

## **World Interfaith Harmony Week 2023**

To commemorate World Interfaith Harmony Week 2023, 'Team 1699' organised a series of events. It was considered that a maximum number of participations shall be taken from schools (High Schools and Senior Secondary Schools) and Colleges. The main goal was to tickle the young brains and wake them up in the brightness of the ultimate way to a peaceful harmonious society. To achieve this goal a special session of paper presentation was organised.

The details of the WIHW 2023 commemorated by 'Team 1699' are as follows.

**Launch Event (1<sup>st</sup> February 2023)** - The launch event took place at Ramgarhia Girls College, Ludhiana. S. Ranjodh Singh (President, Ramgarhia Girls College) welcomed more than 500 young individuals who willingly participated. The district administration also contributed to the event by catering the precious thoughts during the inaugural session; S. Mandeep Singh (Police Commissioner, Ludhiana) quoted 'Humanity is the ultimate religion'; Ms. Surabhi Malik (IAS, Deputy Commissioner Ludhiana) motivated the participants to showcase the message of brotherhood, peace and harmony in the society. An introduction of World Interfaith Harmony Week was given by the faith leaders, S. Sarabjit Singh Renuka (Sikh Scholar and Professor at Punjab Agriculture University), M. Usman Ludhianvi (Shahi Imam Punjab, Muslim Scholar), Pragya Buddhist Thero (Buddhist Scholar) and Father Vergese Kachapali (Christian Scholar), and the participants were made aware of the ways to join the interfaith leadership.

Gursahib Singh (Director, Interfaith Affairs) briefed the series of events scheduled for WIHW2023 and encouraged the participants to volunteer for the upcoming events. 78 young individuals willingly gave their names as volunteers of interfaith events.

**Interactive Sessions (4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023)** – It was observed that the participants were required to interact with the faith leaders to know the

significance of interfaith in their religion. So, four interactive sessions were arranged in the Auditorium of Ramgarhia Girls College Ludhiana. Four hours of dedicated interaction were organised each day (of the given dates) with the aim to tickle the analytical views of the participants. The participants were asked to make notes and devise a paper presentation after attending all the sessions.

**Interfaith Walk (12<sup>th</sup> February 2023)** – One of its kind, and the very first one in Punjab, Interfaith Walk was joined by more than 500 participants. People from different faiths, including students, members of non-governmental organisations, officials of District Administration, and locals went to places of worship belonging to different faiths here. S. Mandeep Singh Sidhu (Police Commissioner, Ludhiana) signalled the start of the interfaith walk from Fountain Chowk. The participants formed an unusual caravan to encourage interfaith harmony by walking in groups while carrying banners and flags representing their own religions. The walk began from the Church near Fountain Chowk and concluded at Guru Dwara Dukh Nivaran Sahib, routing from Durga Mata Temple and Jama Masjid Ludhiana. The aim of the interfaith walk was to make the participants familiar with the rituals of the worship places of faiths other than theirs. It was observed that the earlier sessions had a positive impact on the participants as they were patient while learning about the rituals and maintained the honour of the places of worship.

**Concluding Event (16<sup>th</sup> February 2023)** – The concluding event was observed as a tribute to Late Hazrat Maulana Habib-Ur-Rehman Sani, at SCD Govt. College Ludhiana. S. Harjot Singh Bains (Minister, School and Higher Education Punjab) Chaired the event as Chief Guest. M Usman Ludhianvi (Shahi Imam Punjab), Dr Dev Singh Advaiti (Head of Valmiki Samaj), Rev. Fr. A Patrick (Christian Scholar), Dr Anurag Singh (Sikh Scholar, Historian and Author), and S. Parampal Singh (Interfaith UN Speaker) gave a message of religious harmony, sharing what their religion preaches about peace and harmony. Simultaneously,

a paper presentation session was going on. Around 130 papers were presented out of which the panel selected the best papers and awards were presented to them by the honourable minister. The stage was also graced with the book launch of the biography of Interfaith Leader Maulana Habib-Ur-Rehman Ludhianvi.

As a closing ceremony all the faith leaders, scholars and interfaith leaders were thanked for sharing their precious time and asked to share the stage with TEAM1699 to raise the slogan of Interfaith peace and harmony.

The Interfaith week came to the most beautiful end, imagined and perceived by TEAM1699, with an Interfaith meal.