

RELIGIONS FOR PEACE: BANGLADESH CHAPTER REPORT

Religions for Peace/ACRP Bangladesh Chapters has invested all its possible efforts for the promotion of its activities in Bangladesh. The green land of ours has been maintaining a long tradition of communal harmony where people live together and are observing their religious rites and festivals in a peaceful environment. There are some sporadic cases of violation, but the government is determined to ensure happy state of religious tolerance and communal harmony. Here we mention some of RfP/ACRP Bangladesh Chapter activities in brief.

An Executive Committee of the National Chapter was formed on 01.07.2016 after around five years. Some important leaders of the Chapter attended different seminars and conferences organized by other organizations in and outside Bangladesh to promote peace activities in last two years. Add to this, Principal Sukomol Barua (Secretary General & Convener, Ad hoc Committee, Bangladesh National Chapter) attended ACRP- EC meeting held in Beijing on 20-21.05. 2017 as an exclusive task of ACRP/RfP. Dipankar Barua (Secretary General-Youth of ACRP/RfP Bangladesh) also went to Jakarta for participating RfP Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp 2017 (12- 15.12. 2017) organized by ACRP-SPEC and RfP Asia. In return, some high profile six-member delegation of China Committee of Religion and Peace (RfP/CCRP) visited Bangladesh from 24-29 December,2016 headed by Senior Vice President of China Islamic Council on a friendly mission. Among the organizational activities of National Chapter a reception meeting that held in honor of the said delegation was very important. Other Dhaka centered activities to promote peace were motionless due to some unavoidable circumstances, although honorable members of the chapter had capability of becoming speedier.

It is noteworthy that simultaneously a new and effective initiative was taken in 2016 to form Chittagong Regional Chapter by a group of interfaith leaders like Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey (Dean-Faculty of Business Studies, BGC Trust university) and Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar (Chairman, Department of Philosophy, University of Chittagong) , Ambrose Gomes (Church leader)), Dilip Barua (Buddhist leader) and others under the close guidance of Reverend Mitsuyuki Aritomi (Branch Minister, RKK Bangladesh) in the presence of many socially important dignitaries of different religious traditions. This committee performed the following activities in consecutive manner:

A. Organizational Activities:

- i) Creation of background for organizing RfP
- ii) Group meeting (20.11.2016)
- iii) Introductory meeting for organizing RfP at Hotel Agrabad (29.11.2016)
- iv) Formation of Chittagong Regional Chapter (CRC) Committee on 30.12.2016
- v) First Executive Committee meeting of RfP-CRC (12.01.2017)
- vi) RfP Women Forum EC-CRC meeting held on 21.01.2017
- vii) Special meeting of RfP-CRC held on 16.01.2017 on Rohingya issues
- viii) Installation Ceremony of EC, Chittagong Regional Chapter on 03.02.2017 at Hotel Agrabad, Chittagong
- ix) Joint Committee Meeting with Women's Network and Youth Network of CRC on 22.02.2017
- x) Holding of meetings of Women's forum(CRC) activities held on 05.01.2017, 13.02.2017 & 27.02.2017.
- xi) Meeting of Constitution Sub-Committee held on 01.05.2017

- xii) Holding of Meeting with dignitaries and leaders of different faith holders and formation of 25 members Convening Committee of Cox's Bazar District Committee at Fu-wang Dominous Resort , Loboni Point on 11.05. 2017.
- xiii) An extended meeting of RfP-CRC Senior-Youth-Women Network held on 31.05.2017 at RKK Conference Room.
- xiv) Installation Ceremony of EC, RfP Cox's Bazar District Committee at Long Beach Hotel Cox'Bazar on 03.10.2017
- xv) Formation of Convening Committee for RfP Khagrachari District on 25.11.2017
- xvi) Formation of RfP Convening Committee at Rangamati on 17.08.2017
- xvii) Introduction of RfP activities at Bandarban District on 20.03.2017
- xviii) RfP Chittagong Regional Chapter Conference-2017 held on 06.12.2017 at Chittagong District Council Auditorium
- xix) Hosting General Meeting of RfP-Bangladesh Chapter on 19.01.2018 at Long Beach Hotel, Cox's Bazar

B. Academic Activities:

- i) Seminar on 'Buddhism and World Peace' held at the Faculty of Arts Auditorium, University of Chittagong. Keynote speaker: Reverend Shoko Mizutani
- ii) Seminar on Inter-Religious Culture in collaboration with RFP-CRC Youth Network on 17.02.2017 at RKK Conference Room. Presenters: Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey and Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar
- iii) Seminar on "Searching for Peaceful and Inclusive Societies in South East Asia and the Globe" held on 06.12.2017. Keynote speaker: Reverend Masamichi Kamiya (Senior Advisor, ACRP/RfP-Asia).
- iv) Seminar on Multi-Faith Issues organized by Women's Forum RfP-CRC at Prattashi Auditorium on 26.08.2017
- v)

C. Motivational Meeting:

- i) At Sualok Para, Bandarban Hill District with local leaders, dignitaries and teachers on 30.03.2017.
- ii) At the Office of Deputy Commissioner of Bandarban Hill District on 30.03.2017
- iii) At Sadar Upazila Office, Bandarban Hill District on 30.03.2017
- iv) Holding of Meetings at Cox's Bazar City College on 11.10.2017

D. Health Awareness Program:

- i) Health Awareness Program for Children and parents at Sualokpara Govt Primary School held on 30.30.2017
- ii) Health Awareness Program at Rangamti on 17.10.2017
- iii) Youth Network's at health awareness program at Banskhali, Chittagong & Khagrachari

E. Relief Activities:

- i) Family size mosquito net (1200) distributed among Rohingya Refugees of Myanmar at Balukhali, Kutupalong & Hinducamp, Ukhia on 12.10.2017
- ii) Distributed rice at Jamtoli Camp on 20.1.2018
- iii) Distributed Rice and spices at Hindu Rohingya, Ukhia camp on 21.12.2018

iv) Distributed Rice at Nayapara Rohingya camp, Ukhia on 02.28.2018

With sincere and honest recognition of the dynamic activities of Chittagong Regional Chapter, Principal Sukumol Barua (Secretary General of RfP Bangladesh Chapter) took initiative in consultation with Reverend Masamichi Kamiya (Senior Advisor, ACRP/RfP-Asia) to reorganize RfP Bangladesh Chapter and convened a general meeting of RfP Bangladesh on 19.01.2018 (followed by the relief operation of dated: 20.01.2018) at the Hotel Long Beach, Cox's Bazar which was attended among others by Rev. Masamichi Kamiya & Rev. Mitsuyuki Aritomi. It is noteworthy that a 24-member ad hoc committee of RfP Bangladesh was formed at the General Meeting in place of the previous National Committee of RfP Bangladesh to activate the organization countrywide in future.

FUTURE ACTION PLANS:

1. Constitution for RfP Bangladesh chapter has been drafted but official registration is awaiting
2. A wider conference of different faith holders will be held subsequent to registration of the draft constitution in order to form a regular committee of Bangladesh Chapter in the light of the provisions of this constitution
3. An effective membership drive will be made to strengthen and popularize the objectives of RfP
4. Formation of divisional committees of RfP throughout Bangladesh.
5. Publication of booklet to propagate the objectives of RfP.

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