

UPF Matale, Sri Lanka *Peace Road 2023* Reaches Riverston Mountain Peak

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Matale, Sri Lanka - Fifty-five people representing three different countries converged at the base of the majestic Riverston peak in Central Province, Sri Lanka on August 15, 2023 to participate in the "Peace Road" event in the country, a hike guided by the theme, "Towards Peace and Reconciliation In Sri Lanka."

The peak, towering at 1,424 meters above sea level in the Knuckles Mountain Range, loomed above them. At 11 a.m. they commenced their journey to ascend Riverston, which was often referred to as the "mini world's end" with its precipitous overhang providing a breathtaking panoramic view of the undulating hills and valleys below.

They hiked for more than three hours, during which they navigated changing weather, at one point experiencing the weather of four seasons in the span of one hour. Along the way, they encountered numerous cascading waterfalls and a perpetual mist that shrouded the landscape, all the while exploring the region's rich biodiversity, which is known for its windswept grasslands.

Throughout this awe-inspiring journey, each participant reflected on the profound significance of building "peace roads" connecting and bridging the diverse communities of this enchanting island nation. As the participants represented every religion, every region and every language spoken in Sri Lanka, the Peace Road event served as a vibrant reminder of their collective duty - and that of all Sri Lankan citizens - to safeguard peace and harmony, transcending all differences, and work toward lasting reconciliation.



Dr. Chula Senaratne, secretary general of UPF-Sri Lanka, led the group. This journey was an exhilarating and heartwarming experience for both the young and older participants, fostering an inter-generational harmony enriched with a global perspective. The universal values upheld by UPF were not merely spoken at the program but were embraced and shared by the participants throughout it knitting them together in a sense of togetherness and interconnectedness.

