

“World needs a new development model”

15/2/2014 P.2

Use non-violence to address real needs of people: expert

Staff Reporter

DINDIGUL: Following the teachings of Vinobha and Jayaprakash Narayan in a new way at government-level - local and national - and practising non-violence will improve the situation of the poorest, according to Alberto L'Abate, Emeritus Professor, Florence University.

Delivering the key note address during Sarvodaya Day celebrations held at Gandhigram Trust in Gandhigram recently, he said creating awareness among the people of their rights and the need to organise themselves to solve their problems will benefit them.

“Gandhian non-violence will win not only at the grassroots-level, as we have seen, but also at the State and National levels, where it is not practised now,” he added.

Grassroots movement

Another important thing happening in the world was the emergence of grassroots movements like 'Blocking Wall Street.'

The prevailing model of development, developed by capitalists, communists and social-democrats, had increased problems like hole in the ozone layer, global warming and natural disasters.

The world needed a new model of development - bottom to the top - based on self-rule of the villages, he suggested.

Now, India had become more armed, had atomic bombs, and also had a terrible



TRIBUTE: Alberto L'Abate (left), Emeritus Professor, Florence University, at the Sarvodaya Day celebrations in Gandhigram near Dindigul.

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and increasing gap between the rich and the poor.

“We have seen that the countries spend very little for prevention of armed conflicts. The prime interest of five countries - the USA, the UK, France, Russia, China - the main constructors and sellers of armaments in the world, is more in selling arms than in finding ways to avoid wars.”

Victory without violence, the model of development as outlined by Gandhi, Kumaraappa and Sarvodaya leader Jagannathan, had never been realised in their own country.

Struggles won by non-violence were so many and so important such as the Indian struggle for independence, the struggle to overcome apartheid in South Africa,

against dictators in Poland, Philippines, Chile, for an improvement in the conditions of the black minority in the USA and to defend the Jews from Nazi aggression in Denmark.

Non-violence was the common way to fight against dictatorship, injustice, abuses of every kind, he recalled.

Non-violence was still not ready to be brought to the State-level, because it had not developed in its own way to be a government force.

Third force

Nonviolence as a third force must be practised, neither for those in power, nor for those in the opposition, but to address the real needs of the people, he also suggested.