

# 2012 Thailand Multi-Faith Forum Review

## Achieving World Peace through Religious Harmony and Conflict Resolution



- World Fellowship of  
Buddhists
- Pure Land Learning College  
Association Inc.  
May 2012

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# **Chapter 1. The Pursuit of Peace**

## **1. 2012 Multi-Faith Summit Theme**

2012 has been an unusual year. It is not only the year for the realization of the planet-wide catastrophe predicted by Mayan prophecy, but also the year of the 2600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Buddha Shakyamuni's enlightenment. For Thailand, it is the year of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's eighty-fifth birthday, Her Majesty Queen Consort Sirikit's eightieth birthday, and His Majesty Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn's sixtieth birthday. It has been a very gratifying year for Thailand's royal family.

Therefore, the World Fellowship of Buddhists and the Pure Land Learning College Association Inc.co-hosted a multi-faith summit in Bangkok with the theme of "Achieving World Peace through Religious Harmony and Conflict Resolution."Although we are of different ethnicities and have broad cultural differences, we have the same wish that all countries become prosperous and their people live in peace; that all countries peacefully coexistent and become mutually prosperous; and that international communities achieve enduring peace.

What caused people to become very anxious is that although they have wonderful expectations, they saw that the world has been experiencing natural and man-made disasters. As the only founding nation of Buddhism, Thailand has profoundly realized that as its foremost responsibility and obligation, it must dedicate itself to the restoration of world peace. As one of the first founding Buddhist universities in Australia, the Pure Land Learning College Association Inc. shoulders the burden of the ancient precept that says, "Everybody is responsible for the rise and fall of a country." Over the past decade, the college has dedicated itself to reconciling conflicts and harmonizing different religions. Therefore, the World Fellowship of Buddhist, headquartered in Bangkok, co-hosted the summit along with the Pure Land Learning College Association Inc., in order to come together to discuss how to achieve world peace.

Starting from 21 May 2012, five hundred religious leaders from around the world, representing ten religions, gathered together in Bangkok. While they dressed differently and spoke different languages, they all shared a common goal – to achieve “religious harmony” and that “all religions are one family.” The ten religions represented were: Baha’i, Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Taoism and Zoroastrian.

When the five-day forum came to an end, participants had again witnessed that all religions teach the education of love and peace; only the education of love can bring about happiness and only the education of peace can harmonize all ethnicities of the world. The true meaning of religion had been expressed again; the essence of religion is education, it is primary education, an important teaching that is worthy of our veneration.

## 2. Event Banner and Images for the Opening Ceremony



Photo 1. Event Banner



Photo 2. Mr. Phan Wannamethee (R), President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB), and Mr. Phallop Thaiarry (L), Secretary General of the WFB, rang the gong on 21 May 2012, Aksra Theater, Bangkok.

Photo 3. A spectacular view of the forum, Aksra Theater.





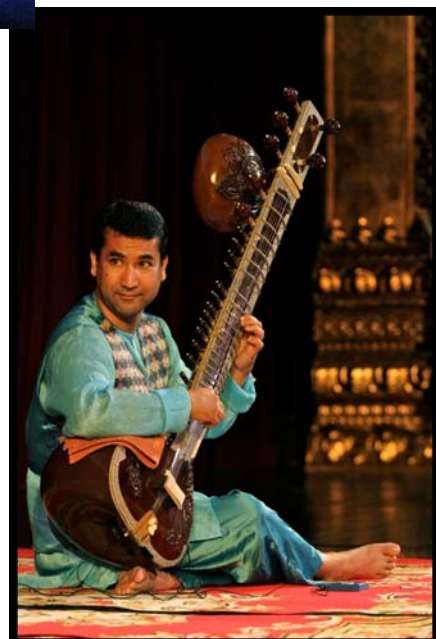
### 3. Forum Minutes, 21 May



Photo 4. Mahayana Buddhist chanting in praise of the Buddha.



The performance of Brahma voices from various countries made the audience hear the sound from the bottom of their heart. At this moment, languages are not obstacles; the world is one.





## Highlights of Venerable Master Chin Kung's Speech

- Buddhism has a long history. It is a perfect teaching of the utmost virtuousness taught by the Buddha for the benefit of all beings in the Nine Dharma Realms. Learning Buddhism is the ultimate enjoyment of life.
- During his life-time, the Buddha was a voluntary social educator who taught for forty-nine years. The Buddhist Sutras are all inclusive. They are far more perfect than today's university education.
- Physicists who study quantum mechanics have recently proven that Buddhism is not only the pinnacle of all philosophies in the world, but also the pinnacle of science in the world. We are persuaded by the joint confirmation between Buddhism and state-of-the art science that Buddhism is a perfect teaching of the utmost virtuousness.
- Only when Buddhist teachings are practiced in daily life and one is a sincere student, can they receive real benefit. One can then help others.

- Owing to the crisis of natural and man-made disasters in recent years, people have realized that there is a great need for restoring the teachings of saints and sages. People will be convinced of the benefit of ancient saints and sages' education by building a model site of harmony using the teachings of saints and sages. Saints and sages' education is the only way to reconcile conflicts and achieve enduring world peace.





## Chapter2. Moral Education - Hope for a Harmonious World

Vajiravudh College, founded by King Rama VI in 1910, is a very outstanding school for imparting moral education to teenagers in Thailand. It is an all-boys boarding school with a long history of achieving good results. The school provides a continuous education; starting from when the boys enter primary school and ending when they graduate from high school. The school has cultivated many political, commercial and scientific leaders for Thailand.



Photo\_5. The Assembly Hall of Vajiravudh College, is one of the landmark buildings of the school. It displays photos of the Kings, Queens and Princes of Thailand.

The school is renowned for its moral education. It therefore receives many student applications from many different cultural backgrounds from across Thailand, including citizens of Chinese origin. Since students participate in morning and evening Buddhist classes, they are more calm in comparison to others of the same age. This is the most outstanding and distinguishable feature of the students in this school. Additionally, they have also achieved remarkable success in physical education and the arts.

On the morning of 21 May, all distinguished guests attended a Buddhist ceremony, organized by the World Fellowship of Buddhists (See Photo 7) to devoutly make an offering to ninety-nine monks on the lawn of the school. Their wish was that the virtues and merits resulting from this good deed would be a celebration of Their Majesties the King, Queen and Prince of Thailand.



Photo 6. On 21 May, the first day of the forum, a Buddhist ceremony was conducted in the school to celebrate the Royal families' birthdays.



Photos 7 & 8. In the ceremony of making an offering to ninety-nine monks, guests devoutly participated as well as the students.

## **Chapter3. Religious Education – Ways to Achieve World Peace**

On 23-25 May 2012, at the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel, religious leaders from ten different religions participated in round-table discussions, explored the relationship between religious harmony and world peace, and discovered ways to achieve world peace. During the meeting, Venerable Master Chin Kung delivered a keynote speech titled “Eliminating Crises through Religious Education,” where he appealed for the restoration of religious education and how that will be the only way to reconcile the crises that the world is now confronting.

The summit provided all religious leaders with sufficient opportunities to discuss religious harmony, concrete strategies, and feasible solutions for restoring the true nature of religious education. The group meetings discussed and shared the experiences of religious education, the issues of inheriting traditional morality and virtues, how to enhance the dialogue of different religions from different cultural backgrounds, and how to ensure that the interaction and cooperation of multi-faith is feasible. The discussions of these topics were offered by Her Excellency Ms Katalin Bogyay, Hungary’s Ambassador to UNESCO and President of the General Conference of UNESCO. She realized that what the multi-faith forum was trying to achieve was the same as the United Nations, even though they have different approaches. She stated that the United Nations supports multi-faith and multicultural activities that seek peace and happiness for humanity.

The last day of the summit focused on discussions of reconciling conflicts, promoting religious education, cooperation of different religions, and so forth. All the participants had not only reached a consensus on the restoration of religious education, but also considered the establishment of their own model city of religious education as an imperative. They had also realized that it was the most effective way to achieve enduring world peace. Mr. Russi Giadiali, an elder of Zoroastrianism, called on all religious

leaders to put their words into action, i.e. to establish a model city of their own religions, at once.



Photo 9. Religious leaders and Her Excellency Ms Katalin Bogyay, Hungary's Ambassador to UNESCO and President of the General Conference of UNESCO, holding hands, symbolizing world peace.

## 1. Keynote Speech by Venerable Master Chin Kung

### Eliminating Crises through Religious Education (Excerpt Highlights)



23rd May 2012 10:30-12:00

- How I started learning Buddhism.

I loved reading when I was young. Even when I was deprived of schooling, I never stopped reading. I had the opportunity to learn about Buddhist Philosophy when I was

twenty-six years old. My teacher taught me that Buddhism was not found in temples, but in the Sutras.

- The confidence of ancient saints and sages is derived from their respectful attitude.

One can receive real benefit if they study the saints and sages' teachings with sincerity and respect, and without doubts.

- Buddhism is not a religion.

Each religion has a God. The Buddha is an awakened person. Everybody can achieve enlightenment and become a Buddha. Buddhism attaches great importance to wisdom rather than to knowledge. One with wisdom will understand all knowledge naturally. As long as one does not give rise to thoughts and lets go of afflictions and attachments, they will understand all. Buddha Shakyamuni is a good example.



Photo\_9. The Summit, attended by five-hundred representatives from different religions and different countries, participated in round-table discussions, listened to Venerable Master Chin Kung's speech, and explored the relationship between religious harmony and world peace.



He left home at nineteen years of age, studied for twelve years and achieved enlightenment when he was thirty.

- Buddhism embodies profound science and philosophy

The newest research report on quantum mechanics has helped us break from doubts completely. Matter originates from consciousness. “All phenomena are manifested by the mind and altered by the consciousness.” I believe that Buddhism will be classified as the most advanced science and philosophy in the next two or three decades.

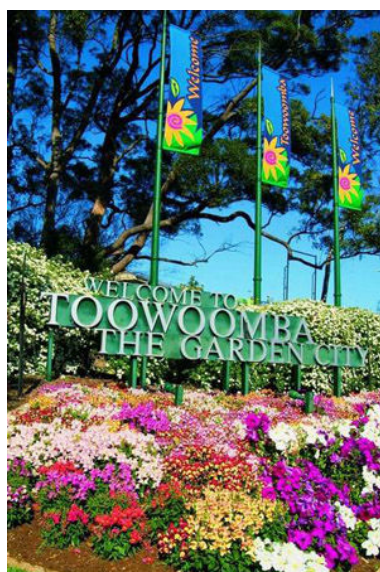
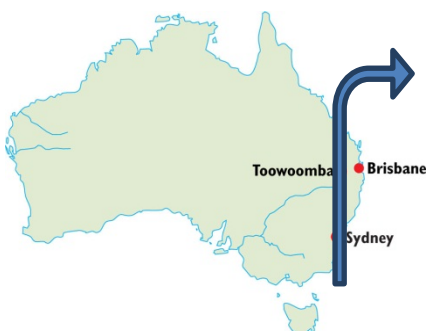
- The root causes of today’s social problems

The root causes of today’s social problems are the problems of education. People who are religious are fewer and fewer. Religious education must be restored. Looking back on religious history, the founders of each religion were educators.

- Practice validates the truth

Any experience without verification is not a good experience. We will promote religious education and influence the rest of the world by setting up a “Multicultural Model City of Harmony” in Toowoomba, Australia.

The Chinese classic, *Imperial Compilation of Books on the Principles of Governing*, has provided essential governing wisdoms. We are planning to translate this set of books into English; one book per year; ten years to finish. I wish these virtues will bring the world enduring peace.



Toowoomba, “The Garden City”, is located in the eastern part of Australia. It has an estimated population of 100,000, and is comprised of more than 100 languages, and over 80 ethnic groups. It is a typical multicultural city.

## **2. Putting Words into Action**

### **25 May 2012 Summit Discussion Minutes**

Many representatives were concerned about what actions they should take after summit. Issues raised include: How to ensure the cooperation between religions is feasible and how to draw the attention of government officials to religious dialogues and participation in a summit like this one?

Attendees pointed out that the current practice has proven that religious cooperation does, in fact, not only accord with the interest of administrative rulers, but also provides a stable communication platform. Such practice proves that politicians can gain more all-round information through religious dialogues. All religions should do their utmost to promote the experiences of religious harmony in Australia back in their own countries

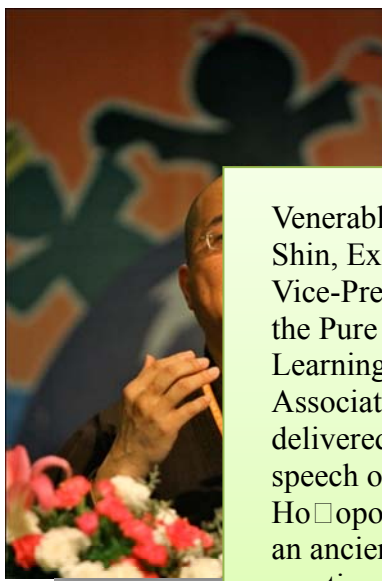
Furthermore, a number of religions could jointly establish a coordinating organization. There are already precedents. In countries such as Malaysia, which has many different religions, five religions jointly established a coordinating committee that harmonizes religious issues in their country. People are gratified by the success achieved. Religions that are members of the committee enhanced their mutual understanding by working together. They have been united as one for many years. This is a very effective experience.



### 3. Summit Overview



Inside and out, ambassadors discussed the education and immersed in



Venerable Wu Shin, Executive Vice-President of the Pure Land Learning College Association Inc delivered a speech on Ho□onop an ancient H practice of reconciliation forgiveness.



During the summit, experts from various religions and cultures shared their insights and experiences. The summit was a significant event in the history of interfaith dialogue and cooperation.



## 4. The Key to Saving the Religious Education Crisis is Faith and Action

### Closing Speech by Venerable Master Chin Kung (Audio Transcription)

25 May 2012

Today's world has witnessed an increase in the occurrence of uncertainty, instability, and natural and man-made disasters year by year. To reconcile disasters and help society towards harmony is something that everyone wishes for from the bottom of their hearts. Many people have lost faith in peace. We sustain our faith with great difficulty. We in fact understand the principles and methods, but how to put them into practice is a serious question.



Venerable Master Chin Kung delivered a closing speech with the "All Religions are One Family" logo displayed in the background.

In previous years, we participated in many conferences that were convened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). We presented the ideas of ancient saints and sages to the attendees. Everyone was pleased with the ideas. However, after the conference, some people told me that those ideals were not feasible. Therefore, how to help people gain confidence is a major issue. People only believe what they see.

In 2005, the experiment at Tangchi achieved good results within only four months' time that initially was anticipated to take two to three years. We couldn't even believe it ourselves. We were very cheerful with the results. This experiment had demonstrated that human nature is originally good. It has also demonstrated what the Buddha said in the Mahayana Buddhist sutras that "All sentient beings are originally Buddha." Simultaneously, it proved that "People can be taught to be good". But the problem is who is

going to teach?

After its establishment, I said to the teachers in Tangchi center that the most successful educators were Buddha Shakyamuni and Confucius. But why were they successful? The reason was that they practiced what they taught. If one has not practiced, one is not qualified to teach. One can only teach when they have practiced.

Confucius had practiced the Five Human Relationships, Five Moral Principles, Four Social Bonds and the Eight Virtues. Buddha Shakyamuni had practiced the Three Refuges, Five Precepts, Six Paramitas, Ten Virtuous Deeds, and the Ten Vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. They then started teaching people. People could thus believe them. For teaching to be effective, one must first practice. Then one can become a saint. If one could put into practice what one teaches, one would be a sage. If one couldn't practice what one teaches, but hoped others were able to, one would be a liar. I used these words to encourage teachers and to emphasize to truly practice ourselves.

Where should we begin? We should begin with the *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child* and integrate it with *Taoism's Accounts of Request and Response* and *the Ten Virtuous Conducts*. To practice what we learn, to set a good example. I asked the teachers to achieve this within four months' time; they listened to my words and actually achieved it within two months. I was very much moved! Afterwards, they travelled to rural areas, gave lessons to villagers and practiced filial piety to each family. When they saw the elderly, they treated them as their own parents and as if they were their children. When they returned from work, their attitudes toward the elderly were just like their attitudes towards their own parents. Many people were profoundly moved. The elderly felt that they didn't teach their own children properly when they witnessed these teachers' behaviors and wanted to learn from these teachers. Meanwhile, the younger people felt ashamed when they saw how respectful and careful these teachers were towards their parents.

Therefore, we didn't teach using words, but by actions. We did this for three weeks. We then told the public that our center would begin offering lessons and welcomed everyone to join. We didn't



enroll students, but many people joined. We brought a great change to this town of 48,000 people by significantly restoring their good social values. They became unwilling to commit wrongdoings. They felt it was wrong to have evil thoughts.

A taxi driver found a customer's briefcase with more than seventy thousand RMB and returned it to the owner immediately. The owner was very happy, saying: "There are still such people in this place." The owner wanted to reward the driver with twenty thousand RMB. But the driver refused saying that was what he should have done. He said to the owner: "We received the teachings of saints and sages. We thus know how to behave as a human being. Beforehand, I might not have returned it to you. And I would like you to know that I am not the only person who would have returned it to you, because if it had happened to other drivers in Tangchi, they would have all done the same." Such great outcomes made us truly have faith in traditional Chinese culture.

With the success of the Tangchi experiment, we firmly believe that the teachings of saints and sages can save society, change the general mood, reconcile conflicts, and advance the stability of society and world peace. This is true, not false! But to introduce this experience to UNESCO and the whole world is not an easy task. But we have a strong aspiration! What we could never imagine happened after two months: UNESCO invited me to attend a conference in October, 2010. The conference was to commemorate the 2550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Buddha Shakyamuni's enlightenment with the theme of "Buddhist Contributions to Humanity."

It was because UNESCO contacted Thailand first and the Thailand Ambassador recommended me. We therefore launched a four day event. This was due to the Buddha's blessings and our ancestors' virtues.

The successful experiment at Tangchi told us two things: "People can be taught to be good." and "Religions can be united." I therefore invited nine religions from Singapore and Australia, respectively, to conduct a joint prayer for world peace. We also presented the achievements of this project for eight hours at UNESCO. 192

representatives from different countries pledged to visit Tangchi. The local government also considered that it would be a good thing. However, they also felt it would not be possible for them to receive so many visitors. Eventually, the plan was cancelled. However, there were still some representatives who visited Tangchi as tourists and stayed there for a few days witnessing its success. We therefore are more confident. We must set a good example.

Over 3800 years ago, Chinese Emperor Tang of the Shang dynasty, set a good example for all. China was not unified at that time. Each tribe governed a small territory. According to historical records, Emperor Tang had territory of only seventy *li*, which is about thirty to forty square kilometers, equivalent to a small town today. All other states tried to learn from him. He was respected as the emperor by all of the states. At that time, “Emperor” was a title, representing that he was a good example for all other states to learn from because his country was stable and people lived in happiness, and the whole country was prosperous. This is an example that shows when a small region does well, it can influence the whole world.

We have these experiences in Chinese history. Our experiment was successful in Tangchi, but I reminded the teachers that we should not take the credit. The success was all due to the virtues of our ancestors and their divine blessings, rather than human abilities. This is the attitude we should have.

In recent years, the situation has become increasingly disordered and disasters are increasingly severe. The idea of creating a model holy city has become more urgent.

Last year, I accepted an invitation from the Pope of Vatican City, primarily because I wanted to suggest to the Pope to build the Vatican into the most holy city for Christians. Vatican City is not large and has a small population. I therefore asked the Pope: “How many churches belong to Catholicism in Rome?” He said there was more than four hundred. These more than four hundred churches can be seen as more than four hundred schools. If each school can teach the teachings of Christianity, then Rome will become a most holy city of Christianity within a year. This will definitely help to

reconcile the disasters. This will be the best example for the world to abandon evil and return to virtue, stop all wrongs and do what is proper, and finally correct our erroneous mindsets. We believe the outcome would be on par with what Emperor Tang had achieved.

I was very delighted to receive the visit of the Secretary General of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB) in Hong Kong. I told him about the idea of establishing a Buddhist holy city, hoping he could build a holy city in Thailand, and implement and practice Buddhist teachings and culture. He was very pleased with the idea and reported to the King of Thailand. His Majesty was also very pleased.

One Australian city, Toowoomba, has already started to build the first “multicultural model city” in the world. Toowoomba has an estimated population of 100,000, and is comprised of more than 100 languages, and over 80 ethnic groups. It is a typical multicultural city. If it is successful, world peace would be brought along.

What made us excited was the participation of the seventeen ambassadors to UNESCO. They are very pleased and supportive with the idea and report. If Toowoomba could achieve a good result within a year, their experiences could be presented to the United Nations and inform the whole world. I hope a TV station could be established in the future, which would broadcast Toowoomba residents’ daily life with the interaction of different religious teachings. The whole world could then see it and hear it. I believe everyone would yearn for visiting Toowoomba and wish to learn from it. This is the only way to implement harmony comprehensively. We promote harmony to individuals, to families, to societies, to cities and the whole world.

We are using this event to commemorate Buddha and the holinesses of each religion, for they genuinely teach and guide people. I also wish Thailand prosperity, Their Majesties good health and happiness. All the participants of this conference are descendants of saints and sages; are the subjects of holiness. We join hands to promote God’s love to the whole world, outer space and the entire universe, and all the beings of each planet. We treat each one with pure and equal love. Religious spirit can save the

Earth. You and I have the same confidence and anticipation. We believe, if we put forth the effort, we will create a brighter world. Thank you all!



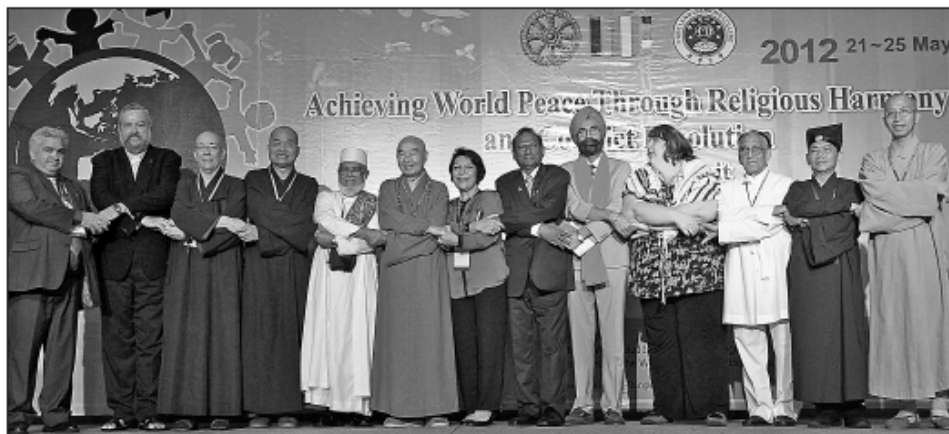
# Chapter 4. The Public's Response – The Media's Report English Report

China Daily's Report 28 May 2012

life

CHINA DAILY CHINADAILY.COM.CN/LIFE

MONDAY, MAY 28, 2012 | PAGE 20



Leaders of different religions and cultures hold hands to pursue lasting world peace at the Interfaith Summit in Bangkok.

PHOTO: XINHUA TO CHINA DAILY

## Faiths as the foundation

Religious leaders from various beliefs and countries meet to discuss how spirituality can maximize profits and create happier societies in trying times. Chitralkha Basu reports in Bangkok.

The first time Greg Ridd visited Tangchi town in Anhui province's Lujiang county in 2007, he felt ambivalent, at best. Ridd says he went there with an open mind. He has a background in politics and business. Ridd runs a consultancy in Beijing, Hong Kong, Canberra, Australia, and London for companies seeking investment opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region in the areas of power, renewable energy, water and agriculture. And he served as a minister in the Australian government in the 1990s.

"I asked the businesspeople there: 'Why are you into this Buddhist stuff?' All at once, sweeping, clearing, picking up garbage from the road and attending lectures based on the Buddhist agrarian activities in which profit-driven business community members usually participate. But it's what they do in Tangchi."

Wang, who was one among the first group of 37 teachers in the village to launch the Tangchi experiment, recalls the initial excitement.

"Wang, who now is the director of the Hubei-based Chang Hua Cultural Education Center of the China Studies, remembers all too well how it took at least three months of painstaking and sustained effort to break the ice and get people to attend classes."

She and her colleagues won the confidence of Tangchi residents and access to their households only after they had endeavored themselves to the limit. It was a revolution that could not have happened overnight.

The Tangchi experiment, Ridd says, is proof that community building can effectively generate greater business gains.

Taking their cue from Buddhist teachers, the entrepreneurs started arriving at the workplace early in the morning — well before the workers — and beginning the day with prayer.

"Gradually, the workers started following the examples set by the leaders, and the workplace became happier and more cheerful, leading to better productivity," Ridd says.

The "Tangchi model" in which religious teachings from Buddhist texts are used to inculcate individuals' moral values, in the branch of the United Nations representative, "Venerable Master" Chin Kung.

In an event organized by the World Fellowship of Buddhists and the Queensland-based Pure Land Learning College Association, more than 400 religious leaders, representatives and observers from across the world, including 17 ambassadors to the UNESCO General Conference headquartered in Paris, met in Bangkok from May 21-25. They brainstormed about the effectiveness of using the educational component that forms the basis of all religious teachings to build communities of people with strong moral values in their core values.

Kung's idea of building "sacred cities of religion and culture" now exists in a formal form in the picturesque city of Toowoomba, in Queensland, Australia. There, at least 80 churches, who speak more than 100 languages, have set a new inclusiveness benchmark.

"At a time when the world is experiencing unprecedented chaos and turmoil, a peace village is the only hope we have," he says.

His associate, "Venerable Master" Ding Hong, who is also an academic with Pure Land and Sun Yat Sen University, says: "That the population of United Nations representatives, who've spent decades engaged in resolving peace initiatives."

There is no underestimating the tremendous power of spirituality that might be used to contain misunderstandings among cultures and the tremendous potential of faith in resolving conflicts," UNESCO General Conference president Katayun Bogoy says in the conference keynote speech.

She also stressed the importance of involving women, who have the potential to "nurture reconciliation and contribute to sustainable development of their community."

Depicting the apparent paradox of using religious teachings to curb religious fundamentalism — the source of much of the intolerance and violence in today's world — has generated mixed reactions.

Ridd is banking on religious teachings' corrective powers. He points to a landmark event in 1993, when he got religious leaders from nine faiths, including Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism to speak from a common platform in Singapore.



Leaders of different faiths pray for world peace in the Grand Palace in Bangkok.

But not everybody is convinced this might be a foolproof method to persuade terrorists to lay down their guns.

Rachel Rubin, who hosts a popular show on religion, the 'Spirit of Islam' on the Australian Radio National, calls the idea "naïve."

However, she's cautious to learn how Buddhism, which she felt received the most focus at the conference, "might be made to engage in a real dialogue with other faiths."

Other wise, she's cautious to learn how Buddhism, which she felt received the most focus at the conference, "might be made to engage in a real dialogue with other faiths."

He cited examples of how ideas might be turned into workable solutions by reaching out to greater numbers at a time when religion is often viewed with skepticism.

"People think you are trying to convert them, rather than talk to them," he says.

A colleague, he says, had suggested "putting food, fun and faith together," assuming people might be more receptive to religious ideas in a casual setting.

Ultimately, the process of moral education has to start with belief. As Kung, an extremely soft-spoken yet sturdy 86-year-old, reflected in his closing lecture during the conference: "We can benefit from religious teachings only if we approach them with true sincerity and respect."

Such unwavering faith was not in short supply at the conference. Malaysian businessman Husein Yusoff experienced a dramatic turnaround in his life after he came in contact with Kung.

"I was a moral leader," he says. "I was young, had money, looked every potential to waste my life. But after I started listening to the master and reading his works, I realized if I did not turn around and mend my ways, I would be destroying my family. The master says Chinese culture can save the world from disaster as it is premised on the strength of family bonds."

Kung also offers the example of Emperor Wen of China's Zhou Dynasty in 1098-1050 BC, whose catholic beliefs and righteous rule attracted several thousand migrants to his 50 sq km territory.

judging by the Interfaith Summit's upbeat mood, Kung is likely not the only one who believes such magic could be recast.

Other wise, we run the risk of "minor differences getting blown out of proportion and starting wars," he says.

As a member of the UNESCO board in Beijing and a keen China watcher, Ridd says: "China has a fair chance of this change happening."

At a time when Chinese politicians

are looking for investment opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region, contends the reason many democracies are falling apart is they intentionally drive an unnecessary wedge between them.

The world, he feels, would experience fewer conflicts, "if we took a politically mature view and started focusing on commonality."

"I have always found we have more commonalities than differences," he says.

Greg Ridd, who runs a consultancy in Beijing, Hong Kong, Canberra, Australia, and London for

companies looking for investment opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region, contends the reason many democracies are falling apart is they intentionally drive an unnecessary wedge between them.

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## Discovering the devout soul of our similarities

By CHITRALAKHA BASU  
in Bangkok  
basu@chinadaily.com.cn

and public event on the sidelines of the Interfaith Summit in Bangkok. Sun had well-defined reasons for attending the event.

"As leaders of their own company, I would like to learn the best practices of running an organization from the conference."

And he was very clear that the process began with self-education. "I am trying to be a good pupil," he says.

Although his company is one of China's leading profitable state-run enterprises, Sun says it's important to

propagate the message among our happiest business partners," Sun says.

He had an opportunity to brush up on his knowledge of Islam at the conference, which reinforced his understanding of the emotions inferring the minds of his business partners in South Africa and Iraq.

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## Discovering the devout soul of our similarities

Updated: 2012-05-28 08:01

By Chitrallekha Basu in Bangkok (China Daily)

Sun Ziyu, who's a highly placed executive with China Communications Construction Company in Beijing, sees strong parallels between the principles guiding the Communist Party of China and Buddhism.

"Communists believe the Buddhist notion of selfless service, working toward the benefit of others - don't they?" he asks.

We caught the buoyant engineer and public servant on the sidelines of the Interfaith Summit in Bangkok. Sun had well-defined reasons for attending the meet.

"As a leader of a State-owned company, I would like to learn the best practices of running an organization from the conference."

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"I am trying to be a good pupil," he says.

Although his company is one of China's leading profitable State-run enterprises, Sun says it's important to keep learning and create good vibes.

"It is important to create a good environment at the workplace, and that can only happen by motivating oneself to put in one's best by deriving lessons from traditional culture."

His ambition is to promote the values he so cherishes - values he picked up from reading about Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism in their distilled essences in the book *Di Zi Gui*, compiled by the celebrity Buddhist monk "Venerable Master" Chin Kung.

"I would like to use my position to propagate the message among our European business partners," Sun says.

He had an opportunity to brush up on his knowledge of Islam at the conference, which reinforced his understanding of the emotions informing the minds of his business partners in Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

"I have always found we have more commonalities than differences," he says.

Greg Rudd, who runs a consultancy in Beijing, Hong Kong, Canberra, Australia, and London for companies looking for investment opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region, contends the reason many democracies are falling apart is they intrinsically thrive on differences rather than similarities. The world, he feels, would experience fewer conflicts, "if we took a politically mature view and started focusing on commonalities".

As a member of the UNESCO board in Beijing and a keen China-watcher, Rudd says: "China has a fair chance of this change happening."

At a time when Chinese youth are undertaking a new wave of learning, one of the ways of doing this would be to "go back to the roots of traditional Chinese education".

Rudd believes China would do well to take lessons from the teachings of the sages and use them as "a societal control informed by the right kind of education and leading to mature conversation and internal morality".

Otherwise, we run the risk of "minor differences getting blown out of proportion and starting wars", he says.

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(China Daily 05/28/2012 page20)



### Faiths as the foundation

Updated: 2012-05-28 08:01

By Chitrallekha Basu (China Daily)

Print Mail Large Medium Small Share 0



Leaders of different religions and cultures hold hands to pursue lasting world peace at the Interfaith Summit in Bangkok. Photos provided to China Daily

Religious leaders from various beliefs and countries meet to discuss how spirituality can maximize profits and create happier societies in trying times. Chitrallekha Basu reports in Bangkok.

The first time Greg Rudd visited Tangchi town in Anhui province's Lujiang county in 2007, he felt ambivalent, at best. Rudd says he went there with an open mind. He has a background in politics and business. Rudd runs a consultancy in Beijing, Hong Kong, Canberra, Australia, and London for companies seeking investment opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region in the areas of power, renewable energy, water and agriculture. And he served as a minister in the Australian government in the 1990s.

"I asked the businesspeople there: 'Why are you into this Buddhism stuff?'"

After all, sweeping, cleaning, picking up garbage from the road and attending lectures based on the Buddhist sutras aren't activities in which profit-driven business community members usually participate. But it's what they do in Tangchi.

That's when Rudd learned the residents of Tangchi were, in fact, suspicious, even resistant, at the outset.

Alice Wong, who was one among the first group of 37 teachers to launch the Tangchi experiment, recalls the initial reluctance.

Wong, who now is the director of the Malacca-based Chung Hua Cultural Education Center of Han Chinese Studies, remembers all too well how it took at least three months of painstaking and sustained effort to break the ice and get people to attend classes.

She and her colleagues won the confidence of Tangchi residents and access to their households only after they had endeared themselves to the families. It was a revolution that could not have happened overnight.

The Tangchi experiment, Rudd says, is proof that community building can effectively generate greater business gains.

Taking their cue from Buddhist teachers, the entrepreneurs started arriving at the workplace early in the morning - well before the workers - and beginning the day with prayer.

"Gradually, the workers started following the examples set by the leaders, and the workplaces became happier and more cheerful, leading to better productivity," Rudd says.

The Tangchi model, in which religious teachings from Buddhist texts are used to inculcate individuals' moral values, is the brainchild of the eminent Buddhist monk and teacher, "Venerable Master" Chin Kung.

In an event organized by the World Fellowship of Buddhists and the Queensland-based Pure Land Learning College Association, more than 400 religious leaders, representatives and observers from across the world, including 17 ambassadors to the UNESCO General Conference headquartered in Paris, met in Bangkok from May 21-25. They brainstormed about the effectiveness of using the educational component that forms the basis of all religious teachings to build communities of people with strong moral values in these cynical times.

Kung's idea of building "sacred cities of religions and culture" now exists in a kernel form in the picturesque city of Toowoomba, in Queensland, Australia. There, at least 80 ethnicities, who speak more than 100 languages, have set a new inclusiveness benchmark.

The interfaith community at Toowoomba celebrates aboriginal festivals, break bread together after fasting in the month of Ramadan, sing Hindu devotional bhajans and also address the needs of migrants and refugees. Kung's mission is to propagate the idea of this "model city of peace and harmony" across the world.

"At a time when the world is experiencing unprecedented chaos and turmoil, a peace village is the only hope we have," he says.

His associate, "Venerable Master" Ding Hong, who is also an academic with Pure Land and Sun-Yat Sen University, says: "Half the population the world over is religious, and the core values in all religious teachings are the same. We are trying to harness that emotion to encourage people to return to the teachings of the sages in order to bring greater stability to society."

The endeavor has the endorsement of United Nations representatives, who've spent decades engaged in evolving peace initiatives.

There's no underestimating the "tremendous power of spirituality that might be used to contain misunderstandings among cultures and the tremendous potential of faith in resolving conflicts", UNESCO General Conference president Katalyn Bogyay says, in the conference's keynote speech.

She also stressed the importance of involving women, who have the potential to "nurture reconciliation and contribute to sustainable development of their community".

Expectedly, the apparent paradox of using religious teachings to curb religious fundamentalism - the source of much of the intolerance and violence in today's world - has generated mixed reactions.

Kung is banking on religious teachings' corrective powers.

He points to a landmark event in 1993, when he got religious leaders from nine faiths, including Buddhism, Bahai faith, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism to speak from a common platform in Singapore.

But not everybody is convinced this might be a foolproof method to persuade terrorists to lay down their guns.

Rachel Kohn, who hosts a popular show on religion, The Spirit of Things, on the Australian Radio National, calls the idea "utopian".

However, she's curious to learn how Buddhism, which she felt received the most focus at the conclave, "might be made to engage in a real dialogue with other faiths".

And she wants to know how that might lead to practical solutions that would actually "improve the living conditions of people".

Australian Ariel Heber, who leads the Jewish segment of the Interfaith community in Brisbane, was more optimistic, even as he agreed the conference was somewhat "preaching to the converted".

He cited examples of how ideas might be turned into workable solutions by reaching out to greater numbers at a time when religion is often viewed with skepticism.

"People think you are trying to convert them, rather than talk to them," he says.

A colleague, he says, had suggested "putting food, fun and faith together", assuming people might be more receptive to religious ideas in a carnival setup.



Ultimately, the process of moral education has to start with belief. As Kung, an extremely soft-spoken yet utterly indefatigable 86-year-old, reiterated in his many lectures during the conference: "We can benefit from religious teachings only if we approach them with true sincerity and respect."

Such unwavering faith was not in short supply at the conference. Malaysian businessman Elmar Tan says he experienced a dramatic turnaround in his life after he came in contact with Kung.

"I was a rascal before," Tan says.

"I was young, had money, looks - every potential to waste my life. But after I started listening to the master and reading his works, I realized if I did not turn around and mend my ways, I would be destroying my family. The master says Chinese culture can save the world from disaster as it is premised on the strength of family bonds."

Kung also offers the example of Emperor Wen of China's Zhou Dynasty in (1099-1050 BC), whose catholic beliefs and righteous rule attracted several thousand migrants to his 50-sq-km territory.

Judging by the Interfaith Summit's upbeat mood, Kung is likely not the only one who believes such magic could be recreated.



**Leaders of different faiths pray for world peace in the Grand Palace in Bangkok.**

(China Daily 05/28/2012 page20)

## **2. Chinese Report**

- 1、 *Sing Sian Yit Pao* of Thailand, 29 May 2012, A8  
Top Line**

# 各国文化领袖倡议加强 圣贤教育 推动全球长久和谐



图一：论坛会场场景。图二：宗教代表与联合国教科文组织大会主席共话和谐。从左起：联合国教科文组织大会主席匈牙利大使 Ms Katalin Bogvyay (左)，释净空老教授(中)。图三：多个宗教领袖在台上联手呼吁宗教界和谐共处。

为庆祝泰国国王拉玛九世普密蓬·阿杜德 (Bhumibol Adulyadej) 八十五岁生日寿辰，以及登基六十六周年，泰国于5月23日至25日在首都曼谷隆重举办多元宗教高峰论坛。论坛由世界佛人组织 (World Fellowship of Buddhists WFB) 主办，主题为“通过宗教与和谐化解冲突实现世界和平”，并提出了“通过在各国家建立圣贤教育基地来拯救目前全球危机”的重大倡议。

本次论坛是泰国近年来最有影响力的多元文化论坛。联合国教科文组织大会主席、匈牙利大使 Katalin Bogvyay 女士，教科文组织外交委员会主席、刚果大使 Jean-Marie Adoua 先生，教科文组织特别委员会主席 Bujaku 先生等

十九位大使出席了大会。中国佛教协会副会长刀迷仁等来自世界各国的宗教领袖，亦受邀发言。共同探讨如何通过恢复圣贤教育、伦理道德的教育来解除困扰全球灾难危机的危机，实现世界持久和谐与和平共存。

总部设在曼谷、在全球37个国家设立分中心的佛人组织 (WFB) 指出：依照泰国佛教界的算法，今年是释迦牟尼佛成道2600周年，在这个特别时刻举办文化教育高峰论坛，目的是为了倡导多元文化教育，共同令宗教回归到“仁慈博爱”的教育中，令广大民众重视伦理道德、净化社会风气。

联合国教科文组织大会主席、匈牙利大使 Katalin Bogvyay 女

士表示，本次会议汇集全球各民族各宗教的代表。大家虽然文化迥异、宗教信仰不同，但是都是为了共同的全球和平聚在一起。共话和谐，这一点与联合国本身的宗旨是完全一致的。Bogvyay 主席特别指出：“联合国非常愿意与各国、各机构合作，共同推进世界和平。”

本次大会对于推进世界和平达成一致意见，即各国文化领袖在当地建立圣贤教育文化中心来实现社区和睦，进而实现国家安宁、世界冲突化解。澳洲南昆士兰大学荣誉博士、致力于多元文化教育的宗教领袖释净空教授在大会上指出，各国传承本国圣贤文化传统、建立各自的圣贤教育文化中心不是构筑物质基础，也不是为了搞各种宗教仪式，而是通过培养伦理道德教育的教师将古圣先贤对于人生的教导在民众中传播开来，帮助民众将圣贤教诲落实在生活之中、落实在待人接物之中。

释净空老教授在报告中指出：“如果各个宗教真正能够在当地选择一个示范城，将各组、各宗教的传统文化落实在示范城的每个小区之中，把圣贤的文化、圣贤教育的精神真正在实际生活中做出来，那么人们就再也不会怀疑圣贤教诲，这将对拯救现代社会危机的最大贡献。”在新加坡多年致力于宗教和善共处的拜火教长老 Rumi Ghazali 认为目前重在行动：“未来在我们手里，全在我们语言起行。”

Bogvyay 主席对大会的建议表示理解和支持，她指出：“圣贤伦理道德教育帮助我们达成内心的和平、内心的安宁。因为所有的宗教以及圣贤教诲的核心就是‘爱’，爱是我们整个人类文明的核心。”

Bogvyay 主席认为爱的教育这一点对于实现全球和平至关重要因为只有每个人唤醒了内心中本有的博爱，才能够恢复内心的安宁，她说：“只有我们内心的和谐、安宁，才能够将和谐推广之，带动社区、国家乃至全球的和平。”

通过对于示范城内公民的伦理道德以及平等博爱的教育，进一步可以推动国与国、政党与政党、族群与族群、宗教与宗教之间迈向真正的彼此尊重、欣赏和信任，实现永久和平与和谐共存。各国建设圣贤文化教育中心将对拯救人类危机作出重要的贡献。老教授说：“当然，各国民众要从圣贤教育中获得真实利益，唯有唤起真诚心和恭敬心才行。”

对于圣贤文化教育中心的构想，是建立在过去七年来，在不同国家和地区成功试点基础上的。此前，圣贤教育分别在中国落地小镇、澳大利亚图文巴市和马来西亚马六甲地区尝试推行，均在不长的时间里取得了令世人赞叹的效果和影响。

2005年底，在中国安徽省的一个人口5万的落地小镇，曾经进行短期推广儒家圣贤教育的尝试。仅仅30名教师，用三个月的时间学习和落实《弟子规》，尔后组成研教教学队伍，下乡入户为村民讲课，身体力行孝悌仁爱。在短短数月之间，就令小镇世风大变，不仅在短期内当地社会就恢复稳定和谐，而且带动了当地经济发展。可见圣贤教育对于社会稳定和和谐效果事半功倍。

澳大利亚被誉为“昆士兰花园之邦”的图文巴市本来就以多元文化著称。这个人口约十多万的城市却有八十多个民族，一百多种语言。去年年底，该城不同宗教界开始携手致力于推动宗教教育以将这个图文巴建立成为和谐示范城，令不同种族文化都在同一城中繁荣并茂。图文巴的宝贵经验证明，圣贤教育的推广、伦理道德教育的普及确能令社会和谐，天下太平。

作为典范之一的马来西亚，中华文化教育中心也完全融入了伊斯兰教社会之中。去年开办之初，马来西亚总理纳吉便亲自到该祝贺，所有这些圣贤教育的成功典范，虽耗资不多却成效显著，颇具借鉴价值，联合国教科文组织对此大为惊叹。

与会的十多种不同宗教界的领导认为：多元宗教的团结，对于世界和平至关重要，因为目前全球有一半以上人口信仰宗教。对于当前人类的冲突与危机，拜火教的 Rumi 长老说：“我们是世界上最小的族群之一，但是1700年来我们与世界其它族群和平相处，这已经证明，只要深入多元文化的教育互动，并落实到生活当中，而不仅是口头上，那么世界族群和谐共处就是可能的。”拜火教是全球历史最悠久的宗教之一，曾是古代波斯帝国的国教。Rumi 指出：“整个地球都是一个国家，我们是地球国家的公民，理应和平相处。”

大会达成的另一项共识便是目前急需将宗教恢复到教育的正轨上。既然宗教的伦理道德教育对实现世界和平、化解冲突至关重要，如果宗教能回归教育，教导全民弃恶扬善、改邪归正、端正心念，相信人类危机一定能化解。

## 2、China's Internet Reporting

Title: "Proposal to establish cultural centers for the teachings of saints and sage; advancing world peace and harmony"

## Media List

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## 文章標題：各國倡議建立聖賢教育文化中心 推動全球長久和諧

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發佈總計：20 篇



## 網路報導內容

### **各國倡議建立聖賢教育文化中心 推動全球長久和諧**

為慶祝泰國國王拉馬九世普密蓬·阿杜德 (Bhumibol Adulyadej) 八十五歲生日壽誕，以及登基六十六周年，泰國將於 5 月 21 日至 25 日在首都曼谷隆重舉辦多元宗教高峰論壇。論壇由世界佛人組織 (World Fellowship of Buddhists WFB) 主辦，主題為“透過宗教和諧與化解衝突實現世界和平”。

本次論壇被認為是泰國近年來最有影響力的多元文化論壇。屆時，聯合國教科文組織大會主席、匈牙利大使 Katalin Bogay 女士，教科文組織外交委員會主席、剛果大使 Jean-Marie Adoua 先生，教科文組織特殊委員會主席 Budjaku 先生等十九位大使將出席大會。中國佛教協會會長傅印長老等來自世界各國的宗教領袖，亦將聚會曼谷。泰國國王拉馬九世本人也將有望出席會場，聆聽國際文化界、宗教界的提議並一同探討如何通過恢復聖賢教育、倫理道德的教育來解除困擾全球的天災人禍的危機，實現世界持久和諧與和平。

聖賢教育拯救危機是本次論壇的核心議題。總部設在曼谷、在全球 37 個國家都設立了分中心的世界佛人組織 (WFB) 指出：今年是釋迦摩尼佛成道 2600 周年，在這個特別時刻舉辦文化教育高峰論壇，目的是為了聯合世界各大宗教，共同令宗教回歸到“仁慈博愛”的教育中，令廣大民眾重視倫理道德、淨化社會風氣。

為此，與會宗教界領袖將向泰國國王拉馬九世提出重大構想和建議，即在泰國境內選出一個民風淳樸的小鎮，率先建立“聖賢教育文化聖城”，亦即和諧示範城，以推動泰國乃至國際社會化解衝突、遠離天災人禍，並最終實現社會和諧、世界和平。

澳洲南昆士蘭大學榮譽博士釋淨空老教授認為，文化聖城的建設將是泰國對於拯救全球人類危機的重要貢獻。他特別指出，建設文化聖城最重要的不是物質基礎建設，更不是舉辦各種宗教儀式的基地，而是真正說明民眾將將聖賢教育落實于生活之中，幫助政府將倫理道德教育普及開來，令廣大家庭恢復安定和睦，同時，也通過推動不同宗教、種族間的互相尊重、彼此欣賞而實現整個社會的和諧共處。

本次論壇提出的建設文化聖城的構想，是建立在過去七年來，在不同國家和地區的成功試點的基礎之上的。此前，聖賢教育分別在中國的湯池小鎮以及澳大利亞的圖文巴市已經嘗試推行，來自這些不同國家和地區的寶貴經驗證明：該構想耗資不多卻成效顯著；試點雖小卻影響頗大。

2005 年底，在中國安徽省的一個人口 5 萬的湯池小鎮，曾經進行短期推廣儒家聖賢教育的嘗試。僅僅 37 名教師，用三個月的時間學習和落實《弟子規》，爾後組成師資教學隊伍，下鄉入戶為村民講課，身體力行孝悌仁愛。在短短數月之間，就令小鎮世風大變，不僅在短期內當地社會就恢復穩定和諧，而且當年就帶動了當地經濟增長。可見傳統聖賢教育對於消弭衝突、實現和諧效果事半功倍。

澳大利亞被譽為“昆士蘭花園之都”的圖文巴市本來就以多元文化著稱。這個人口約十萬的城市卻有八十多個民族，一百多種語言。去年年底，該城不同宗教界開始聯手致力於推動宗教教育以將這個圖文巴建立成為和諧示範城，令不同種族文化都在同一城中共榮並茂。圖文巴的寶貴經驗證明，聖賢教育的推廣、倫理道德教育的普及的確能夠令社會和諧、天下太平。因此，與會的聯合國教科文組織大使也認為，泰國的文化聖城，如果能夠真正建成，則可以提供寶貴經驗，各國都可以依照其國家實際情況進行實際規劃，從而令聖賢教育、倫理道德真正能夠利益千家萬戶，最終以點帶面地帶動全球人心歸善，國際社會便有望實現長久和平。

# Examples of Internet Reporting

1、TOM <http://post.news.tom.com/95001D31108.html>

TOM首页 > 新闻 > 正文 TOM新闻 news.tom.com

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## 各国倡议建立圣贤教育文化中心推动全球长久和谐

发布者: huysani ★ 收藏 (0人收藏) 复制链接 打印

时间: 2012年05月21日 10:27:38

为庆祝泰国国王拉马九世普密蓬·阿杜德 (Bhumibol Adulyadej)八十五岁生日寿诞,以及登基六十六周年,泰国将于5月21日至25日在首都曼谷隆重举办多元宗教高峰论坛。论坛由世界佛人组织 (World Fellowship of Buddhists WFB) 主办,主题为“透过宗教和谐与化解冲突实现世界和平”。

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2、中华网 <http://culture.china.com/info/news/11022808/20120521/17207545.html>



中华网 www.china.com  
海阳亚沙会互联网独家合作伙伴

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## 各国倡议建立圣贤教育文化中心 推动全球长久和谐

2012-05-21 10:32:07 【大 中 小】

为庆祝泰国国王拉马九世普密蓬·阿杜德 (Bhumibol Adulyadej)八十五岁生日寿诞,以及登基六十六周年,泰国将于5月21日至25日在首都曼谷隆重举办多元宗教高峰论坛。论坛由世界佛人组织 (World Fellowship of Buddhists WFB) 主办,主题为“透过宗教和谐与化解冲突实现世界和平”。

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3、中青在线 [http://news.cyol.com/content/2012-05/21/content\\_6268890.htm](http://news.cyol.com/content/2012-05/21/content_6268890.htm)

中青在线 | 新闻 2012年5月21日 星期一

频道首页 | 舆情 | 要闻 | 评论 | 热文 | 中国青年报 | 国内 | 国际 | 教育 | 法治社会 | 经济

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## 各国倡议建立圣贤教育文化中心 推动全球长久和谐

<http://www.cyol.net> 2012-05-21 10:41 中青报订阅 收藏本页

为庆祝泰国国王拉马九世普密蓬·阿杜德 (Bhumibol Adulyadej)八十五岁生日寿诞, 以及登基六十六周年, 泰国将于5月21日至25日在首都曼谷隆重举办多元宗教高峰论坛。论坛由世界佛人组织 (World Fellowship of Buddhists WFB) 主办, 主题为“透过宗教和谐与化解冲突实现世界和平”。

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4、新浪 <http://cs.sina.com.cn/minisite/news/20120521mw003.html>

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## 各国倡议建立圣贤教育文化中心 推动全球长久和谐

<http://all.vic.sina.com.cn> 2012年05月21日 新浪资讯

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为此, 与会宗教界领袖将向泰国国王拉马九世提出重大构想和建议, 即在泰国境内选出一个民风淳朴的小镇, 率先建立“圣贤教育文化圣城”, 亦即和谐示范城, 以推动泰国乃至国际社会





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## 各国倡议建立圣贤教育文化中心 推动全球长久和谐

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为庆祝泰国国王拉马九世普密蓬·阿杜德 (Bhumibol Adulyadej)八十五岁生日寿诞，以及登基六十六周年，泰国将于5月21日至25日在首都曼谷隆重举办多元宗教高峰论坛。论坛由世界佛人组织 (World Fellowship of Buddhists WFB) 主办，主题为“透过宗教和谐与化解冲突实现世界和平”。

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## 各国倡议建立圣贤教育文化中心 推动全球长久和谐

时间：2012-05-21 17:03:41 来源：千龙新闻网 [发表评论>>](#)

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内容摘要：

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世界宗教是一家  
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八三  
更淨  
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All religions are one family; all religions are one



Amitabha Buddhist Association of Queensland

11 Toona Pl, Calamvale QLD 4116, Australia Tel: 61-7-3273 1693 Fax: 61-7-3272 0677

Website: [www.amtb-qld.org](http://www.amtb-qld.org) Email: [enquiry@amtb-qld.org](mailto:enquiry@amtb-qld.org)