

Sixth Justpeace Festival 2020 happened in Mymensingh, Bangladesh

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The sixth Justpeace festival 2020, organized by Shanti Mitra, was held in Mymensingh, Bangladesh on the 12th and 13th February 2020. This year, festival was focussed on climate change. The theme of the Justpeace festival 2020 was “Environment-care of creation” and the slogan was “Jaguk hridayo sristir Kolyane (Bangla).” Through this slogan, ask people to wake up/open up each heart for the well-being of the creation. Approximately 3000 people have attended in different programs of the festival.



During the opening ceremony of Justpeace Festival 2020

Opening Ceremony

12th February, Wednesday, festival was inaugurated by Md. Mijanur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh. Also with the deputy commissioner, in the opening ceremony, George Epp (The country representative of MCC), Sayeda Salima Azad, Biplob Rangsha, Aronno E Chrian were presented as special guest. Suborna Poli Drong, the executive Director is given a welcoming speech addressing the aim/objectives of the festival. The deputy commissioner asked everybody to be empathetic to all creations.



Opening Ceremony

Workshops

First day, there was a workshop for the young people. The topic was “Climate change and my responsibility”. More than 70 young people from different college and universities attended the workshop. At the workshop, facilitators gave chance to the young people to reflect about their favorite thing of the nature which under threat for the climate change issue. Then participants discussed about their understanding on climate change and the effect of the climate change they have been experiencing in their life. Participants figured out their responsibility and asked them to write down their steps which which they are going to do to protect the negative effect of the climate change.



Group sharing during the climate change workshop with young people

In the second day, there was a workshop on “*Environment- taking care creation based on holy books*”. More than 100 people have attended in that workshop. Dr. Anjon Kumar Chicham played role as moderator in that workshop. Rev. Fr. Biolen Chambugong shared from Biblical perspective and Dr. Partho Sarothi shared from Hinduism perspective. Another panelist Dr. Ohab was absent for his personal problem. Merwyn De Mello, Peace Adviser of MCC Bangladesh, share with participants from his personal view, belief and action. All panelists said to start to care for creation from **thysself**, from home. They said that if we want to be close to God, care of creation must be done. Without the care of creation, we can't serve God. Participants were responding well. Everybody written down what they are going to do from that moment for the caring for creation. Some of the committed to plant more trees, some committed to care of family members and neighbors well, some appreciated about the workshop and asked to arrange that workshops more in future. Merwyn De Mello shared that what is his thought about living in harmony with creation and how put thoughts into action.



Workshop on Environment-care of creation based on holy books

There was an another, sharing workshop between world tourist Eliza Binte Elahi and young people. Eliza shared about her experiences and motivates participant's especially young people with her speech and presentation to know the roots and history. More than 70 participants attended in that workshop.

Also 13 February, there was an earth meditation in the morning. Young people have attended in that meditation.



Pic 1: Before the earth Meditation, participants are doing Yoga



Pic 2: Sharing session with Eliza Binte Elahi

Children Activity

In the children Activity, there were songs, stories, cooperative games and origami for the children. All activities focused on care of creation. There was a puppet show on environment, where tried to motivate children to take care of environment from their level, Eg, throwing garbage into the rabis bin, planting trees in front of the house, less use the plastic etc. Approximately 300 children from different primary schools and clubs joined in 2 days children activity program.



Puppet show for children during the festival

Drawing and Creative Writing Session

There was drawing session which was open for everybody but almost participants were children. They have drawn their understanding on care of creation. Also, there was another activity which is creative writing. Visitors had written poems, slogans on their thoughts on the theme of the festival 2020.



Children participating in the drawing session during the festival



Visitor's thoughts reflected in creative writing wall

Photography and Art Exhibitions

There were photography and art exhibitions which made the festival more colorful. 20 photography and 30 paintings from local artist and photographer were exhibited. And the artist from mymensingh, took the main responsibility for make entrance gate of the festival.



Guest of opening ceremony, in front of photography Exhibition



Act and Hope Tree

There were four trees in the festival ground.

- a) Hope tree- In the hope tree, visitors asked to write and hang their hope/dream for the better world.
- b) Act tree- In the act tree, visitors asked to write and hang their actions for the better world.
- c) Favorite Nature Tree- In the favorite nature tree, visitors asked to write their favorite nature which are in threaten for climate change.
- d) Protection Tree- In the protection tree, visitors asked to write their action that how they are going to protect their favorite nature from the negative effect of climate changes.

Also there was a “Commitment canvas to protect the environment”. Visitors responded to these trees actively.



Hope tree-act tree made festival more colorful



Rainbow drama performed by the adolescents of Mukto Binbongo Human rights center, Bibari Camp, Mymensingh

Closing Ceremony

In the closing ceremony, there were Dr. M. Asaduzamman, Professor of Bangladesh Agricultural University, Bilon Ruga, Peace Coordinator of MCC, Br. Erik, Adviser and Founder of Shanti Mitra, Najia Hoque Tina, Chairperson of Community Trust Mymensingh Forum, Suborna Poli drong, Executive Director of Shanti Mitra. The guests have given speeches from their perspective. Bilon Ruga urges audience to be aware about lifestyle and focuses on less consuming. Br. Erik focused on environmental Justice. And, the last, Suborna Poli Drong urges to be friendlier of every creation. She said that we always wish and do good things for our beloved person. So when we will be able to feel the creations as friend then we will do right things to the creation. If we care of creation, then as fruit we will get peace.

Comments from Visitors

“I hope, all natural resources should be protected”

“I will take imitative to reduce the sound pollution. I will warn and sensitze others about the negative effect of sound pollution” Maznu.

“I am committing not to use one time plastic”

“I am going to plant Palm tree at my house”

“I will leave the dirt in certain places and keep the environment nice and healthy”. Mahfuj.

“I will be more kind to animals” Limon.

“I will be part of solution, not part of the pollution”

“I will try to recycle the plastic”



During the closing ceremony of Justpeace Festival 2020

Associate Partners and donors

Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF), Mati, Ghudhuli Nari Kalyan Songstha, Community Trust Mymensingh Forum, Wazed Ali Foundation were played role as an associate partner. MFPS and Mymensingh Charu Silpi Porsad was the exhibition partner for photography and art exhibitions. Also some schools and colleges and NGO's took part in the festival sending participants in different programs.

Mennonite Central Committee Bangladesh (MCC) supported financially for the festival.



Entrance of Justpeace Festival 2020