

RfP-ACRP BANGLADESH ACTIVITY REPORT FROM 2014 TO 2021

RfP-ACRP Bangladesh members believe that religious and inter-religious cooperation are essential for building a just and peaceful society in Bangladesh. We are fully committed to carry out necessary actions for peace and the well-being of people in our region. In conformity with the declaration of the last Assembly, RfP Bangladesh has tried to materialize the recommendations related to unity and harmony in our region and has been contributing with its limited resource and heartfelt efforts. RfP Bangladesh has carried out various peace programs to reach more people ever than before under different projects supported by ACRP and RfP International along with an initiative for peaceful repatriation efforts of Rohingya Refugees to their country of origin in collaboration with RfP Myanmar after the last ACRP Assembly. But COVID-19 has resisted our progress a lot for the last two years. Here we mentioned our different activities (both action and organizational) from 2014 to the present.

<p>ACRPB = Asian Conference of Religions for Peace Bangladesh RfPB = Religions for Peace Bangladesh CRC = Chittagong Regional Committee</p>
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2014

- **27 October 2014:** ACRP Bangladesh organized an interfaith meeting at Cox's Bazar in honor of the visiting Japanese RKK-ACRP delegates where people of different faiths attended the event.
- **29 October 2014:** An international seminar on promoting Buddhist-Muslim relation held in Dhaka during the visit of some prominent Japanese Buddhist scholars those who were belonging to ACRP and WCRP. A good number of local RfPB & RKK members and Buddhist personnel were present in the seminar.
- **December 01, 2014:** An universal peace prayer supported by ACRP-RfPB was held in Dhaka where leading scholars of different faiths, like Prof. Kazi Nurul Islam, Principal Sukomal Barua, Dr. Fr. Tapan C De Rozario & Prof. Heren Biswas were present and actively participated.

2015

- **2015:** RfPB Interfaith Youth Network organized several events under the Hand Wash Project at Banskhal, Chittagong & Khagrachari Districts throughout the year under the guidance of Rev. Mitsuyuki Arithomi, Branch Minister, RKK Bangladesh.
- **February 01, 2015:** ACRP Bangladesh organized an 'Interreligious Harmony Rally' in the Dhaka University campus where people of different faiths participated. This was a part of interreligious harmony week celebrated by ACRP-RfPB.

- **February 04, 2015:** A seminar held on ‘What is Interfaith Dialogue and what it is for?’ at Dhaka as part of the event of ‘Interreligious Harmony Week’. Professor Dr. Kazi Nurul Islam presided over the seminar.
- **August 2015:** Principal Sukomal Barua (Secretary-General of ACR-RfPB) delivered a lecture on ‘What is Interfaith Understanding (?)’ in a seminar organized by the ACRP Bangladesh.

2016

- **July 1, 2016:** An Executive Committee of the National Chapter was formed after around five years headed by Prof. Dr. Kazi Nurul Islam (President) & Principal Sukomal Barua (Secretary-General).
- **November 29, 2016:** A new effective initiative was taken to organize RfPB-CRC by a group of interfaith leaders, like Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey, Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar, Ambrose Gomes, Dilip Barua , & Kanchan Barua and others under the close guidance of Rev. Mitsuyuki Aritomi (Branch Minister, RKK Bangladesh) in presence of many socially important dignitaries of different religious traditions at the Hotel Agrabad, Chittagong.
- **December 12, 2016:** RfP-CRC was formed after several years.
- **December 24-28, 2016:** A six-member delegation of China Committee on Religion and Peace (CCRP) visited Bangladesh from 24th December to 28th December 2016. They had several meetings with the members of RfPB Chapter led by Principal Sukomal Barua, and other leaders of Women and Youth Network, Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, Religious Leaders of Shalban Buddhist Temple- Comilla, Teachers of Rampal Degree College, Religious and local leaders of Bajrajogini- the birthplace of Great Atisha, Deputy Commissioner of Munshiganj. CCRP leaders held meeting with the Minister of Religious Affairs, Director General of Islamic Foundation, & Chairman UGC. They visited Baitul Mukkaram National Mosque, Dharmarajika Buddhist Temple, Kakrail Christian Church, Dhakeswari Hindu Temple, and the Vice-Chairman- Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust and met Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Religious Affairs.

2017

- **January 05, 2017:** A meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee was held at Hotel Agrabad, Chittagong.
- **January 05, February 13 & 27, 2017:** A series of meetings were organized by RfP-B Interfaith Women Network, CRC in connection to different interreligious activities.
- **January 16, 2017:** A special meeting of RfP-CRC with Rev. Mitsuyuki Arithomi, Branch Minister, RKK Bangladesh held on Rohingya Refugee issues at RKK Conference Room, Chittagong.

- **January 21, 2017:** A new committee of RfPB-CRC Women Network was formed headed by Prof. Dr. Rashida Khanam.
- **February 03, 2017:** Installation Ceremony of RfPB-CRC held at Hotel Agrabad, Chittagong. Dr. Iftaqar Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor, University of Chittagong was present as Chief Guest in the ceremony.
- **February 17, 2017:** Seminar on Inter-Religious Culture in collaboration with RfP-CRC Youth Network at RKK Conference Room. Presenters: Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey and Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar. Prof. Dr. Anupam Sen was the Chief Guest at this Seminar.
- **February 22, 2017:** An extended meeting of RFPB-CRC was held with RfPB-CRC Interfaith Youth & Women Network.
- **March 20, 2017:** Introduction of RfPB activities & formation of RfPB Bandarban Chapter for the first time.
- **March 30, 2017:** Meeting at Sualok Para Primary School, Bandarban Hill District with local leaders, dignitaries regarding the aims and objectives of RfPB.
- **May 11, 2017:** A meeting was held with dignitaries and leaders of different faith holders and formed a 25- members Convening Committee of RfPB Cox's Bazar Chapter at Fu-wang Dominous Resort , Laboni Point.
- **May 20-21, 2017:** Principal Sukomol Barua (Secretary General, RfP Bangladesh) visited China to attend the ACRP-EC meeting held in Beijing, China.
- **May 31, 2017:** An extended meeting of RfPB-CRC Senior, Youth & Interfaith Women Network was held at RKK Conference Room, Chittagong
- **August 08, 2017:** Formation of RfPB Rangamati Chapter Convening Committee.
- **August 26, 2017:** A seminar on Multi-Faith Issues organized by RfPB-CRC Womens' Network held at Prattashi Auditorium.
- **October 03, 2017:** Installation Ceremony of EC, RfPB Cox's Bazar Chapter was held at Long Beach Hotel (Cox' Bazar).
- **October 11, 2017:** Meetings with Cox's Bazar RfPB leaders with National Chapter leaders at Cox's Bazar City College regarding the proposed humanitarian help to Rohingya refugee camp.
- **March 30, 2017:** Health Awareness Program for Children and their parents under the hand wash project at Sualokpara Govt. Primary School, Bandarban Hill District.
- **October 17, 2017 :** Health Awareness Program at Rangamti under the hand wash project.
- **October 12, 2017:** Distribution of family size mosquito net (1200) among camps of Rohingya Refugees of Myanmar at Balukhali, Kutupalong & Hindu camp at Ukhia, Cox's Bazar District.
- **November 25, 2017:** Formation of RfPB Khagrachari Chapter Convening Committee was formed in presence of RfPB Secretary-General Prof. Dr NHM Abu Bakar.

- **April 29, 2016:** A seminar on ‘Buddhism and World Peace’ held at the Faculty of Arts Auditorium, University of Chittagong in collaboration with RfPB-CRC, Rissho-Kosei-kai Bangladesh & the Dept. of Philosophy, University of Chittagong. Prof. Dr.NHM Abu Bakar (Chairman-Dept of Philosophy) presided over the seminar where the keynote speaker was Japanese Scholar Rev. Shoko Mizutani.
- **December 01, 2017:** First Executive Committee meeting of RfP-CRC was held at RKK Conference Room, Chittagong. Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey presided over the meeting.
- **December 06, 2017:** RfPB Chittagong Regional Chapter Conference-2017 held at Chittagong District Council Auditorium. Rev. Masamichi Kamiya (Senior Advisor, ACRP/RfP-Asia) was the Chief Guest in the conference. Rev. Kamiya presented a seminar on “Searching for Peaceful and Inclusive Societies in South East Asia and the Globe” before the conference.
- **December 12-15, 2017:** Dipankar Barua (Secretary General, RfPB Interfaith Youth Network) visited Jakarta to participate RfP Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp. This camp was organized by ACRP-SPEC and RfP Asia.

2018

- **January 19, 2018:** RfP-B hosted a General Meeting at Long Beach Hotel, Cox’s Bazar in presence of Rev. Mitsuyuki Aritomi and Rev. Masamichi Kamiya, Senior Advisor, ACRP-RfP. Prof. Ranajit Kumar. With sincere and honest recognition of newly organized chapters in different districts and inactiveness of Prof. Kazi Nurul Islam for long one year, Principal Sukumol Barua (the then Secretary General of RfP Bangladesh Chapter) took initiative in consultation with Rev. Masamichi Kamiya (Senior Advisor, ACRP/RfP-Asia) to reorganize RfP Bangladesh Chapter. Secretary Generals & Presidents of all chapters were present at the General Meeting. Consequently, a 24-member ad-hoc committee headed by Principal Sukomal Barua (Convener) and Prof.Dr.NHM Abu Bakar (Secretary) of RfP Bangladesh was formed in place of the previous National Committee of RfP Bangladesh to activate the organization countrywide in the future.
- **January 20, 2018 :** Distributed two tracks of rice (1000 packets) at Jamtoli Refugee Camp.
- **February 28, 2018:** Distributed one track rice (250 packets) at Nayapara Rohingya Refugee camp, Ukia, Cox’s Bazar.
- **April 16-18 ,2018:** A delegation of RfPB leaders headed by Principal Sukomal Barua (President), Professor Ranajit Kumar Dey(Executive President), and Dr. NHM Abu Bakar (Secretary General) participated in the EC meeting of ACRP held in Bengaluru, India from 16-18 April 2018. A one-year project titled “Children First in South Asia: A case study of the protection of children’s rights and advancing their well-being in Bangladesh” has been approved for Bangladesh Chapter in the EC meeting.

- **June 30, 2018** : An adhoc Committee meeting, Chaired by Principal Sukomal Barua, of RfP Bangladesh Chapter, was held at the RKK Conference Room, Chittagong for constituting a regular committee. A regular committee of RfP Bangladesh Chapter was formed headed by Principal Sukomal Barua (President), Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey (Executive President), and Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar (General Secretary). And it followed an extended meeting together with the representatives of different districts for the adoption of the constitution on the same day.
- **November 27-28, 2018**: A two-day International seminar on ‘World Peace through Interfaith and Intra-faith Dialogue’ held at the hotel ‘the Westin Dhaka’. It was attended by about 140 religious and interfaith leaders together with religious scholars and researchers from Bangladesh, Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka.
- **December 21, 2018**: Distributed Rice and spices at Hindu Rohingya Refugee Camp, Ukhia, Cox’s Bazar.

2019

- **2019**: RfP member Masum Ahmed, Interfaith Youth Network member Nadia Afreen, Sashan Barua, Ujjal Deb & Tazin Akter received fellowship(s) from The Network of Traditional and Religious Peacemakers. They attended two fellowship workshops held in Bangkok from 5th-14th August 2019 and 5th- 9th February 2020. They were awarded grants for their interfaith projects separately in December 2019 and later. RfPB SEA-AIR project monitored their activities until the end of the project.
- **March 4-7, 2019**: RfP Bangladesh leaders participated in the 10th World Assembly Asia Regional Consultation of Religions for Peace held in Yangon. RfP delegation headed by Principal Sukomal Barua, Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey, Dr. NHM Abu Bakar, and Prof. Dr. Rashida Khanam took part actively in the different sessions of the consultation. They also attended a joint meeting with the leaders of RfP Myanmar on the issues of working jointly for immediate repatriation and other burning issues of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey made a presentation in a separate session of the Consultation on transforming conflicts on the same issue.
- **March 28, 2019**: An extended meeting of RfP Bangladesh held at RKK Bhavan regarding the project implementation policy and upcoming National Consultation to be held in July 3, 2019 in preparation of the 10th World Assembly.
- **April 9-13, 2019**: RfP Bangladesh delegation headed by Principal Sukomal Barua (President, RfPB) and Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey (Executive President, RfPB) attended ACRP 2019 annual Executive Meeting from April 9-13, 2019 held in Osaka, Japan.

- June 28, 2019:** An awareness creation event held in Chittagong for children and women rights and their dignity under the ACRP flagship project. RfPB Chapter with the cooperation of the Tokyo Secretariat contributed to the implementation of this flagship project by organizing a “Children’s Rally” and a “Discussion Meeting” at Probotak Songha Auditorium & the surrounding area where children, guardians, teachers of different schools, and the invited guests participated.

July 01, 2019: RfPB started a monitoring project for two years (from July 01, 2019 –June 30,2021) in collaboration with RfP International on “South Asia: Advancing Interreligious Dialogue and freedom of religions or Belief (SEA-AIR). Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary-General of RfP-I and Dr. NHM Abu Bakar, Secretary-General of RfPB signed a joint agreement to implement the project.

July 3, 2019 : Bangladesh National Consultation in preparation for the 10th World Assembly of RfP held at Hotel Agrabad Conference Room, Chittagong. Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary-General of RfP International was present in this consultation as a keynote speaker.

August 19-24, 2019: A delegation from RfPB represented by Principal Sukomal Barua (President), Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey (Executive President) & Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar (Secretary-General) participated in the 10th World Assembly (2019) of Religions for Peace in Lindau, Germany from August 19-23. The experiences of different sessions of the assembly were instructive to the delegates of RfP Bangladesh.
- August 23, 2019:** RfPM and RfPB leaders held Track II Consultations and signed a joint statement on 23 August 2019 on the refugee problem affecting Bangladesh and Myanmar at the RfP 10th World Assembly held in Linda, Germany. Both national chapters expressed serious concern over this tragedy and firm determination to build confidence, and strive to find a peaceful and just solution to this tragedy of the refugees compelled to flee to Bangladesh and be sheltered in different refugee camps there.
- November 21-22, 2019 :** RfP Bangladesh hosted the Second High-level Summit of Buddhist and Muslim Leaders at Long Beach Hotel, Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh for overcoming extremism and advancing peace with justice. The summit was supported by the Religions for Peace International Trustee Group and organized by International Forum on Buddhist Muslim Relations (BMF), The representatives (40) of International Network of Engaged Buddhist, International Movement for a Just World, Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah, Religions for Peace and The Network for Religious and Traditional Peace Makers participated in this Summit. Honorable Minister of Home Affairs, Govt of the Republic of Bangladesh Asaduzzaman Khan, MP, sent a message wishing success of the Summit.
- November 26-30, 2019:** Ms. Semonti Barua , a member of RfPB Interfaith Youth Network, participated in the Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp held in Manila, Philippines. 60 youth leaders representing Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and

Judaism, have attended this camp. Semothi participated in several insightful workshops at this gathering.

- **December 10-13, 2019:** RfPB president Principal Sukomal Barua attended CCRP China Committee for Religions and Peace) sponsored seminar “Interfaith exchanges and shared future for mankind” in China at Beijing Friendship Hotel from 10-13 December 2019. Prof. Dr. Chandra Barua of Pali and Buddhist Studies, Dhaka University also participated in the seminar.
- **December 11-12, 2019:** Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar (Secretary-General, RfPB) participated in the extraordinary session of the RfP World Council titled Multi-religious and Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Peace and Development held in New York. **2020**
- **January 14 and 15, 2020:** Prof. Dr. Rashida Khanam participated at the first online symposium of Asia-Pacific Women of Faith Network (APWoFN) titled “The Reality of Human Trafficking in Asia” on behalf of RfPB Women Faith Network..
- **March 25, 2020:** RfPB leaders participated in a Global webinar on “Redefining Leadership, Re-Envisioning Faith, and Reconstructing Humanitarianism” organized by RfPI.
- **July 28, 2020:** RfPB leaders joined the Global Webinar organized by RfPI on IRC Development - Securing Representative and Inclusive Governance.
- **September 9, 2020:** RfPB leaders joined the third Global Webinar organized by RfPI on Interreligious Council (IRC) Development, focusing on Strategic Communications and Media Engagement.
- **September 30, 2020:** RfPB leaders participated on a Global Webinar on Interreligious Council (IRC) Development organized by RfP International.
- **September 2020:** RfPB leaders attended Religions for Peace (RfP) Inter-Religious Council (IRC) Development Webinar on Financial Accountability and Resource Mobilization.
- **October 14-15, 2020:** RfPB Secretary-General Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar presented a report on the COVID-19 situation in Bangladesh at ACRP, EC meeting held online. In a different session Executive President Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey spoke on the issue of finance and resource mobilization related to “Development of Inter-Religious Councils/IRCs
- **October 23-24, 2020:** Prof. Dr. Rashida Khanam delivered speech on “Gender Equality and Culture: Culture: Keeping Faith and Transforming Tomorrow” at the “Asian Consultation on Women, Faith, and Diplomacy: Keeping Faith and Transforming Tomorrow” on Oct 23, 2020 organized by ACRP.
- **November 10-13, 2020:** Principal Sukomal Barua, Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey, Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar and Prof. Dr. Rashida Khanam joined online in the different sessions at the Assembly held in Lindau, Germany on Women, Faith and Diplomacy. Over 1,000 representatives of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and other religions

virtually met to discuss new forms of policymaking, with a focus on women and diplomacy in this Assembly.

2021

- **March 11, 2021:** A meeting on the progress of the Flagship project held online with Rev. Masamichi Kamiya (Senior Advisor, ACRP-RfP). RfPB leaders Principal Sukomal Barua, Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey, Prof.Dr.NHM Abu Bakar, Dilip Barua & Rev. Kanchan Barua were present in the meeting
- **March 17, 2021:** Second event of ACRP Flagship project ‘Children Fast in South Asia’ held on March 17, 2021 at Ramu Jagatjyoti Shishu Sadan (Ramu,Cox's Bazar) to ensure the child rights against the Child labor and female child trafficking. Different NGO representatives also participated at this event.
- **June 8-9, 2021:** Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar, Prof.Ranajit Kumar Dey, Mr. Dilip Barua, Rev. Kanchan Barua & Dr. Sreepathi Das virtually attended the SEA-AIR Final Conference on FoRB Policy and Practice on behalf of SEA-AIR Monitoring Project of RfPB. RfPB successfully runs this project for two years from July 2018 to June 2021 on Interreligious issues and Freedom of religion and Belief.
- **January 13, 2021:** ACRP Virtual Summit held on Human Trafficking" where Prof. Dr. Rashida Khanam presented a paper on “The state of human trafficking in Bangladesh” and RfPB Secretary-General Dr. NHM Abu Bakar was present there online.
- **April 01, 2021:** RfP leaders attended a seminar on “Positive Peace within the Context of Multi-religious Collaboration”. It was co-hosted by Religions for Peace and the Institute of Economics and Peace.
- **June 10,2021:** Dr.NHM Abu Bakar participated in the 2nd quarterly ACRP Secretary Generals meeting online on behalf of RfPB Chapter.
- **June 17, 2021:** A seminar held on Freedom of Religions and Belief (FoRB) with the religious leaders of Chittagong and Cox’s Bazar region at Taiwah Restaurant under the sponsorship of SEA-AIR Network project of RfPB. Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey (Executive President, RfPB) was present as a Chief Guest in the Seminar. 35 religious leaders from Muslim, Hindu, Christian & Buddhist communities were present there and most of them praised RfPB for taking initiative to publish the Bengali translation of the resource guide titled “Shanthir Pathnirdeshika”.
- **September 23, 2021:** Prof. Ranajit Kumar Dey (EP, RfPB) & Prof. Dr.NHM Abu Bakar(SG,RfPB) virtually attended High-Level Dialogues on ‘Leave No One Behind: Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Sustainable Development Goals’ and imparted their opinion in the context of Bangladesh organized jointly by FoRBLN, IPPFoRB, AfriPAHR & DIHR.
- **October 01, 2021:** The third awareness creation event supported by ACRP flagship project (The Children Fast in South Asia) was held on October 01, 2021 at Alutila-

Uluchhara Poura private primary school of Rangamati District. RfPB leaders on behalf of the project distributed study materials and snacks to the students.

- **October 02, 2021:** The fourth event of ACRP flagship event was held at Noymile Tripura Para Junior High School, Dighinala, Khagrachari . Most of the populations of this area are deprived of education due to their poor economic condition. After a colorful procession of students in the surrounding area a seminar titled “The Children First in South Asia: Advancing their wellbeing in Bangladesh” was organized as part of this event.. The Seminar was presided by RfPB leader Sashon Barua.
- **October 04, 2021:** The fifth event of the ACRP flagship project was held at Bandarban Sowalock Govt. Primary School ,Mzar Para, Sowalock Union Sadar, Bandarban. Rev. Kanchan Barua (Treasurer, RfPB) and RfPB Bandarban Chapter President Dr. Aung Tha Loo conducted and lead this event. This awareness creation event held on education on the dignity of human life aimed at empowering the vulnerable such as women and children of that area.
- **October 8, 2021:** The last but sixth event of ACRP flagship project was held at Scout Training Center, Railway Zone, Kamalapur, Dhaka . Nadia Afreen Khan (Convener, RfPB Interfaith Youth Network) conducted and lead the whole event in collaboration with Pather School (Kamalpur and Gulshan Branch). The children of this school (60) are deprived of regular education and have no idea about their rights as human being. Most of them are engaged in different kinds of temporary work to feed themselves. Even they have no permanent shelter. The event started at 01pm with their chorus songs “We shall overcome (Bengali version)” following a seminar along with light brain games. RfPB-EC member Journalist Selim Reza presided over the seminar where Prof. Dr. NHM Abu Bakar was the Chief Guest. All speakers of the seminar said that everywhere, regardless of gender, ethnicity, orientation, religion, nationality, caste, creed, or physical ability all children should be treated equally and given equal rights, privileges, and opportunities in all aspects of life. The children were served launch packed on behalf of the flagship project after the event. As part of this event, some study material were donated to Bright Star Junior High School, Kalyanpur Burnt Slum(Pora Bosti), Mirpur, Dhaka after an outdoor event.

Prepared & submitted by:



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Date: October 14, 2021

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