said Swami Dayananda Saraswati of the Aarsha Vidya Peetham, here today.

The Swami who is an exponent of Vedanta, told reporters on Tuesday that the issue is one concerning Hindu sentiment and should not be looked at politically because that would convert it into a question of victory and defeat for the two religious groups. But if the Hindus have accommodated so many mosques in this country, for a "religion which came from outside and they ask for a piece of land in return" the sentiment should be respected. Stating that he did not want to get into the "political aspect of it", the Swami said, "let us hope they settle it (the issue) amicably".

On the issue of religious fundamentalism which is on the increase in the country, he said, it was a dangerous thing. However, Hindus are against fundamentalism, because "of our vision of God being what it is". But attack has now become the best form of defence for the Hindu who finds himself among other religious groups who are aggressive with their religion. Even a person like Mother Teresa believes that people "who are outside the flock must be brought into it". The only solution now is for people to be educated so that they

understand the strength of their own religion and are not either gullible or vulnerable to conversion.

Meanwhile, religious and spiritual education must be inculcated in the home by the parents and not by educational institutions, he said. Moral science cannot and should not be just a special class but must percolate to all activity in life. Instead it would be beneficial if teacher training schools gave emphasis to inculcating universal spiritual values among teachers.

His own philosophy is to provide the right perspective through the teaching of Vedanta, he said. If the perspective is clear the priorities become clear and there is less conflict, the Swami added. Vedanta, he said, addresses the individual always and does not distinguish between materialism and spiritualism.

Swami Dayananda who had started a retreat centre at Rishikesh for students interested in Vedantic study, is shortly starting a teaching institute at Coimbatore where he proposes to hold a 3-year residential course for full-time students of Vedanta. All expenses of the student will be borne by the Sruti Seva Trust set up for the purpose.

The Swami is currently in Bombay for a 5-day yagna (lecture series) on the topics "meditation" and "Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara" (You, World and God) from Jan. 24 to 28. The former will be held in the morning at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and the latter at the Birla Mathushri Sabhagar.