

**SCI-India (Maharashtra State Group)
observes International Day of Peace
21st Sep 2022**

FROM A CULTURE OF WAR
TO A CULTURE OF PEACE

... by Bruce Kent

(the article first appeared on opendemocracy.net on 15th Mar 2010)

Bruce Kent.



In 1969, Bruce Kent hired an armoured car to attract attention to his protest about arms sales fuelling war



With an army, legal and catholic clerical background, Bruce Kent had been active in different parts of the peace movement for half a century. A former Chair of War on Want and President of the 100 year old International Peace Bureau based in Geneva, he was Vice President of CND, Pax Christi and the Movement for the Abolition of War. He died this year.

The time has run out for traditional military answers. Ours is a culture of war, but cultures can change. We need education in peace and in international understanding.

William Randal Cremer was the first Briton to be awarded, in 1903, the Nobel peace prize. A hero of peace, who spent much of his life promoting the notion that international disputes can and should be settled by arbitration and not war, has been forgotten.

War films and war stories are staple media diet. War toys are still acceptable gifts for children. School cadet corps are still normal. We are now even to have a national 'armed forces day' in order to promote greater respect for the Services. Gross media violence is now normal entertainment.

Cultures change, and it ought to be our business to make ours one of peace, not war. Without demeaning or disparaging the bravery of the military or their role in our society, how do we reduce their high significance in our national psyche and put peace in pride of place ?

Accept that cultures do change, and the next thing we have to be convinced of is that we ourselves can promote such a change. Racism still exists, but is no longer respectable. Homophobia (dislike of or prejudice against gay people) was open and almost normal. Not now.

Cultures change, sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. And we can help make it change for the better.

Where to start?

Public events and processions do not have to have an exclusively military character. By all means, let the military have a part to play. But if the qualification is bravery, then why not representatives of other national services as well ? UN peacekeepers ? The fire service ? Coastguards ? Lifeboat and ambulance crews ? The police ?

What of schools and colleges ? My hope is that one day, as consciousness of global citizenship develops, every pupil moving into a secondary school will be given their own personal copy of both the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Citizenship is now on the curriculum, but it is rarely thought of as international citizenship. The Final Report of the 1978 first special UN Session of Disarmament called specifically for education on the issues of peace and war. Most people have no idea that there ever was such a session.

Career rooms should also provide information about jobs in the peace, justice and human rights fields, and information about peace-directed higher education. Ministry of Peace. What a good idea.

National holidays could do with some additions. May 15 is International Conscientious Objectors day. The UN Charter was signed on June 26, 1945. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted unanimously on the December 10, 1948. Those three additions would do for a start. Scrap Bank holidays and replace them with something more meaningful.

Many museums could also refocus. Some are already doing so. London's Imperial War Museum for instance regularly hosts peace history conferences and has exhibitions which are far from warlike.

Recently I visited the Hiroshima Museum which records the disaster of August 6, 1945. No one could ever talk casually about a nuclear war who has seen such an exhibition.

So many other institutions could help to promote a culture of peace.

Peace is too important to be left to the governments.

Yes we take reasonable precautions against burglars, but getting on well with the neighbours is far more important than arming each house with weapons which, if ever used, would destroy all the houses in the street.

Scientists have to learn to be willing to refuse military research, especially when it is aimed at the development of weapons of mass destruction.

“Honour all those who have died in war by working for the elimination of war itself“.

Wars, whatever they tell you, are neither inevitable nor compulsory. Anti-poverty and environmental protection groups must make it clear that war is a major cause of poverty and of environmental damage. Global warming is in part a consequence of military activity. The trillion and a quarter dollars spent every year on the world’s military is indeed what President Eisenhower once called “a theft from those who hunger ... ”.

The current struggle for essential resources like water will cause conflict and the flow of millions of refugees. Resource conflicts will lead to war unless non-violent systems of law and justice are in place.

There are 27000 nuclear weapons in the world today, each a possible Hiroshima, and every one of them accident prone.

This is the security of the mad house. Culture has to change. We are all part of the process of making that change happen.

.... Bruce Kent



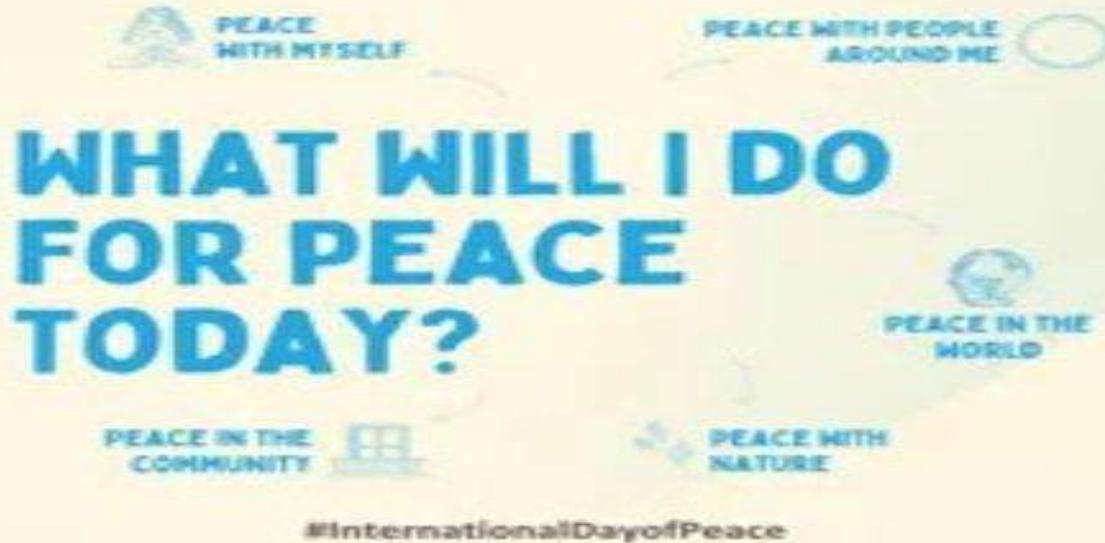
SCI-INDIA
MAHARASHTRA STATE GROUP

SCI

Service Civil
International-India



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**WMD = Weapons of
Mass Destruction**



**WMD = We Must
Disarm**



**There Is No Way to
Peace,
Peace Is the Way**

What is SCI ?

Service Civil International (SCI) is a voluntary organisation dedicated to promoting the culture of peace in the world. Based on the values of peace and international understanding, the organisation has responded to the needs of the changing times. In today's world—increasingly divided by hate and distrust—SCI strives to create among people, solidarity and mutual respect, and a propensity for resolving problems in non-violent and constructive ways, and by avoiding conflicts, through mutual understanding.

Realizing that peace is not a static situation, but a continuous process that requires an empowered society to maintain that process, SCI's thousands of volunteers work on small and big projects, as well as in conjunction with like-minded partner organisations at many levels of society around the world.

.... What is SCI ?

Worldwide, SCI has over 40 national branches and affiliated national groups. Through these and partner organisations (a total of 132 organisations), SCI's volunteers are active in 93 countries.

SCI's Indian branch has six regional groups: in Delhi, as well as in the states of Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Under SCI's broad Constitution, branches and groups work independently in their own country. This allows them to work freely and closely with the neglected sections of the society.

.... *What is SCI ?*

SCI encourages exchange of volunteers at the national as well as international level. Such exchanges help introduce various cultures and ideologies of the world to each other, thereby enhancing international understanding. In addition, volunteers are able to share their experience, knowledge, and skills with one another.

SCI is open to all. It was one of the first organisations to divest itself of all political or religious affiliations in its work of promoting peace and intercultural understanding through practical action. Anyone who is keen and open-minded to work for peace and mutual understanding in the world through action rather than words (Deeds, not words!) can become an SCI volunteer.

Nurturing world peace and mutual understanding is everyone's task. Through their work, volunteers help create awareness in the society about it, and engage people in this endeavour.

Who are these volunteers and what do they do ?

Voluntary service means acting out of self-initiative, without seeking material reward and for the benefit of civil society, as a method and a statement for social change, whilst never competing with paid labour nor seeking to contribute to strike-breaking.

SCI volunteers are ordinary people like you and me, who take some time off their daily life to work with people from neglected sections of the society, not only to solve their problems, but also to enable them to solve such problems on their own.

Volunteers do not expect any material benefit, other than the experience gained from such activities, the joy of success, the awareness and development of one's self-motivation, and the new bonds of friendship that emerge from these group activities.

...Who are these volunteers

Volunteers plan their local projects through consultation with each other, and with the participation of people from the targeted social groups, or in conjunction with other like-minded organisations. They also take responsibility for the successful implementation of the project. Although this work is voluntary, and may face constraints of time, money, human power, due attention is given to ensure that the work is of high quality and effective.

Exchange of volunteers at national and international levels is facilitated through branches and by SCI's International Secretariat. Partner organisations also contribute greatly, through volunteer placement on their projects and by sending their volunteers on SCI's exchange programmes. Generally, exchange volunteers participate in short-term workcamps (of 8-15 days) in another state or country, at their own expense, or sometimes with the help of their branch or group. In addition, based on individual qualifications and work experience, many choose to work as medium-term volunteers (MTV; medium-term volunteering for 1 to 3 months) or long-term volunteers (LTV; long-term volunteering, over 3 months).

...Who are these volunteers

Furthermore, campaigns are conducted to spread awareness on regional as well as global issues and draw the attention of the government. These campaigns take the form of seminars, peace walks, poster exhibitions, street plays, etc.

For SCI, volunteering is a powerful means of personal and social transformation that benefits the volunteer personally as well as the community. On the individual level, it strengthens the volunteer's self-confidence, adds to his/her knowledge and skills, and fosters new bonds of friendship; while on the societal level it helps bring about constructive and effective changes in the society.

....Who are these volunteers

Volunteers are the core of SCI. It is on the strength of their self-motivation and social commitment that this organisation : born out of a small experiment of reconciliation through work in Verdun, France, in 1920 : has today flourished across the world. Just as a house is built brick-by-brick, so does every small or big act of volunteering help toward nurturing the culture of peace in the world. Whether it is work at a children's centre in Paris, participation in an environmental project in Colorado, or a workshop at a handicraft school in Sri Lanka, every effort of the volunteer contributes to bringing peace in the world.

Among all of SCI's volunteering activities, short-term workcamps have the lion's share. These camps not only provide a great way to know SCI better, especially for new volunteers, they offer much more.

What are these workcamps, and what do you get by participating ?

A workcamp is a place where a group of people stay and work together on a project voluntarily for a specific period of time, and without seeking any remuneration for their labour.

SCI branches or their regional groups organise 8 to 15-day workcamps to complete certain tasks in their or other charitable organisations' projects. Apart from some local volunteers, participants may include volunteers, experienced as well as inexperienced (newcomers), from other provinces and countries.

The number of camp members is kept at 20 or fewer to facilitate ease of communication and better understanding among the volunteers. This helps in building stronger interpersonal bonds and team spirit.

.... What are these workcamps

SCI is the first organisation worldwide to organise international voluntary projects in the form of workcamps. Today, workcamps have become an important part of international voluntary service for many charitable organisations around the world. This importance is reflected in the fact that a number of agencies have been set up to facilitate volunteer exchange, chief among them being the CCIVS (Co-ordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service), which was founded in 1948 under the aegis of UNESCO, and of which SCI is a member organisation.

The workcamp is still the main pillar of SCI's volunteer work. For new volunteers, workcamps are the most effective means for getting to know SCI's work and an introduction to the basic principles of peace and understanding.

.... *What are these workcamps*

Workcamp projects fall into three broad categories:

(1) Physical Work : e.g. construction, tree-planting, and restoration;

(2) Social Work : Often with children and the disabled;

(3) Work & Study : Where opportunities for work and learning are integrated.

.... *What are these workcamps*

The skills and experience acquired through participation in the workcamps can be very useful for the volunteers later in life.

- (1) The social work experience : Working with local people and members of the community gives the volunteer opportunity to understand their problems and their ways to solve them.
- (2) The participation experience : Living and working together with people from different regions and countries, with different socio-economic, cultural, ideological and language backgrounds is a novel experience itself. Volunteers take turns to oversee the daily camp routine (preparing meals, keeping the place clean, arranging work schedule, etc). They also participate in resolving internal issues, if any, reviewing daily work, informal discussions on various topics of common interest, etc.
- (3) The Personal Experience : Through all this may begin the personal contemplation about one's place in this world full of rich diversity and yet plagued by myriad problems, and what one can do to address these problems and help bring the culture of peace into the world.

.... *What are these workcamps*

With such rich experience gained in a short period of time, the workcamp can be considered a laboratory for social change as well as personal transformation of the volunteer.

In order for a workcamp to be successful, the following principles need to be observed.

- (1) Commitment to the experience of group life and team spirit;
- (2) Commitment to working together on decisions and problems;
- (3) Attending the workcamp for its full duration;
- (4) Awareness about the camp's position in the target community;
- (5) Learning with an open mind;
- (6) Contributing fully to the work;
- (7) Having plenty of self-motivation and developing it further; and,
- (8) Having lots of fun together.

.... What are these workcamps

Workcamps provide an opportunity for volunteers to pool their individual self-motivations together. They stress equality in living; volunteers live by the local standards. Internal decision-making, problem-solving, and developing a sense of group identity are actively promoted.

Workcamps encourage alternative forms of community life with the objective of increasing tolerance and facilitating the questioning of values. It is through the hard, yet fulfilling daily work in the workcamps that SCI has managed to incorporate and sustain its visionary aims. And to achieve them, SCI and her volunteers are committed.

SCI has consultative status with the Council of Europe, operational relations with UNESCO, and is a member of CCIVS (Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service Organisations), YFJ (Youth Forum Jeunesse), UNITED for Intercultural Action – a European network against nationalism, racism, fascism.

In 1987, SCI was awarded the title “Messenger of Peace” by the United Nations, in acknowledgement of its efforts to promote peace and understanding.

SCI Worldwide

1. Albania : PVN Albania (Branch)
2. Australia : International Volunteers for Peace – IVP (Branch)
3. Austria : SCI Österreich (Branch)
4. Azerbaijan : AYAFE Azerbaijan (Group)
5. Bangladesh : Service Civil International Bangladesh (Branch)
6. Belarus : New Group SCI Belarus (Group)
7. Belgium (Flemish-speaking) : Vrijwillige Internationale Aktie Belgium (Branch)
8. Belgium (French-speaking) : SCI – Projets Internationaux (Branch)
9. Bulgaria : Cooperation for Voluntary Service – Bulgaria (CVS-Bulgaria) (Branch)
10. Croatia : Volunteers’ Centre Zagreb – VCZ (Branch)

SCI Worldwide

11. Finland : Kansainvälinen vapaaehtoistyö ry – KVT (Branch)
12. France : Service Civil International Branche Française (Branch)
13. Germany : Service Civil International – Deutscher Zweig e.V. (Branch)
14. Greece : SCI Hellas – Kinissi Ethelonton (Branch)
15. Hong Kong, China : SCI Hong Kong, China (Group)
16. Hungary : Útilapu Nemzetközi Építőtábor Hálózat (Branch)
17. India : Service Civil International India (Branch)
18. Indonesia : IVP Indonesia (Group)
19. Ireland : Voluntary Service International – VSI (Branch)
20. Italy : Servizio Civile Italia – SCI Italy (Branch)
21. Japan : SCI Japan (Branch)
22. Kosovo : GAIA Kosovo (Branch)
23. Malaysia : SCI Malaysia (Branch)
24. Mauritius : SVI Mauritius (Branch)
25. Moldova : AVI Moldova (Group)
26. Nepal : Service Civil International Nepal (Branch)
27. Netherlands : VIA Netherlands (Branch)
28. Nigeria : VWAN Nigeria (Group)
29. North Macedonia : Center for intercultural dialogue – CID (Group)
30. Norway : Internasjonal Dugnad Norway (Branch)

SCI Worldwide

31. Poland : Stowarzyszenie "Jeden Świat" – SCI Poland (Branch)
32. Portugal : Associação Medestu (Group)
33. Romania : SCI Romania (Branch)
34. Serbia : Volunteers' Centre of Vojvodina – Volonterski centar Vojvodine (Branch)
35. Slovenia : SCI Slovenia (Branch)
36. South Korea : SCI South Korea (Branch)
37. Spain, Catalunya : Servei Civil Internacional (Branch)
38. Spain, Madrid : SCI Madrid (Branch)
39. Sri Lanka : SCI Sri Lanka (Branch)
40. Sweden : SCI Sweden (Branch)
41. Switzerland : SCI Switzerland (Branch)
42. United Kingdom : IVS Great Britain (Branch)
43. USA : SCI USA (Branch)

Prominent members

Pierre Cérésolle	Hélène Monastier	Rodolfo Olgiati	Mohamed Sahnoun
Friedrich Glasl	Simone Tanner-Chaumet	Elisabeth Eidenbenz	Jens Klocksinn
Max-Henri Béguin	Emma Ott	August Bohny	Idy Hegnauer
Ralph Hegnauer	Ethelwyn Best		

“Since wars begin in the minds of men and women, it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed.” : UNESCO

“The best method of fighting against those who serve violently is to serve non violently.” : Pierre Ceresole (founder of SCI)

Links : (1) <https://sci.ngo/about-us/who-we-are/>
(2) https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_Civil_International
(3) <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workcamp>

Global Minute of Silence at 12 noon
(all time zones) – September 21

Individuals, organizations and countries are being asked to observe a Minute of Silence - Moment of Peace on the UN International Day of Peace, September 21, at 12noon local time. This simple yet profound and practical action demonstrates that personal and planetary peace are one.



"As everyone knows, who takes a moment of silence from time to time, it is what remains that really counts as the moment progresses. And what really counts is life and love and our responsibility to each other. We are connected to all life throughout time and space, shaped by generations past, connected today around the globe, shaping our generations to come. A shared moment of silence to honor this connectedness is a simple and elegant statement of connection to life."

- Astronaut Rusty Schweikart (stated at an International Day of Peace celebration hosted by Pathways to Peace, San Francisco, CA, 1984)

In 1983, in commemoration of the annual International Day of Peace and in solidarity with the United Nations, the NGO Pathways To Peace inaugurated a Minute of Silence of Peace at 12:00 Noon in each time zone that resulted in a Peace Wave around the world. This observation of a noon *Minute of Silence - Moment of Peace* has grown throughout the world, with the idea of a 24-hour Peace Wave at noon in each time zone. In 2012, cities across the world including Chicago, USA, Manchester, UK, Montreal, Canada, Nairobi, Kenya and Hong Kong, SAR observed this global minute of silence, and global organizations such as *Mayors for Peace* endorsed observance of the *Minute of Silence - Moment of Peace*.

As part of his 2012 Peace Day message, the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stressed in that on the International Day of Peace the UN “calls for a complete cessation of hostilities around the world. “ The Secretary-General encouraged people worldwide to observe a minute of silence at noon to “honor the victims – those who have lost their lives, and those who survived but must now cope with trauma and pain.”

Peace Day is an opportunity to mark our individual progress toward building a Culture of Peace, and serves as a reminder of our permanent commitment to Peace, above all interests and differences of any kind. The *Minute of Silence - Moment of Peace* is a shared and practical act of peacebuilding in which all individuals, organizations and nations can participate.

Pledge taken on International Day of Peace 2022

On this International Day of Peace, I declare my commitment to, and my local participation in the global efforts to usher in the Culture of Peace.

For my commitment to be strong and my participation effective :

- > I will actively practice peace and non-violence in my daily life.
- > I will respect the thinking, beliefs and culture of all human beings.
- > I will treat everyone with equality and tolerance, and foster mutual understanding and sharing.
- > I will introduce the concept of culture of peace through constructive action and encourage others' participation.

- > I will support organisations working to bring a social change toward peace, non-violence, understanding and sharing.
- > I will strive relentlessly to firm my courage, patience, and motivation.
- > I am aware that peace is not a one-time goal, but a continuous process.
- > I also realise that, replacing the culture of war with the culture of peace is not an easy task; millions of people through thousands of organisations are working across the world to bring about this change.
- > In solidarity with these global efforts, I take a solemn oath to fulfil the promises in the aforesaid declaration with courage and a clear conscience, and without any pressure or prejudice.

May my efforts, and this life-long journey on the path of peace, succeed.

Amities

What are SCI Peace Cards?

Peace Cards are a tool to spark discussion on the topics of peace, non-violence, and activism. This set contains 56 cards, each having a quote connected to peace.

Peace Cards creators and project team : Goska Tur, Hasna El Hiyani and Natalie Jivkova

Design: Artwork & Graphic design by Natalia Bystrianyuk

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An electronic version of the Peace Cards with instructions as to how they can be used to introduce peace issue to the group, is available at sci.ngo

Sample of Peace Cards

~ There never was a good war or a bad peace. - Benjamin Franklin

~ Unless we teach children peace, someone else will teach them violence. - Colman McCarthy

~ Peace is not something you wish for; it's something you make, something you do, something you are, and something you give away.
- John Lennon

~ War cannot be humanized; war can only be abolished. - Albert Einstein

~ It is far better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. - Author uncertain

~ Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. - Margaret Mead

.... Sample of Peace Cards

- ~ Be the change you want to see in the world. - Mahatma Gandhi
- ~ Being a pacifist between wars is as easy as being a vegetarian between meals. - Ammon Hennacy
- ~ Those who do not move do not notice their chains. - Rosa Luxemburg
- ~ No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite. - Nelson Mandela
- ~ Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in. - Syed Muhammad Zeeshan Hussain Almashhadi

Programmes organised by
SCI-India
(Maharashtra State Group)

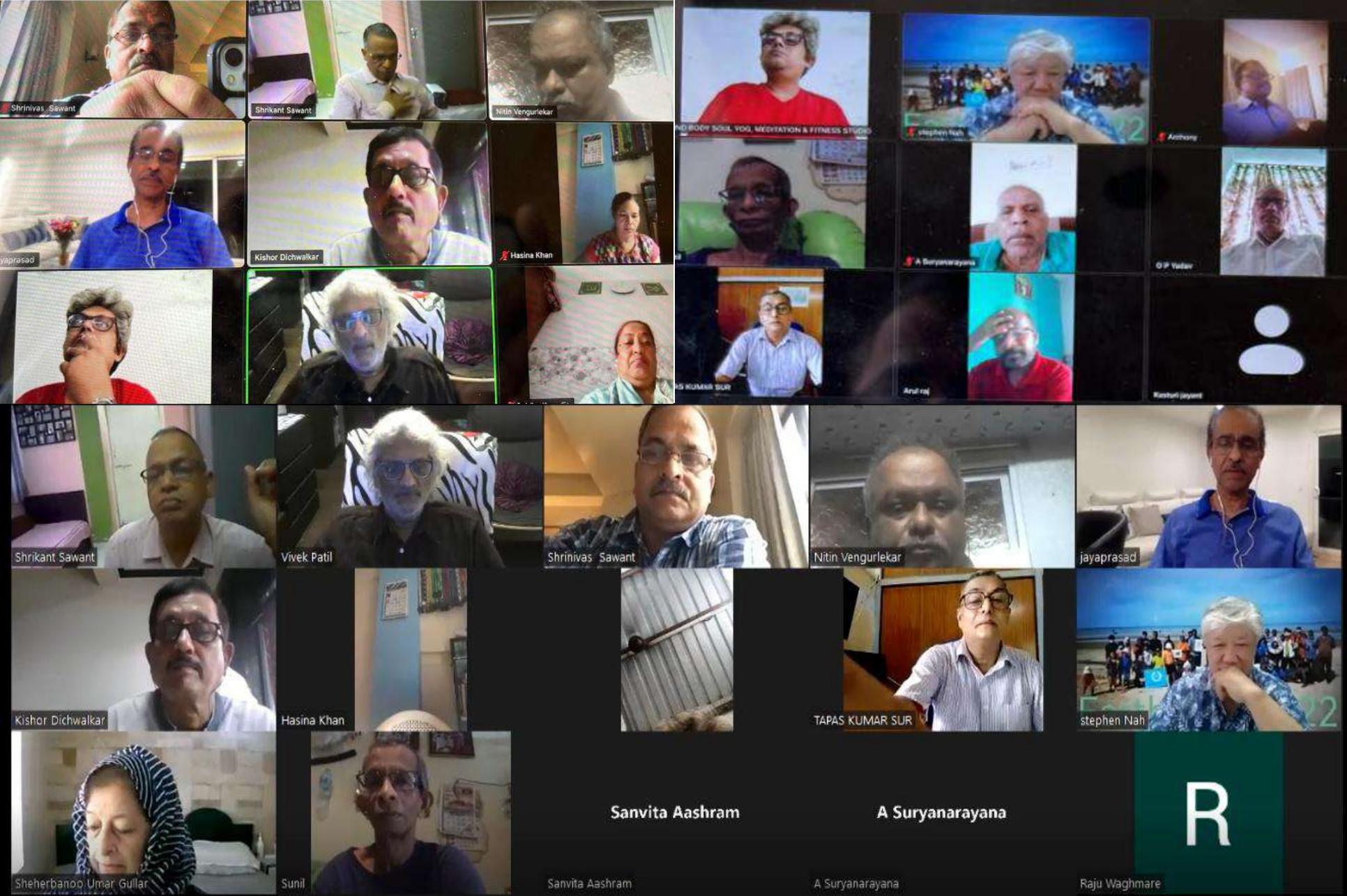
ON

International Day of Peace

21st September 2022

Meditation Camp at Vasai







Vivek Patil



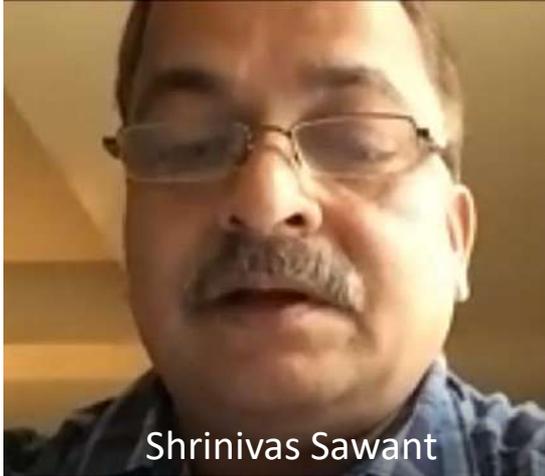
Stephen Nah



Tapas Sur



Peter Pollard



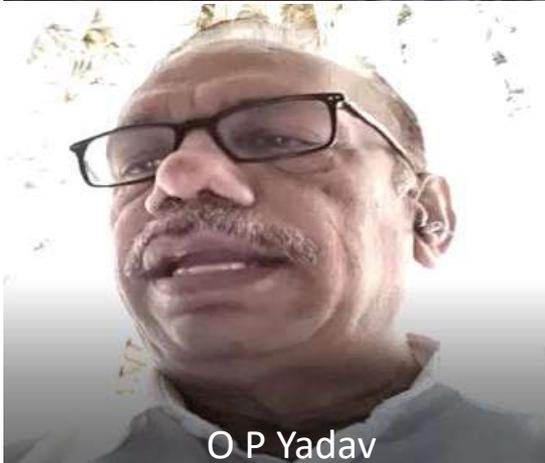
Shrinivas Sawant



Janak Gor



Abinash Ganesh



O P Yadav



Arul Raj

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Lecture and oath-taking by adivasi students & parents, at Samarth Ashram School, Virar





Oath-taking and Discussion on Peace topics at Kandivali, Mumbai





2-kilometer long
Peace Walk in
Mapusa, Goa





Poster/Banner exhibition and interaction with public at Thane



Service Civil International
INDIA

International Peace Day
21st September 2022
Nashik



**Students taking
Peace oath at Nasik**





Discussion on Women's Mental Health, Foeticide, along with Yoga and Oath swearing at Mankhurd, Mumbai



**SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL-INDIA
MAHARASHTRA STATE GROUP**

२१ सप्टेंबर जागतिक शांतता दिवस

आज या जागतिक शांतता दिनाच्या निमित्ताने आपण सर्वांनी मानवता हाच धर्म मानून जगास शांततेचा संदेश दिला पाहिजे. म्हणून ज्या देशात शांतता नदिल म्हणजे जगात शांतता नदिल तेथे मानवतेची सत्ता वेईल. म्हणून जिथे शांतता असेल तिथे मानवता आहे म्हणावे लागेल, कारण शांतता असेल तिथे मानवता आहे म्हणावे लागेल, कारण शांतता हे मानवी विकासाचे मूळ आहे.

विद्यार्थ्यांचे संपूर्ण नाव :-

शाळेचे संपूर्ण नाव :-

इयत्ता :- तुकडी :-

विद्यार्थ्यांचे वय :-

स्पर्धेचे नाव :- फक्त टिक करा

१. चित्रकला स्पर्धा :-

२. निबंध स्पर्धा :-

३. वक्तृत्व स्पर्धा :-

स्वाक्षरी :-

Forthcoming programmes :

- (1) Drawing, Essay & Elocution on peace related topics for the students in tribal area near Thane
- (2) Lecture on peace-related topics for youth from tribal community
- (3) Lecture on peace-related topics in Sindhudurg

This booklet is compiled and published by :

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on International Day of Peace 21st Sep 2022

*(The booklet is for free private circulation
among peace workers only, and not for sale)*