

**MANCHAM RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM SRI LANKAN PRIME MINISTER IN THE COMPANY OF INTER-FAITH LEADERS OF SRI LANKA**



**Sir James (*third from left to right*) among the Sri Lankan Prime Minister and Interfaith leaders of Sri Lanka**

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2016, Seychelles founding President Sir James R. Mancham was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Global Energy Parliament in recognition of his lifelong dedication to global peace, by the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka in a ceremony held at the Temple Trees Banquet Hall in Colombo, hosted by Isa Viswa Prajnana Trust (I.V.P.T.) and the Interfaith Coalition for Peace in Sri Lanka.

The Trust was represented by His Highness His Holiness Swami Isa, Founder of I.V.P.T. and Global Energy Parliament whereas the Interfaith Coalition, by the Venerable Banagala Upatissa Nayaka, the Sri Lankan most-respected Buddhist Leader who is also the President of the Mahabodi Society and the Interfaith Coalition for Peace of Sri Lanka. Also present was Rev. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph,

the General Secretary of the Interfaith Coalition and the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka.

It is to be noted that last year Sri Lankan Interfaith Coalition successfully organized the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka.

Seychelles was represented at the event by its Ambassador to Sri Lanka H.E. David Pierre and Sir James' Personal Assistant, Mr. Bernard Racombo.

Following the presentation, Sir James was invited to officially open the Global Energy Parliament Session alongside Swami Isa who is internationally-respected and the Proponent of the Concept that "It is the great light of consciousness within an individual which illuminates him towards greater heights of achievement and contentment."

The theme for the conference "Habitat Harmony" was most relevant according to W.P. Ebenezer Joseph of the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka. "As we collectively endeavour to work for peace and justice where all religious and ethnic communities can live with dignity, in security and in harmonious relationship with nature and the environment."

The conference was attended by some 500 delegates from all parts of the world.

Asked by the media how he felt in receiving such Prestigious Recognition, Sir James said, "All life has a secret purpose and therefore dignity and respect of life are essential ingredients for harmonious living. Every life needs a secure and fearless environment, not only for healthy living but for genuine growth, nourishment, care and concern for each other enriched by natural dependency.

What is taking place in Sri Lanka today is of great relevance to what is taking place in Seychelles. Today, I am glad that more and more people are becoming aware of the importance of reconciliation in our sadly divided world."

As for Ambassador Pierre, Sir James' Award is a treasure not only to himself but also to the Republic of Seychelles where his reconciliatory approach has won him national respect.

In his address following the presentation of the Award, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister. Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe said that he himself was impressed by Sir James' performance when he attended a meeting of COMESA in Lusaka Zambia some years back.

The Sri Lankan Prime Minister then focused on the need to uphold peace and harmony in Sri Lanka. In this respect, he said, “There are a handful of people who want to mobilize ethnic and religious hatred to provide insulin for mischievous element. We have to move away from this kind of activity. The government will talk to them and try to convince them that they are wrong to disturb the ethnic and religious harmony in Sri Lanka today. Today people want to live in peace, they believe in National Reconciliation, but the handful of trouble makers are keen to disrupt the prevailing climate of peace and harmony.”