

## Spirituality is the inner technology: Sri Sri

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"Trade, Tradition, Truth and Technology need revival and updating," said The Art of Living Founder, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar at the 5th International Women's Conference hosted at the Art of Living International Center. Titled 'Women and Technology', this three-day conference seeks to understand the role of spirituality in a technologically-driven world. "Spirituality can be called the inner technology. It does not negate technology but it complements it," shared Sri Sri with a 500-strong audience from 55 countries.

The three-day conference is an extension of The Art of Living's women empowerment projects and is a platform for women to come together and create a stronger social transformation.

Addressing the role of technology in women empowerment, he said, "There is a big divide between rural and urban women, not just in India but all over the world. Bridging this gap is the need of the day."

Touching upon the debate on technology versus human relationships, Bhanumathi Narasimhan (Chairperson, International Women's Conference) said: "Technology has shrunk the world into a global village but are we really connecting or is it just an illusion? We need to move ahead with the human touch."

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Emphasising on the role of spirituality in dealing with technology, Narasimhan said, "We rarely wonder at the capacity of the mind which has created this technology. If a small machine has the power to connect, our mind is no less. Spirituality connects you to the source – the inner net, where the power of the mind is revealed to us."

The inaugural ceremony was represented by women from several countries: Hon'ble Lulama Xingwana, Minister for Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Republic of South Africa; Hon'ble Ronit Tirosh, Member of Parliament, Israel; Ms. Shiren Ibrahim Fattah, Representative, Kurdish Government, Iraq; Hon'ble Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, State Minister of Women and

Children Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; and Ms Orna Sagiv, Honourable Consul General of Israel, Israel Consulate, Mumbai.

Strongly asserting on the role of education in empowering women in India, Hon'ble Duggubati Purandeshwari, Minister for State for Human Resource Development (Higher Education), said, "We need technology to connect the rural women with the necessary facilities such as health care and literacy. More than 48 percent of the population in

India is women. Unless we bring technology to this segment of the population, our country cannot progress." To make technology accessible, literacy is the first step. Making significant strides in the field of free education, The Art of Living educates 23,500 children through 175 schools in rural and tribal areas of India. The International Women's Conference, since its inception in 2005, continues to support girl child education. **Click NEXT to read further...**

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The conference also supports and honors women achievers with the Vishalakshi Awards, instituted in memory of Sri Sri's mother. Adding to the cultural diversity evident in the conference, there will be performances from the Russian St Petersburg Ballet, Bharat Natyam danseuse Shobana Chandrashekar, and Elitsa Todorova from Bulgaria with her traditional percussion instruments. Besides serving as a means of support to the 175 schools, the last four IWCs have also initiated projects to provide employment for rural women, building homes for rural women, besides raising funds to educate the girl child. Some of the notable projects initiated are the rehabilitation of female prisoners, planting of

10,000 trees in Bali, Indonesia, campaigns against female feticide, child support for Zimbabwean families afflicted by HIV, and vocational training for widows in Iraq.

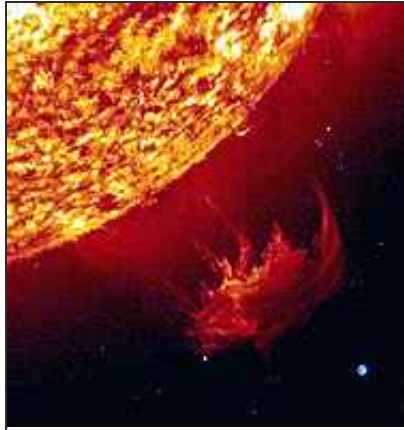
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