

International Day of Peace in India: seminars, debate and an interfaith conference

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September 30, 2016



New Delhi, India—The International Day of Peace was commemorated in India with seminars, an inter-collegiate debate competition and an interfaith conference.

The first event took place on September 9, 2016 in Gangtok, the capital and largest town of the mountainous northern Indian state of Sikkim, and was attended by government ministers and students. Speeches were given by Hon. Shrinivas Patil, governor of Sikkim state, who was the chief guest of the event; Hon. G.M. Gurung, a minister of government of Sikkim state and chair of UPF-Sikkim; and Mr. Pradhumna Shrestha, a retired engineer who worked for the government of Sikkim. Mr. H.P. Dhakal, a government officer and secretary general of UPF-Sikkim, was the emcee. At the end of the program, Mr. Patil was appointed as an Ambassador for Peace.

The second event, an inter-collegiate debate competition, was held on September 21 at the Sridora Caculo College of Commerce and Management Studies (SCCCMS) in Goa state, in western India, in partnership with the NSS Unit of the school. The topic of the debate was “Can India Achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030?” Twelve students representing six different colleges participated in the competition. Dr. Santosh B. Patkar, principal of SCCCMS, gave the welcome speech and Mr. Dilip Mishra, coordinator of UPF-Goa, gave a presentation on UPF. The winners of the debate were awarded medals, certificates and a cash prize, which were distributed by Dr. Rahul Tripathi, associate professor and head of the Political Science Department at Goa University.

The third event took place on September 21 at Century Government College in Orai city in Uttar Pradesh state, and was organized by Dr. Praveen Singh Jadaun, coordinator of UPF-Uttar Pradesh. Academics and civil society leaders attended the program. Among the speakers were Dr. Rajendra Purwar, former head of the department of Dayanand Vaidic College Orai, who was the chief guest of the event, and Dr. Anuj Bhaduriya.

The fourth and main International Day of Peace event in India was the [second Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative conference](#), “Role of Religious Leaders in Peace Building and Human Development,” which was held on September 30 at the India Habitat Center in New Delhi.