The Chronicle of

COVA
Peace Network

@30

VISION

Social Harmony, Equality & Global Peace Through Responsible Citizenship

Service Through Social Transformations

Engagements from Slums of Hyderabad to Twin Cities, 7 States, National, Southasia,

Multi Laterals to the UN -30 Important Causes and Issues in 30 Years

Successful Structural Transformations to Prevent Violence and Promote Peace, School Education and Financial Inclusion

COVA PEACE NETWORK

- ***COVA*** is a Confederation of Voluntary Associations working for communal harmony and community empowerment in India and peace in South Asia.
- COVA was established in 1995 in Hyderabad- 30 years back and has worked with over 750 organisations and institutions in the 7 States of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and kashmir, North East. Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal
- COVA also works to promote peace through people to people contacts and campaigns with partner organisations in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal. Bhutan and Maldives
- COVA Peace Network is also engaged with state and national governments and multilateral bodies like G20, BRICS, SAARC, UNHCR and others for structural transformation to make society more equitable, sustainable, just and peaceful.
- Members and partners comprise of community groups working at grassroots to national and international organisations and networks undertaking advocacy and policy interventions.

RECOGNITIONS

Recognition for COVA & Member Organisations

- Government of Telangana as COVID Warrior
- The Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Earthquake Relief
- Asia Star Peace Award by Association for Communal Harmony in Asia
- UN My World Award for work on MDGs in New York

Challenges to Peace & Responses by COVA at Micro Level

- **The Problem:** Communal Riots in Hyderabad
- **Response:** Riot Prevention in 42 communally sensitive localities of Hyderabad by making warring communities as Peace Vangaurds
- **Problem:** Disintegration of Society through development Programs by organisations working with their own communities like Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, Reddys, Yadavas etc and excluding others.
- This results in reduced interactions between different communities, misconceptoons, stereotypying and hatred that could result in violence and riots.
- **COVAs Responses:** Promoting Development as a Strategy for Integration- inclusion of members from different communities and castes in all our programs and activities- Board and Members of COVA comprise of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Buddhists. Staff also has diversity.
- Formation and Facilitation of Citizens Action for Peace in Manipur

RIOT PREVENTION IN LOCALITIES

A National Network Of Voluntary Organisations Working For Communal Harmony & Community Empowerment In India And Peace In South Asia

INITIATIVES FOR STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS

1. **Compassionate Citizenship Program**

Objective is to Take Students beyond Textbooks and Classrooms for experiential learning that could transform them into compassionate beings and responsible citizens.

A Pilot Program was undertaken during 2022-23 in 122 Schools of 4 Districts in collaboration with the Education Department, Government of Telangana

Enthused with the results, Education Department of the Government of Telangana has included this Program as part of the curriculum and this Program will be implemented in 3000 schools of Telangana State starting from September 2024

Compassionate Citizenship Program is bringing a Paradigm Shift in School Curriculum

PERSPECTIVE & ATTITUDINAL TRANSFORMATION

https://youtu.be/j6IcbmlxJ9s?si=rDmESDKiKVNSXRg6

Initiatives for Structural Transformations

Economic & Political WEEKLY
HomeWeb Exclusives
Can the G20 Summit 2013 Deliver?
Vol - XLVIII No. 36, September 07, 2013 | Mazher Hussain

- **Financial Inclusion**
- Government of India accepted 9 Recommendations of COVA for Financial Inclusion from a G20 Study in 2013
- 5 of these Recommendations were incorporated in the MUDRA Scheme Including the Concept of eMUDRA
- HRD Ministry accepted 4 Recommendations from a Study for BRICS Summit of 2016 to transform Job Seekers into Job Creators
- **GECS** -Proposal of a Comprehensive Matrix of Growth, Equity, Conflicts and Sustainability (GECS) Audit replacing only GDP measure that is in vogue now and that is grossly inadequate to measure the multi dimensional implications of Growth- **Economic and Political Weekly -2013**

RESEARCH AND STUDIES BY COVA

COVA has undertaken over 25 Studies and Research Projects covering local to international issues in collaboration with national and international organisations including:

- Royal Tropical Institute Netherlands - Ford Foundation - Oxfam - University of Hyderabad- Rajiv Gandhi Foundation- CBGA-TISS- UNICEF- VANI- WNTA and others

Some Select Research Projects:

- Death by Dignity for the Lower Middle Class COVID19- 2020
- Status of Micro and Small Enterprises in BRICS Economies- 2016,
- Muslims and Union Budget of India- 2015
- Financial Inclusion in G 20 Countries with Focus on India- 2013
- Proposal of Growth, Equity, Peace and Sustainability (GEPS) Audit-2013
- Tax Justice-2012
- Study on Ward Committees of GHMC- 2011
- Empirical Study on Taxes Paid By Poor- 2010
- Messages of Oneness 2009
- Religions of the World- 2009
- Basic Services and the Marginalised- 2007
- 1000 Years of Conflicts and Peace in the Deccan- 2005
- Muslims - Reservations & Employment- 2003
- Action Research on Women Elected Representatives 2002,
- Status of Minorities in India- 2001

SETTING TRENDS

Flags for Peace and Partners in Victory Campaign

- Cricket Matches between India and Pakistan were converted into battle grounds with citizens of both countries their flags as symbols of aggression
- In 2004, COVA initiated the practice of spectators in stadiums waving flags of both countries together.
- This is now a trend with people waving flags, wearing dresses, painting on their faces flags of both countries during cricket matches between India and Pakistan anywhere in the world

DOYENS OF PEACE SOUTHASIA

- **Doyens of Peace: Pan Southasia Network** of NGOs, Youth Groups, Educational Institutions, Unions and Professional Bodies etc. interested in promoting Vision for and exploring common concern of Southasia and collective initiatives to address them.
- This Platform provides a unique opportunity to Collaborate / Participate Online in Events and Programs by Member Organisations of Southasia.
- This Platform privileges youth from different countries of Southasia to facilitate their vision and expression for the Region.
- **1st South Asian Commemoration 12th August 2025**
- **Youth between 15 and 25 years to submit 5 Minute Videos on; My Vision for Southasia if I am the President / Prime Minister of My Country**
- Website: www.peacedoyens.org

COFI Networks Program

enables participants to gain mastery over 8 social media platforms to secure cyber space for peace/

COVA trained participants from 8 Countries of South Asia and Far East and 10 cities in India to promote peace through cyberspace

Combating Fake News:

COVA trained 100 activists, faith leaders, academics and media persons to decode and expose Fake News through The CHECKIT Program.

Addressing Emerging Challenges: COVA IN CYBER SPACE

Addressing Emerging Challenges

Religions As Weapon

Religions are being increasingly used to spread hate and violence against other communities

COVA has started the Intra Faith Program to Deweaponise Religions

Intra Faith Program consists of Two Actions

- Self Critique: Faith Leaders assess and critique misuse, abuse or incorrect use of their own religion
- **Internal Corrections:** Secure corrections and ensure their religion is not exploited or weaponised to bring discords and promote violence in society.

Two Activities by Faith Leaders

- 1. Speak against misuse of their religions during their congregations
- 2. Invite Faith Leaders of other communites to address their congregations during festivals with messages of peace
- Able to ensure peace during Milad Un Nabi and Ganesh Procession in Hyderabad in 2023 with active contributions of Muslim and Hindu religious leaders

INTRA FAITH ACTION
HYDERABAD- INDIA

Addressing Emerging Challenges
Detoxing Social Alienations

- Today there is Little knowledge about ones own religion
- But more about other religions- negatively- Thanks to social media
- There is drastic reduction in direct interpersonal interactions
- Leading to mistrust- alienation- stereotyping- hatred- violence

The Answer by COVA is Multi Faith Celebrations

Encouraging people to invite neighbouring families of other communities for their festivals

This is providing better understanding and appreciation of the beliefs and traditions of other religions and can eventually lead to harmony and peace in society

- Started in September 2023 and over 28 festivals of 7 religions are covered so far in Hyderabad and other cities of India.
- An example is the Multi Faith celebrations in April 2025 for Eid and Ugadi on 31st March, Ram Navami on 6th April, Mahavir Jayanti on 10th April, Baisakhi on 14th April, Goof Friday on 18th April and Easter on 20th April.
- Multi Faith Celebrations were organised in 20 Cities across India including, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkotta, Bangaluru, Varanasi, Ahmadabad, Srinagar and Hyderabad etc.
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MULTI FAITH CELEBRATIONS

COVA PEACE NETWORK
WORK WITH REFUGEES

- There are 9,000 refugees in Hyderabad from 8 Countries

(Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan, Palestine, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran and Eretrea)

- 8000 are Rohingya Refugees from Myanmar
- Education Support for Rohingya Refugee Children
- Monthly Rations support to 135 most destitute Rohingya Refugee families to enable them to live with dignity.
- Livelihood Grants to 300 small Refugee Entrepreneurs to start and sustain their own business
- Emergency medical treatment

Policy Changes through Advocacy and Pils

- Advocacy with Telangana Government for Rations for Migrant Workers during COVID- 3.5 Lakh Migrant families received rations and cash support for 2 months
- High Court of Andhra Pradesh ordered services of teachers of Government schools should be used for census and other duties only during vacations

- On a PIL by COVA, Telangana High Court directed that Ward Committees of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation should be constituted as per Rules. This is facilitating participation of citizens in the local governance processes to some extent
- Order by AP High Court to make sale of whiteners to children below 18 years a criminal offence
- Ongoing PIL in Telangana High Court for 25% Free Admissions for poor students in private schools as per Sec 25© of RTE Act- With the Order from the High Court expected anytime now,16 lakh poor students will get free admissions in Private Schools

DEALING WITH DISASTERS

COVA Addressed Man Made and Natural Disasters:

Riots, Earthquakes and Floods

Riots: In Hyderabad, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir and Manipur

Floods: Hyderabad, Kurnool and Jammu & Kashmir

Earth Quakes: Gujarat and Jammu & Kashmir

Kashmir Earthquake: 6000 houses in 136 villages of Uri and Tangdar Tehsils provided relief and shelter

196 houses in 36 villages constructed For the most destitute.

5483 houses worth Rs. 8.22 billion saved through facilitation in Retrofit

Hyderabad Floods: Produced two Documentaries on floods due to encroachments on lakes and wate bodies: **And Nature Replies** (2000) and **Why Hyderabad Drowned** (2021)

10 GAME CHANGERS FROM COVA

- Riot Control Strategies
- Peace and Equity Audit
- Pre- Matric Scholarships
- Flags for Peace Campaign
- Social Issues in Curriculum
- 3rd Generation Philanthropy
- Advocacy for Migrant Workers
- Entrepreneurship in Curriculum
- Transforming Banking for the Poor
- Inter Faith Forum for Social Causes

MEGA MOMENTS

- Peace Rallies
- Global Vigils for Peace
- International TechCamp
- Joint Signature Campaigns
- Bharat Yatra for Child Rights
- Festival of the Sub continent
- Human chain to Prevent Riots
- UN Award Acceptance Speech
- Linking MPs and Hurriat Leaders
- Celebrating 125th Gandhi Jayanti

WWW.COVANETWORK.ORG

THANK YOU