

The Singapore experience shows that it is possible for people of different races, religions, languages and cultures to live happily together as brothers and sisters in a new nation.' **Tommy Koh**, Chairman, National Heritage Board

BAHA'IS | BUDDHISTS | CHRISTIANS | HINDUS | JAINS | JEWS | MUSLIMS | SIKHS | TAOISTS | ZOROASTRIANS

THE GOLDEN RULE: Each religion is different, but all teach people to be good. They all teach the "Golden Rule": that we should treat others the way we'd like to be treated. Here is the Baha'i version of the Golden Rule...

Choose for your neighbour that which you would choose for yourself. – Baha'u'llah



Baha'i Singaporean kids visited a yam plantation in Sabah in 2005 (above) to learn more about farming. Last year, Bahai'is helped spread the green message to students taking part in an international summer camp organised by Nan Hua Secondary School (below).

Serving God by saving the environment

Religions teach their followers to make the world a better place. Our series on religions starts with the Baha'is and their green mission.

During Singapore's Clean and Green Week every year, one group doing its part for the environment is the Baha'i community. The Baha'is are one of Singapore's smallest religious groups, but they have big dreams to help change the world for the better.

Like other major religions, the Baha'i faith says there's a special connection between God the creator and God's creations – including all of nature. So, a good person is one who cares for the environment.

Baha'is around the world get involved in green projects, ranging from beach clean-ups in Portugal to training farmers in sustainable methods in India. In Singapore, they have organised talks and taken part in regular clean-ups in the island's nature



reserves. In the Baha'i view, the world's major environmental problems are signs of a sickness in the human spirit: people value material things too much. Baha'is believe that there should be a balance between nature and technology.

The Baha'is also believe that animals should be protected. Baha'i writings say, "Look not upon the creatures of God except with the eye of kindness and of mercy."

The Baha'is believe that one major problem in the world is that people are divided. Baha'is believe strongly in unity. It is only by working together as a global community that major environmental problems can be solved. Baha'is hope to break down the barriers that block harmonious cooperation among people, whatever their national, racial or religious background.

That's why the Baha'is like to have different religious groups involved with them in environment activities, like a multi-religious celebrations of Earth Day.

More about Baha'is

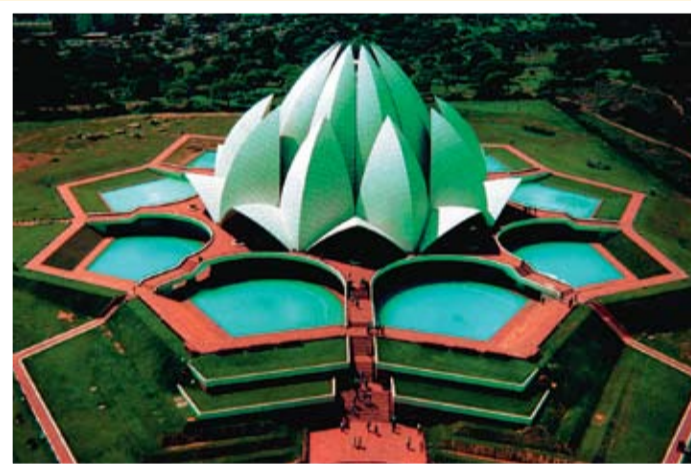
WOMEN'S EQUALITY: The Baha'is are famous for caring deeply about the position and treatment of women. One of the first Baha'is in Singapore, Mrs Shirin Fozdar (below), spoke up for women of all races and religions, and helped to make Singapore laws fairer for the so-called "fairer sex". Although she died in 1992, Mrs Shirin Fozdar is still remembered by Singaporeans as a hero of the women's movement here.

A YOUNG RELIGION: The Baha'i faith was founded in 1844, making it one of the youngest religions. It came from Persia (today's Iran).

FOUNDER: The religion's founder-prophet was Baha'u'llah, who lived from 1817 to 1892.



LEADERS: The Baha'is have no priests. Instead, Baha'i communities elect local, national and international governing bodies.



INSPIRED BY THE LOTUS: The Baha'i House of Worship in New Delhi, India, (above) is one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. It was completed in 1986. There are nine doors leading to a big hall in the middle, which can hold more than 2,500 people. Inspired by the lotus flower (left), the temple walls are made up of 27 "petals" tiled with marble. The lotus has been admired by people of different faiths for thousands of years. The flower is beautiful, even though it grows in muddy ponds. In the same way, people can try to be pure no matter what their surroundings are like. That's one reason why both Hindus and Buddhists treat the lotus as a special symbol. Muslim rulers in India also adopted the lotus design for mosques, castles and other buildings – including the world-famous Taj Mahal.



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