



# Religions for Peace India

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## RfP India Activities Report

Greetings from India. This is a brief Report of activities of “**Religions for Peace India**” for the period from 2015 to 2021.

INDIA is a founder member of WCRP and ACRP. The source of our inspiration and interest in multi-religious approach to find solution to various problems springs from the age-old belief in, what we call, “*Sarva Dharma Smabhava*” (Equal respect for all religions). “Unity in Diversity” is India’s national creed. “Ahimsa Paramo Dharma” (Nonviolence is the Ultimate Righteousness) is yet another ancient exhortation we all believe in. Respecting and upholding these civilizational values, our secular democratic Constitution guarantees equal respect and right to all religions. So, believers of all the religions live together in India from ancient times to the present in relative harmony and flourish and progress without hitch or hindrance.

WCRP in India, now called “**Religions for Peace India,**” continued to engage itself in various activities to promote peace, interfaith harmony and cooperation, and understanding among people across religious communities and social divides.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING IN INDIA

Religions for Peace India successfully organized the 2018 Executive Committee meeting of ACRP on 16-19 April 2018. It was held in the beautiful Campus of St. John’s National Academy of Health Services, Koramangalam, Bengaluru, Karnataka. More than 30 Members representing more than a dozen countries in Asia-Pacific region attended the annual meeting.





The meeting commenced with a Welcome Dinner on 16<sup>th</sup> evening. The chief guest was Sri Sugunendra Thirtha Swamiji of Puttige, an eminent Hindu religious leader. He expressed his happiness that such an important interfaith meeting of religious leaders is being held in Bengaluru. He gave his benedictory blessings for the success of the meeting.



The Committee transacted its business on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> April. A sidelight of the meeting was plantation of a few “Interfaith Friendship Trees” in the Campus of St John’s by visiting religious leaders from other countries in commemoration of holding the EC meeting there.





As part of the field visit, the members visited the Seva Sadan in the neighborhood where orphan boys are being imparted training in various skills like carpentry, black smithy, welding, printing, binding, etc. so as to equip them to secure gainful employment. The members also visited the famous Botanical Garden in Bengaluru city.



**CAMPAIGN FOR “VIOLENCE-FREE INDIA”:** Being a vast, complex and diverse country, India faces many daunting challenges. Among them are the menace of increasing violence caused by religious extremists – both internal and external. They have become a constant threat to peace and peaceful coexistence and orderly democratic process of development and progress. It is a matter of serious concern to peace-loving people everywhere. Small sections of people with vested interests are deliberately manipulating religious and sectarian sentiments as well as socio-economic backwardness to rouse passions, leading to conflict, violence and terrorist acts.

To counter this, some of us who are committed to Gandhian values of peace and nonviolence and democracy, have come together and started a national-level campaign for a “**Violence-free India**” (“*Himsamukt Bharat*”) for the past few years. This is an on-going program and we are continuing with this campaign.

**SHANTI SENA/PEACE CORPS:** We have been organizing “Shanti Sena” or Peace Corps. Shanti Sena means unarmed peace army. Shanti Sena will comprise of student and non-student youth as well as adult citizens trained in Nonviolence and in peace-building and peace-keeping. Qualification to become a Peace Volunteer (Shanti Sainik) is total adherence and commitment to Nonviolence under all circumstances. The task of such Peace Volunteers is to maintain peace and to help restore normalcy whenever and wherever conflicts and violence occur.

**CAMPAIGN FOR MINISTRY OF PEACE:** Another program we are engaged in is an on-going campaign to establish a Ministry of Peace in the Government exclusively to promote peace and harmony in the country. This is part of a global campaign to set up such Ministries in national governments across the globe to promote global peace and to reduce militarisation.

**PEACE CLUBS IN SCHOOLS:** Due to societal, familial and various other factors, including exposure to mindless violence in films, on television, video games, etc., children are becoming increasingly aggressive and often indulge in violent activities. This is a matter of great concern to everyone. To inculcate moral values of tolerance and understanding among children and to promote harmonious co-existence and acceptance of diversity and plurality by children, we have persuaded the concerned education authorities to start Peace Clubs (Shanti Kendras) in Schools and other educational institutions in some parts of the country. This, again, is also an ongoing program. This is part of Education for Peace program.

**PROTEST AGAINST HATE SPEECHES AND MINORITY BASHING:** With a Hindu Right Wing government in power in India now, we are witnessing a kind of majoritarian dominance. Some members of the ruling party have been instances of making derogatory and hateful statements/speeches against religious minorities. There have also been attacks on political dissidents and places of worship of minorities. Of course, all these have been roundly rejected and publicly condemned by majority of people, including by us in RfP India/ACRP, on mainstream media as well as in social media. But it continues to be a matter of concern.



**SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES:** Our members have also participated in various other programs like seminars, workshops and conferences on issues such as peace education, human rights, environment and sustainable development, communal harmony, gender equality and other social problems held in different parts of the country, besides organizing and participating in different religious festivals and commemorative events.

Our members are associated with several NGOs, educational institutions, civil society movements, Gandhian organizations, and thus a great deal of our work is done through networking. We conduct programs on our own and jointly in association with institutions and groups with similar aims and objectives.

**PARTICIPATION IN THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF KOREA’S FREEDOM STRUGGLE:** Mr N. Vasudevan and Dr Deepali Bhanot participated in the 4-day international conference of religious and civil society leaders on the theme “Religions and Peace for Another 100 Years” on 18-21 February 2019 in Seoul, Korea. This was organized by the Korean Conference of Religions for Peace (KCRP).



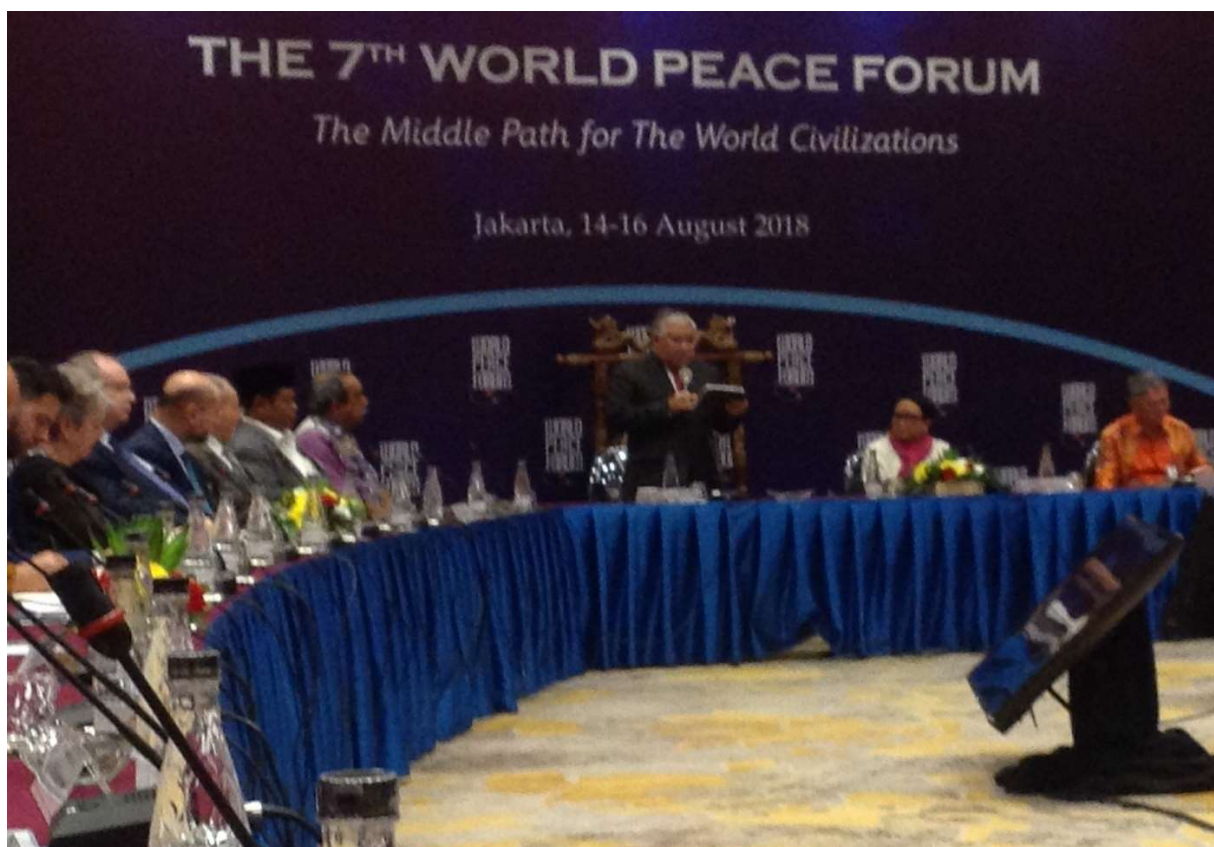
Mr Vasudevan delivered the Keynote address on the topic “Use of Nonviolent Resistance by Gandhi in India’s Struggle for Independence” He brought out brilliantly how Gandhi, a “failed” Lawyer became the Mahatma – the Great Soul – and how his life and work have impacted India in particular and humanity in general and explained at length what provoked him to become a

nonviolent resister, why and how he chose Ahimsa/nonviolence as his technique/method; how he trained his nonviolent army, how he mobilized an entire nation of 320 million Indians to follow him; and how Gandhi's nonviolence is used by people all over the world today to fight injustice and oppression and even to bring about change of governments.

On behalf of **Religions for Peace India**, Mr Vasudevan presented a statue of Mahatma Gandhi – symbol of Ahimsa and Peace – to KCRP as a token of goodwill and friendship. The gift was received by Archbishop of Gwangju Rev. Kim Hee-Joony, President of KCRP.

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR IN DHAKA: Mr N. Vasudevan participated in a two-day International Seminar on “World Peace Through Interfaith and Intra-faith Dialogue” in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 27-28 November 2018, which was organized by Religions for Peace Bangladesh. He presented a paper and spoke on the theme at the Seminar and also about “interfaith movement” in the last 50 years since the establishment of “World Conference of Religions for Peace/Religions for Peace” in 1970.

WORLD PEACE FORUM: Dr Bhanot and Mr N. Vasudevan participated in the Seventh World Peace Forum organized by Centre for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilizations (CDCC) on 14-16 August 2018 in Jakarta, Indonesia, and both of them presented papers and spoke on, “The Middle Path: Perspective of National Ideologies.’







Dr Deepali Bhanot, one of our senior members participated in a Seminar on “National Stocktaking of the Statutes and Condition of Children in India” organized by the National Child Rights Coalition on 20-21 February 2018 in New Delhi.

She also participated in an Interfaith Round Table discussion on the theme of “Regional Interfaith Dialogue on Child Dignity Online” held in New Delhi from 26-27 September 2018. She also participated in another Round Table Discussion on “Pluralism, Identity-based Conflicts and Democracy in India” at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi on 14 November 2018,

Dr Bhanot presented a paper on “Proposing Alternative Models of Poverty Alleviation in the Experience of Religion: A Hindu Perspective” in a Seminar organized by the School of Dialogue with Oriental Religions, in Hong Kong on 23-26 February 2019.

**ASIA-PACIFIC INTERFAITH YOUTH CAMP:** Religions *for* Peace, Myanmar hosted Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp on the theme “Taking Action on Climate Change through Interfaith Cooperation” from December 17 to 20, 2018 in Yangon, Myanmar.

This event was sponsored by ACRP Seoul Peace Education Center (ACRP-SPEC) and co-hosted by Religions for Peace Asia (ACRP) in partnership with Korean Conference of

Religions for Peace (KCRP), Religions for Peace International and the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

Mr Rishad Shameer, a Law student at Indraprastha University, New Delhi, attended this youth camp as the Indian delegate. There were around seventy people from thirteen different countries, interacting with each other and sharing their unique experiences over a period of four days. He says “it was a life-altering experience that put him on a journey of self-realization as a youth, thinking on the lines of accepting and celebrating differences, not only on a human level but on a spiritual level as well.”

Discussions, visits to religious sites, voluntary community social service and presentation of cultural programs were among the highlights of the Youth Camp.

**RfP India Youth Committee:** RfP India has now set up a Youth Committee with Mr Rishad Shameer as Chairperson and Ms. Priyanshu Krishnamoorthi as Secretary. The Committee consists of the following youth members:

Mr Rishad Shameer  
Mr Joel George Alex  
Ms. Priyanshu Krishnamoorthi  
Ms. Debangana Kundu  
Ms. Ananya Rao  
Ms. Vidhi Kohli  
Ms. Arpita Goel

**RfP India:** Keeping in mind the changed circumstances and to make it more in tune with the International body, we have now decided to re-register WCRP/India under the name “Religions for Peace India”. We hope to complete the official formalities very soon.

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Religions for Peace**

We are observing the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the founding of “Religions for Peace” RfP is a unique international, inter-religious body – representative of the religious population of the world and dedicated to the cause of peace and justice. It is in a way the spiritual successor to the famous “Parliament of World Religions” held in Chicago in 1893.

The fact that it survived – not only survived but grew and expanded globally -- for half century in the present turbulent and trouble world is in itself an achievement. To be part of it is a privilege for me.

**Religions for Peace India** continued to engage itself in various activities to promote peace, interfaith harmony and cooperation, and understanding among people across religious



communities and social divides, though the outbreak of the catastrophic Covid pandemic early this year has disrupted or halted all normal activities.

**CAMPAIGN FOR “VIOLENCE-FREE INDIA”:** Being a vast, complex and diverse country, India continue to face many challenges. Among them are the menace of increasing conflict and violence caused by religious extremists and small sections of people with vested interests deliberately manipulating religious and sectarian sentiments as well as socio-economic backwardness to rouse passions, leading to tension, conflict and violence.

To counter this, some of us who are committed to Gandhian values of peace and nonviolence and democracy, have come together and started a national campaign for a “**Violence-free India**” (“*Himsamukt Bharat*”) for the past few years. This is an on-going **joint program** and we continue to be engaged with this campaign.

We continued with other on-going programs such as Shanti Sena or Peace Corps; Protest against hate speeches and minority basing; and Campaign for a Ministry for Peace in the Government. The question is: If you can have a Ministry of Defence (in effect, war), why not a Ministry for Peace?

**YOUTH ACTIVITIES:** From 2018 onwards, RfP India has an active five-member multi-religious Youth Committee under the chairmanship of Mr Shameer Rishad. The Committee represents Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh religions.

**Youth Camp:** The Youth Wing received a small grant of 1000 dollars from RfP APIYN earlier last year for generating awareness among young people on the theme “Our Earth Our Responsibility – Harmonizing Peace and Climate Change.” Accordingly a Youth camp was held at the Campus of Mewat Engineering College in neighboring Haryana. The program included tree plantation and a public meeting, which was addressed by Mr Vasudevan and Mr Abdul Mabood.

Mr Shameer Rishad attended the **Annual Youth Peace Camp** of 2019 held in Manila, Philippines.

He also conducted a few **Workshops**, including one on the role of Faith-based Organization for successful implementation of SDGs. The honorable members can read the details in them Report, already circulated by the Secretariat.

**Fr. Bento**, President, RfP India and Dr Deepali Bhanot and Mr Abdul Mabood and me participated in several virtual/digital Interfaith Prayer meetings and discussions on Covid and its consequences on Webinars, including the ones conducted by RfP New York Office and ACRP Secretariat. Again, you can read the details in RfP India Report.

## **PARTICIPATION IN TENTH WORLD ASSEMBLY**

As part of the preparation for the 10<sup>th</sup> World Assembly, an Asia Regional Consultation was held at Yangon, Myanmar in March 2019, which was attended by Dr Deepali Bhanot, Mr Shameer Rishad and Mr N. Vasudevan.

On behalf of RfP India, a five-member delegation comprising of Rev. Rodrigues Bento, Dr Deepali Bhanot, Abdul Mabood, Shameer Rishad and N. Vasudevan participated in the 10<sup>th</sup>

**World Assembly of Religions for Peace** in Lindau, Germany from 20 to 23 August 2019 on the theme “Caring for Our Common Future – Advancing Shared Wellbeing.”

### **“Multi-religious and Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Peace and Development”**

Subsequently, Dr Deepali Bhanot and Mr N. Vasudevan have attended the two-day meeting on “Multi-religious and Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Peace and Development” on 11-12 December 2019 in New York as a follow-up of the decisions taken at the 10th World Assembly, held in Lindau, Germany.

### **SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES**

Members of RfP India have also participated in various other virtual/digital programs like seminars and discussions on issues like peace education, human rights, environment and sustainable development, communal harmony, and other social problems held in different parts of the country, besides organizing and participating in religious festivals and commemorative events such as Environmental Day, Human Rights Day, and International Nonviolence Day on Gandhi’s Birthday.

Our members are associated with several NGOs, educational institutions, civil society and Gandhian organizations, and thus a great deal of our work is done through networking. We conduct programs on our own and jointly in association with institutions and groups with similar aims and objectives.

**Rev. Rodrigues Bento**, President, RfP India participated in a few virtual Interfaith Prayer meetings and discussions on Covid and its consequences on Webinar.

**Dr Deepali Bhanot**, Secretary, RfP India, was invited to speak at the South Asia Regional Faith-in-Action Webinar, jointly organized by UNICEF and *Religions for Peace (RfP)* on May 7, 2020 to share the local experience in India regarding “The steps taken to counter rumours, misinformation, and stigma towards ethnic minorities, health workers or other groups in relation to Covid-19” and to share a good example with the Webinar participants and give suggestions for joint action for the same.

She was invited as a speaker in an Interfaith Zoom meeting organized by the Focolare Movement in India to present a paper on “*Daan* (Giving) as a social responsibility according to Hinduism” on May 14, 2020.

**Dr Deepali Bhanot** was invited to present the Hindu perspective at the Global Panel Discussion Webinar Series bringing the Global Leaders from the Inter-Faith and Religion Traditions of the World and Global Leaders of Science to join together at a panel discussion on “Inter-faith and Religion’s Role in Providing Ethical support and Guidance to the Community in Mitigating the Impacts of COVID” organized by the Department of Education, UNESCO Chair in Bioethics, Australia on August 23 and 30, 2020.

On 23 September 2019 **Abdul Mabood**, Treasurer, RfP India, delivered a lecture on the “Role of Religions in achieving positive Mental Health and Peace” in India, at the World Learning Centre in which 22 students from different Universities of USA participated. Knowledge of different religions amongst these students was eye-opener.

On 16 March 2020 Abdul Mabood was invited as Keynote speaker by the Youth for Mental Health & Human Rights to speak on the topic: "Can different religions and cultural pluralism in our society play a sustainable role in promoting Good Mental Health, Peace and Human Rights amongst youths?" It was a well-attended gathering of college students. It was a learning for me the way searching questions they raised during the course of discussions. He also attended a few webinars meetings organized recently by the RfP.

## **A Brief Report on Covid-19 Pandemic in India**

As many as 213 countries and territories have registered Covid-19 cases. No country is free from it.

COVID-19 disease is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people who fall sick with Covid will experience mild to moderate symptoms and recover without special treatment after a certain number of days.

The virus can cause a range of symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat and headaches. It can affect the upper respiratory tract (sinuses, nose, and throat) and the lower respiratory tract (windpipe and lungs). In severe cases, there can be difficulty in breathing and deaths can occur.

There are strict rules laid down by the government as per international protocol. We all follow the rules, so that we remain protected from infection and prevent others from getting infected.

Everyone should keep to a healthy routine. There are Dos and Don'ts to follow.

### **COVID-19 transmission and protective measures**

- Clean your hands often.
- Cough or sneeze in your bent elbow - not your hands!
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Limit social gatherings and time spent in crowded places.
- Avoid close contact with someone who is sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

How it spreads? The virus that causes Covid-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or exhales. These droplets are too heavy to hang in the air, and quickly fall on floors or surfaces.

As far as India is concerned, Covid has spread to all parts of the country, though with varying intensity. It is increasing almost uncontrollably at present, though there is a declining trend in the past one week. The daily increase now varies from 60,000 to 70,000. The recovery rate is better in India. The fatality rate is also low compared to other countries. Experts believe that the spread will continue indefinitely.

**As on 13 October the total number of Covid infection in India has reached 7.2 million. Deaths are 110,000 (one hundred ten thousand).**



The consequences of Covid are many: fear, anxiety, boredom and social isolation. Women are the worst sufferers. According to recent studies, domestic violence has increased manifold, partly due to job losses and partly due to the fact that men spent more time at home..

Due to the long lockdown from 24 March 2020 onwards, economic activities have slowed down. Many sectors like small-scale industries, construction, travel, tourism, hospitality and education have all come to a halt. This in turn has resulted in job losses to millions of workers. We continue to live in lockdown conditions, though some activities and services have been opened.

Being migrants from rural areas, millions of workers had to go back to their villages causing considerable disruption and deprivation in their lives. The State and national governments are doing whatever they can to reduce the suffering of the people.

Religious institutions, especially local temples, churches, mosques, congregations, and synagogues, could play a significant role in building a resilient society to combat the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic. All these premises, including religious schools, seminaries, and colleges, are being used as quarantine or clinic centers.

85% of the world's population has faith in religion. Religious places play a critical role in the spiritual, mental, and physical services and can provide social, educational, and emotional strength to the surrounding communities. And this is happening in many places in India. Until a permanent remedy is found we can only pray.

Happily, the scientists have been able to find effective vaccines in 2021 and the people are being massively vaccinated across the globe. In India nearly 1000 million people have been administered at least one jab each. This has deterrent effect and the infections have fallen drastically by October 2021.

## Part II

# Religions for Peace India: Youth Activities Report

### **Time Frame 2018-2021**

Shameer Rishad attended the Religions for Peace Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp 2018 held in Myanmar. The camp enhanced his understanding of issues regarding Climate Change and Interfaith work. This camp helped him realise that Multi Religious communities had tremendous potential to impact society by consistently working on thought and behaviour change.

#### **1. Formation of RfP India Youth Committee:**

After coming back to India with a fresh cross cultural perspective and with guidance of Mr. N Vasudevan, Secretary General of RfP India along with other senior leadership within the organisation Shameer Rishad formed the RfP India Youth Committee.

The committee comprises of the following members:

1. Ms. Arpita Goel (Jainism)
2. Ms. Diksha Vashisht (Hinduism)
3. Ms. Ayesha Samah (Muslim)
4. Mr. Joel George Alex (Christianity)
5. Mr. Varun Sharma (Hinduism)

As per the guidance of senior leadership the youth committee has a multi-faith character. To further the agenda of RfP India, the Youth Committee took the following Actions:

**2. Tarraqi I Foundation, January 25, 2019: A brainstorming session on Our Earth Our Responsibility with a youth group.**



A local NGO hosted celebrations on the eve of Republic Day, i.e. January 25. The Youth Chairperson addressed this multi religious group of youth at the end of the celebration taking a session on our moral, ethical and spiritual responsibility towards the environment and impact the youth can make towards the common problem of climate change.

**3. Fast Football Club, January 26, 2019: An interaction with children from a local slum**



The club runs an initiative by the name of “Koshish” (which means Effort) that provides free coaching opportunity to talented underprivileged children (6 to 12 years) as well. While the matches were going on, Shameer Rishad had small group discussions with the substitutes and waiting teams of 10-12 children, covering all 65 children in a couple of hours.

**4. Unity in Tragedy, Multi-faith prayer meet for Pulwama terror attack Martyrs, February 22, 2019:**



There is no denying that the terror attack that took place in Pulwama on 14th of February 2019 was a devastating tragedy which had left the nation shocked, helpless and angry. It was therefore critical to stay united during this highly vulnerable and volatile environment and promote positive peace. With these thoughts in my mind, the youth committee approached friends from different faiths and organized a Prayer Meet for Pulwama Martyrs.

**5. 10th World Assembly Asia Regional Consultation March, 2019: Interaction with Senior Leadership:**



Along with Senior Leadership of RfP India to represent youth the Chairperson was also invited for the Asia Regional consultation in Myanmar. After coming back to India and discussing



with the Youth Committee Shameer Rishad wrote a proposal to AIPYN and got a funding for 1000 USD.

**5.1.To execute the funding the Youth Committee organised the Our Earth Our Responsibility Youth Day Camp on November 16 2019; following is a brief summary of the project (full project report has been submitter to APIYN & ACRP):**



RfP India Youth Wing received a grant of 1000 USDs from RfP, Asia Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APYIN) earlier this year for implementing awareness among young people on the topic Our Earth Our Responsibility – Harmonizing Peace and Climate Change. The youth camp was implemented successfully. Besides utilizing the funding effectively, the camp also accomplished forging new relationships with Delhi & Haryana Governments, educational institutions and civil society organizations with follow up sessions planned with twenty educational institutions –ten in Delhi and ten in Haryana for the year 2020.

The newly elected member of the Legislative Assembly participated in the youth camp and assured full cooperation from his administration for similar activities or any additional work RfP wants to take up with the youth in Haryana.

**5.2.The interfaith youth camp had the following objectives as per the initial project proposal.**

1. Plantation drive engaging 200 Indian youth to plant 500 saplings
2. Introduction of RfP India by Senior Leadership to state authorities for lasting partnership
3. Life Skills workshop with selected youth participants
4. Video documentation of Activity

These objectives were successfully accomplished.



**6. Invitation to 10<sup>th</sup> World Assembly in August 2019; Presentation at the Global Gallery and Group Discussion Facilitation at Youth World Assembly:**



RfP India senior leadership was invited to participate in the 10<sup>th</sup> World Assembly in August 2019, further to represent youth as the Youth Chairperson of RfP India and as a Transition Committee Member of the Asia & the Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APIYN) Shameer Rishad was given the responsibility of Co-facilitating a session on transforming conflict along with Ms. Meera Santosh International Youth Committee (IYC) Member. Further he was given the opportunity to present his work in India at the Global Gallery event of the World Assembly.

**7. Attended the 5<sup>th</sup> World Parliament of Science and Religion organised at the World Peace Dome; in Maharashtra on October 2019:**



To grow the RfP India Youth Network, learn new concepts from eminent speakers and understand the Indian context better, the Youth Chairperson travelled to Maharashtra to attend Attended the 5<sup>th</sup> World Parliament of Science and Religion organised at the World Peace Dome.

- 8. Invitation to attend APIYN Youth Peace camp, Speak on a plenary and facilitate a workshop in November 2019; as part of the Youth Peace Camp:**



Shameer Rishad was invited for the Youth Peace Camp of 2019 held in Manila, Philippines. There he was given the opportunity to share his experience of working with youth in India on a plenary with Ms. Gasun Han Co-Moderator APIYN, Mr. Yusuke Saito Member IYC and Rabbi Rachel Rosenbluth. Further he Co-Facilitated a workshop with Ms. Gasun Han. Honourable Rev. Kamiya also congratulated Shameer in his efforts as a young peace-builder in his closing remarks.

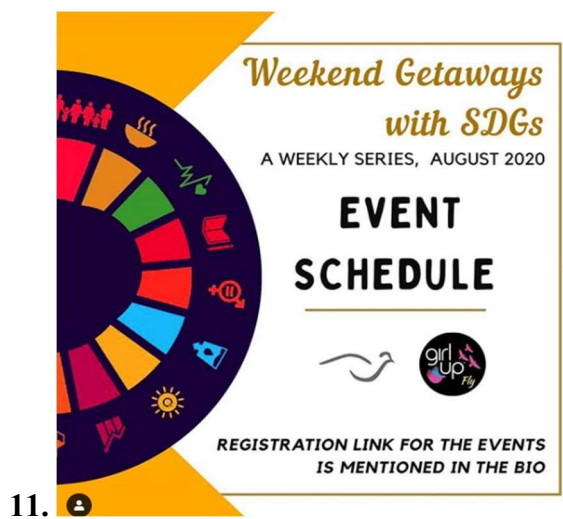
- 9. Volunteered at a workshop organised by Justice Coalition of Religious (JCoR) and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, Maharashtra to understand the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) from a Faith Based Context. March 2020:**



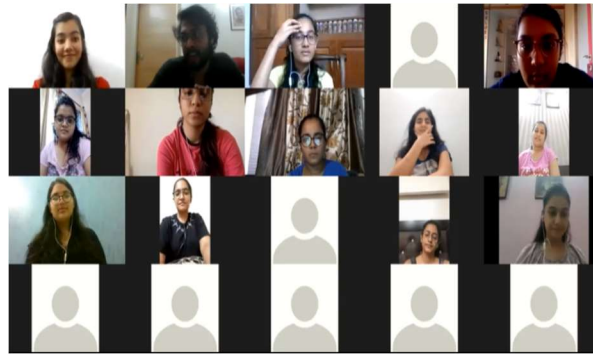
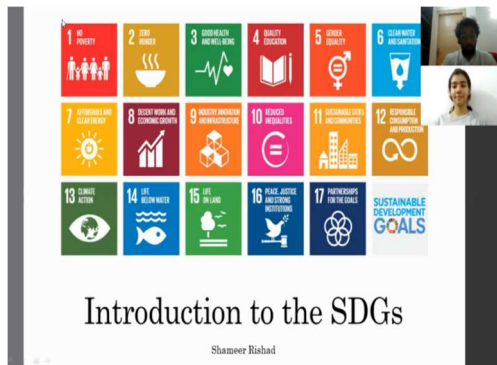


As a result of the Network building done in October 2019, Shameer was requested to Volunteer, handling all presentations and operational tasks done during the workshop jointly organised by JCoR & TISS. During the course of the three days the youth chairperson had the opportunity of interacting with 43 nuns from 21 different Catholic congregations. He also got the opportunity to learn about mainstreaming SDG's in the workings of a Faith Based Organisation (FBO).

**10. Organising in August 2020 Weekend Getaways with SDG's eight Webinar discussions covering different SDG's followed up with a skill building**



11.



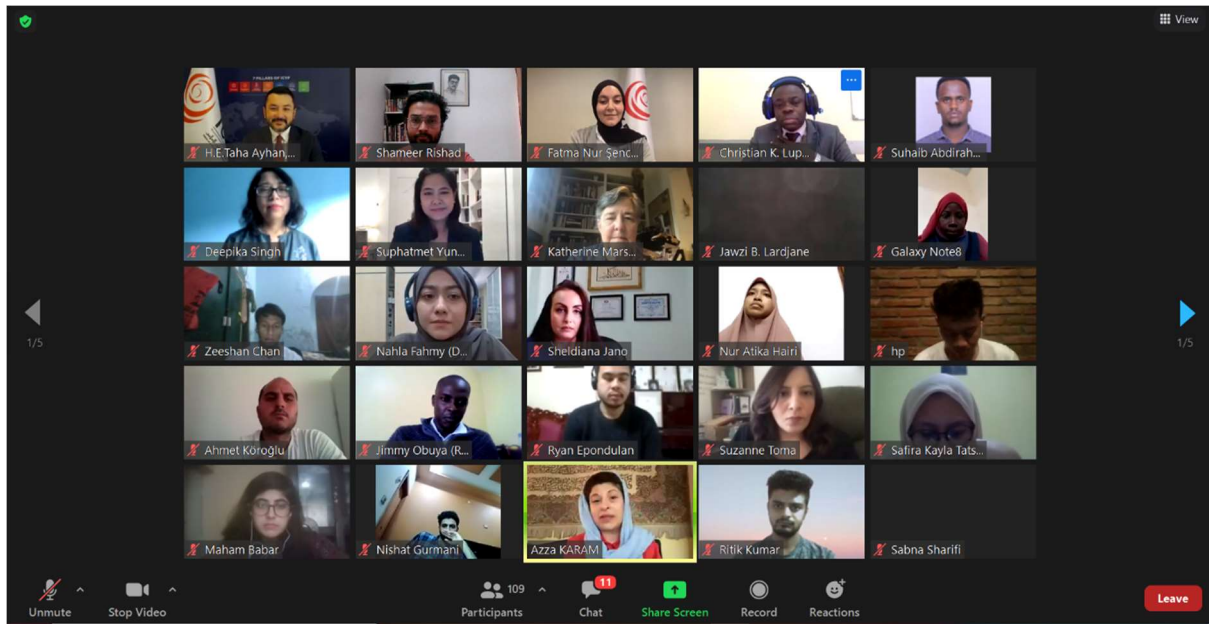
Due to the outbreak of COVID19 all plans as decided in 2019 of visiting schools and colleges in Delhi & Haryana to promote the theme ‘Our Earth Our Responsibility’ were disrupted. The RfP India Youth Committee shifted its mode of working online and launched the project, ‘Weekend Getaways with SDGs’. Following Goals and Topics were discussed on a weekly basis with 50 interested India Youth:

- *August 2 2020: Introductory Session*
- *August 8 2020: SDG1 No Poverty, SDG2 Zero Hunger*
- *August 9 2020: Skill Building Workshop; How to File a Right to Information Application?*
- *August 15 2020: SDG3 Good Health and Well Being, SDG4 Quality Education*
- *August 16 2020: Skill Building Workshop; How to use Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System for Advocacy?*
- *August 22 2020: SDG5 Gender Equality, SDG6 Clean Water and Sanitation*
- *August 23 2020: Skill Building Workshop; Social Media Advocacy & Media Advocacy*
- *August 29 2020: Summing up & General Advocacy Strategies*
- *August 30 2020: SDG10 Reduced Inequalities, SDG16 Peace and Justice Strong Institutions*

A total of 8 SDGs were discussed followed by 4 skill building workshops. The final session on August 30 2020 was taken by the RfP Philippines Youth Committee.

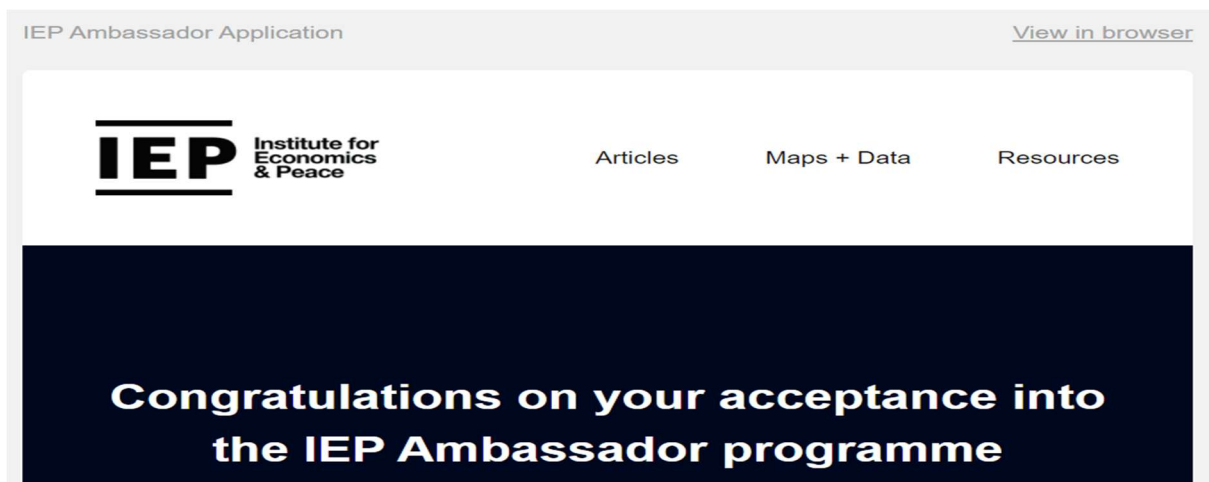


## 12. Paper presentation at the Symposium on Youth Engagement with Religion and Faith in the 21st Century



The Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF) and Religions for Peace (RfP) in collaboration with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC); the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA); the Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA); the Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas; Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University; Office of Religious Life, Princeton University; and the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University, are organizing a symposium on “Youth Engagement with Religion and Faith in the 21st Century,”. Mr. Shameer Rishad’s abstract was selected and he was asked to prepare a paper on the same. The 11-page paper titled “Advocating peacefully for civil liberties as a young person using non-confrontational methods”, was selected to be presented on day one of the symposium. Shameer presented the same, representing India at the conference. The paper would be published by the end of 2021.

## 13. Acceptance in the youth ambassador programme of Institute of Economics & Peace (IEP)





IEP Ambassadors comprise an international network of emerging and established peacebuilders from a wide range of fields and affiliations. Youth Chairperson India, Shameer Rishad due to his work in the area of peacebuilding was selected for this prestigious programme. Through this programme, he would be joining others who are creating a paradigm shift in the way the world interacts with and understands peace. Further the programme also requires the RfP India Youth Committee to execute an actionable project on the basis of the learnings of the participant. Shameer plans co-ordinate amongst young peacebuilders and create content to spread awareness about the concept of positive peace.

**14.**



Shameer was invited to participate in the debate organised by RfP International. His role was to comment and provide his insight on both the affirmative and negative arguments made by the debate teams.