

Moderate Muslims raising voice



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NEW DELHI: Millions of moderate and humanitarian Sunni Muslims are distancing themselves and taking a stand against the radicalized elements of Islam that have resorted to violence and terrorism, according to the world's largest Muslim organization, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), of Indonesia. For this purpose, the NU has organized the Second Global Unity Forum meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 25 and 26 October, for which some Indian leaders have also received invitation.

The NU is the largest independent Islamic organization in the world with membership of 40 million in 2003. NU is also a charitable body funding schools and hospitals as well as organizing communities to help alleviate poverty.

The invitation from NU says, "We invite you to attend the Second Global Unity Forum, a two-day international summit that will be held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on 25 and 26 October 2018, and to join hands with President Joko Widodo and millions of our fellow Indonesians, who seek to "foster the emergence of a truly just and harmonious world order, founded upon respect for the equal rights and dignity of every human being" (Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam, point 31)."

Gerakan Pemuda Ansor (GP Ansor) is the traditionalist Islamic youth movement linked to NU.

The invitation further states that, “In May of 2016 the world’s largest Muslim organization, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), held an International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL) in Jakarta, Indonesia, attended by approximately 400 Muslim scholars from 30 nations. At the Summit’s conclusion, the NU Central Board promulgated a 16-point declaration that identified the salient factors driving Islamist extremism and terror worldwide, called upon “people of good will of every faith and nation to join in building a global consensus not to politicize Islam” and explicitly affirmed that the NU will “strive to consolidate the Global Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah (Sunni Muslim) community, in order to bring about a world in which Islam, and Muslims, are truly beneficent and contribute to the well-being of all humanity” (ISOMIL Nahdlatul Ulama Declaration, points 15 and 16).

“Responding to this call, GP Ansor launched its Humanitarian Islam campaign on March 30, 2017, followed by the Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam on May 22, 2017. Ansor Youth Movement, often abbreviated as GP Ansor, is a non-profit Islamic youth organization based in Indonesia, affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama(NU), the largest Islamic mass organization in the world. Founded on April 24, 1934, GP Ansor has maintained a significant role throughout the history of Indonesia, and it has developed its characteristics as traditionalist Islamic, populist, and nationalist.

“The final day of Kirab Satu Negeri (“One Nation Parade/Motorcade”) will also feature an International Summit of high-powered religious, cultural and political leaders, who will join in launching a parallel international effort to curtail the spread of religious hatred, supremacy and violence, which constitute a profound threat to international peace and security, and to the domestic tranquility of nearly every nation on earth,” the invitation said.

Archbishop Joseph D’souza, the President of the All India Christian Council and the Primate of the Good Shepherd Church of India, has also been invited to this Second Global Unity Forum meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Accepting the invitation, D’souza said in a press note, “This kind of unity movements are critically needed around the globe in the face of the radicalization and politicization of religion. The leadership of the major religions of the world needs to come together to handle the menace of hate propaganda, violence and the deliberate polarization of society.”

Archbishop Bishop further stated, “India is also in great need of a major unity movement. This needs to be led by moderate and liberal Hindus inviting the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and other faiths to come on the same platform to preserve the wonderful diversity of India,” he added.

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