

## 52 attend 4-day Asian Leadership Conference (ALC) in Bangkok, Thailand

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Bangkok, Thailand -- Fifty-two participants from five nations attended a four-day Asian Leadership Conference (ALC) in Bangkok, Thailand from July 7 to 10, 2017. Participants came from the following nations: 30 from Cambodia, 7 from Nepal, 7 from the Philippines, 6 from Thailand, and 2 from Malaysia.

Among the conference participants were three members of parliament (two current and one former), two military generals (retired), two governors, a vice minister for education (retired), five college principals, two medical doctors, a television director, a consultant for national defense from the Presidential Office, the chairman of two women's associations, several government officials, and district leaders. This was the highest level ALC held in Asia this year.



For many, the highlight of the educational part of the program was a special high-level session where H.E. Madhav Kumar Nepal, former prime minister of Nepal (2009-2011), and Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, a two-time minister of the government of Nepal, both spoke to the conference delegates.

In an address entitled, "The Role of Governments, Parliamentarians and Civil Society in Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time," Prime Minister Nepal said that "the role of civil society in our time, particularly in developing countries, is highly important. It plays a role to enhance transparency and good governance."

"Besides, civil society enhances and strengthens the democratic system promoting ideas of self-reliance." He went on to say that "the sole responsibility of the government is to serve the

people by systemizing the financial activities under proper regulations."

Before outlining the chronology of the launching of chapters of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) throughout the world in the last year and a half, Hon. Dhakal explained the four fundamental principles of the IAPP. It is politically neutral, religiously inclusive, dialogically based, and focused on world peace with ideal families as the cornerstone.

At the end of the program, an Interfaith Peace Blessing Festival was held where nine couples rededicated their marriages based on a renewed understanding of the importance of marriage and family. Those who were single or did not bring their spouse rededicated themselves to the ideal of purity before marriage and fidelity in marriage.

This was a solemn time for all, but it was also filled with song and laughter. The couples took seriously the opportunity to make a new beginning for themselves and their loved ones.

Comments from the reflections of various participants:

"The 'Attributes of True Love,' given by Dr. Chung Sik Yong, chair of UPF-Asia, was very interactive and well received."

"The universal applicability of these teachings was easily obvious, as they could be applied in education, government, business and religion."

"The strong emphasis on marriage and family -- backed up by documented sociological data -- added professionalism to the program."

At the end of the program, Ambassadors for Peace awards were given to 11 participants from three nations.

