



Peace Now and Forever Campaign

21st September 2017- International Day of Peace

Prayers for Peace

Between Pakistan-India- China and in the World

Organized in India and Pakistan



Prayers for Peace at Charminar, Hyderabad, India and at Press Club, Lahore, Pakistan.

The Peace Now and Forever Campaign between India and Pakistan launched on 1st July 2017 saw thousands of signatures collected online and in the cities and towns of India and Pakistan and also in other countries where Indians and Pakistanis live. These signatures will be submitted to the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan as aspirations and demands for peace by the people of both countries. The signatories include former generals and admirals and other ranking military officers of India and Pakistan, film and sports personalities, political leaders, academics, activists, journalists, professionals and eminent persons and thought leaders from all walks of life.

An Initiative of COVA in India and PILER in Pakistan, the Peace Now and Forever Campaign has facilitated organization of many programs by different groups in different cities and towns of India and Pakistan to provide platforms to artists, youth, children, activists and members of communities to express themselves for peace through a range of programs including Art for Peace.

Prayers for Peace between Pakistan-India- China and in the World

Tensions between India and Pakistan and India and China have increased alarmingly during the past year and the portents do not look positive for the future. In terms of effect of internal conflicts and terrorism, Pakistan is ranked 4th, India ranked 8th and China at 23rd among all countries in the world during 2016.

We are also appending below some very startling facts and figures of the conflicts around the world today that show we are surpassing World War II in terms of impact of violence and that should make us rededicate ourselves to work for peace with greater resolve and commitment.

In such a scenario any and every effort to promote peace is the need of the hour. As 21st September is declared as International Day of Peace by the United Nations, Prayers for Peace Programs were organized on 21st September 2017 in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Manipur, New Delhi, Saharanpur and Srinagar in India and Karachi in Pakistan. The Prayers could not be organized in Ayodhya and Jhansi due to very heavy rains and also in Lahore.



Prayers for Peace Meeting at USTM - Meghalaya

Hyderabad

Prayers for Peace by Faith Leaders of Christianity, Islam, Jainism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism were organized in front of the historic Charminar.

Hundreds had gathered for the prayers but Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi could not join as he was held up in traffic for over an hour and half and had to turn back mid-way.

Karachi

Vigil Prayer for Peace was Organised at the Karachi Press Club on the occasion of International Peace Day. Representatives of Civil Society, Students, Trade Unionists, Journalists and Academicians participated in the vigil

New Delhi

The Temple of Understanding India Foundation hosted a Multi-Religious Prayer Service at Ramayan Vidyapeeth, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.

Hon'ble Dr. Karan Singh, MP Presided Representatives of Baha'i Faith, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism offered greetings and recited prayers from their Holy Books.

Dr. Karan Singh also released two books on Hindu - Muslim Unity and Peace on the occasion



Prayers for Peace and Book release at New Delhi - Video of Program at Meghalaya – Please Click Photo above

Meghalaya

Prayers for Peace were organized by USTM (UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MEGHALAYA) where thousands of students participated.

Prayers were led by priests for Christianity, Islam, Jainism and Sikhism in the presence of Mr. Mahbul Hoque, Chancellor of the University.

Mumbai

Prayers for Peace were organized at the Astana of Makhdum Mahimi by PMSCT. In the presence of Mr. Suhail Khandwani Managing Trustee Mahim Dargah, priests representing Christianity, Islam, Jainism and Sikhism recited from Holy Scriptures and prayed for peace.



Faith Leaders Praying for Peace in Mumbai and Youth Praying and Singing songs of Peace in Srinagar

Srinagar

The Peace Gong Jammu and Kashmir team organized a day long program on Prayers for Peace in a Boarding School in Srinagar to mark International Day of Peace on September 21.

Besides discussions on how children can take the lead in promoting peace, the students discussed on how peace between communities can be fostered.

Saharanpur

Disha Kendra organized Prayers for Peace Program involving members of all local communities. The Prayers were led by Mr. K. N. Tiwari and included invocations for peace in the world.



Prayers for Peace Meeting in Progress at Saharanpur – Pledge at Prayers for Peace Meeting in Bengaluru

Bengaluru

Prayers for Peace were organized at GFG College, K.R. Puram Bengaluru in which hundreds of students and citizens participated.

The function started with the long bell(in line with the United Nations celebration protocol) followed by one minute of silence to pay respect to the soldiers of peace who are still championing the cause of peace. The Program also included music and songs and concluded with peace wrist band tied to all participants.

The Objectives:

- a) To sensitize people to the scale and devastation from violence in the world today,
- b) To demonstrate unity across different faiths in challenging violence in all forms and
- c) To use spirituality and religiosity to promote values of inclusion and peace and not to divide, promote hate and spread violence in the name of religions.

Conflicts around the World: Some Facts and Critical Need for Peace Initiatives

While only 72 countries were involved in Second World War[1], 87 countries[2]experienced terrorist incidences in 2013 and 58 countries today have groups and communities engaged in active armed conflicts with each other or with the state[3]. The end of Second World War saw 14.9 million (1.49 crore) soldiers killed [4] and the ongoing armed conflicts in different countries have already claimed 10. 2 million (1.02 crore) lives [5] – mostly civilians- and this seems to be just the beginning.

There are more refugees due to conflicts in the world today than even during the Second World War. Around the world, someone is displaced every three seconds, forced from their homes by violence, war and persecution. Half of them are children and mostly unaccompanied. By 2016 the number of refugees and displaced persons had 16.3 million and is growing by the day.

According to the Report of Institute for Economics and Peace, the impact of violence on the global economy in 2014 reached a whopping USD 14.3 trillion or 13.4 per cent of global GDP, equivalent to the combined economies of Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom. The cost of violence to India's economy in 2014 was \$342 bn that is equivalent to 4.7 per cent of India's GDP or USD 273 per person or Rs. 1458 per person per month and Pakistan suffered economic losses of USD 107 bn due to terrorism during the same period.

The Third World War:

The scale, spread and devastation by violence we are experiencing today is fast approaching the dimensions of World Wars and nobody is realizing that the world seems to be already in the middle of the Third World War-being fought on the basis of identity differences or issue of access to resources between communities or between armed forces and communities (at times instigated and supported by other countries) even though there is no formal declaration of war between countries.

It is important to realize and recognize that the grammar and dynamics of what we understood as "war" as a conflict between countries involving armies has changed and today a conflict between communities or between armies and armed groups is generating as much violence and devastation as any traditional war involving armies. All the 54 plus armed conflicts raging across in different locations of the world along with terror attacks (over 1,25,000 documented by [Global Terrorism Database](#) (GTD)[6]) and low intensity unarmed clashes between different groups are generating enough violence to indicate that it is indeed a World War- undeclared and comprising of apparently unconnected clashes in different locations scattered across the globe.

Until the scale and collective devastation of the ongoing conflicts is recognized and the world dedicates itself with single minded determination to understand the causes and evolves strategies and solutions to address the menace (as it did in case of Polio and HIV recently), the spiraling violence could soon spell doom for humanity.

[1] <http://world-war-2.info/countries/>

[2] Global terrorism Index

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ongoing_armed_conflicts

[4]<http://www.world-war-2.info/casualties/>

[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ongoing_armed_conflicts

[6]<http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/about-gti>

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COVA (Confederation of Voluntary Associations), is a national network of voluntary organizations working for communal harmony and community empowerment in India and peace in South Asia and South East Asia through formation of COFI (Countering Online Fanatic Indoctrination) Networks in 12 countries of the region. COVA is also engaged with multilateral bodies like the United Nations Organization, G20, BRICS, OIC and others for structural transformations of the world order to make society more equitable, sustainable, just and peaceful.