

Reception to  
**HIROSHIMA NAGASAKI SURVIVORS**  
on Board-Peace Boat & Filming "I was Her Age"

At Kochi, India on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015.



# REPORT

The Kochi City in association with Mayors for Peace, SEEDS India and YMCA Kerala Region along with various other NGOs engaged in 'Peace activities' accorded a warm reception to the Peace Boat carrying 8 Survivors of the atomic bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and 3 Youth Communicators. Details of Peace Delegation Team as follows:

### **Hibakushas (A-Bomb Victims)**

1. Mr. Miyake Nobuo (Hiroshima)
2. Mr. Morita Hiromitsu (Nagasaki)
3. Ms. Kotani Takako (Hiroshima)
4. Mr. Hironaka Masaki (Hiroshima)
5. Mr. Horie Soh (Hiroshima)
6. Mr. Ito Masao (Hiroshima)
7. Ms. Mitamura Shizuko (Nagasaki)
8. Ms. Kamada Hiroe (Hiroshima)

### **Youth Communicators**

1. Mr. Hashimoto Akihiro
2. Ms. Suzuki Keina
3. Ms. Iwamoto Manami

The Hibakushas reached Kochi-The Queen of Arabia as a part of the Peace Boat's 87<sup>th</sup> Global Voyage for a nuclear-free world to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bomb tragedy. The meeting was held at the Council Hall of Kochi City under the auspices of Mayors for Peace in close association with Kochi City and SEEDS India.

## **Reception at Kochi Port**

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Figure 1- Hibakushas and Youth Communicators being received by organizers at Kochi Port

By 08:45am the organizing team consisting of SEEDS India and YMCA Kerala Region leaders and other dignitaries received the Hibakusha Team at Kochi Port with origami Peace Cranes. The organizing team also visited Peace Boat which carried 1000 peace loving people from across the world and the crew members and Peace Boat officials happily assisted them to know in detail what Peace Boat is all about.

### Reception and Seminar at City Hall, Corporation of Kochi

By 09:55am the Hibakusha Team reached City Hall. Honorable Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Secretary and other officials of Kochi City welcomed the Hibakusha Team with bouquet and garlands in front of City Council Office. The program commenced at 10:00am at Council Hall of Kochi City with a packed audience. Deputy Mayor Mrs. B. Bhadra welcomed the gathering. Dr. Thomas Mathew, 2020 Vision Campaigner-Mayors for Peace made an introductory speech and a brief description of the project.

### Inauguration



Figure 2- His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry inaugurating the Peace Seminar by lighting peace candles to pay homage to the victims of nuclear bombings

His Beatitude George Cardinal Alencherry, Major Archbishop of the Syro- Malabar Catholic Church inaugurated the program. The inauguration was marked by paying homage to the victims of nuclear bombings by holding a candle light vigil. Cardinal lighted a Peace Candle and hundreds of candles were lighted from the center candle by participants, as a prayer for peace and to remember those who lost lives in Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-bomb disaster in a minute of silence (2015 marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II and the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.) **“Peace is a blessing of God and all religions exist for Peace”** the Archbishop remarked. He also appreciated the organizers for organizing such warm reception. Swami Bhadreshwananda, President of Ramakrishna Mission Kochi also attended the event and highlighted the tolerate face of Kochi City towards other religions and faith groups. Being a native of West Bangal (a state in Eastern India) he did not hesitate to admire Kochi City for the broad approach to other communities and people group ever since first century AD. Mayor Tony Chammany in his address said that Kochi is a city that always stood first in spreading the message of peace and brotherhood. City is committed to coordinating the activities for world peace and molding public opinions against nuclear weapons, he

added. It is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that steps are taken to prevent nuclear bombings in future, and to spread the message of global peace, he also added. Kochi has the history of more than two millenniums and in olden times it was known as “Muziris”. He welcomed the Hibakushas officially and appreciated Peace Boat for carrying them to Kochi to share the shocking experiences of their life to the people of Kochi especially to the youths and students. He assured all kind of support for the documentary filming ‘I Was Her Age’ to edify the future generations. He also presented mementos to the Hibakushas.



Figure 3- Mrs. Bhadra B. - Deputy Mayor, Dr. Thomas Mathew-2020 Vision Campaigner, Mr. Tony Chammany-Kochi Mayor, His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry-Arch Bishop and Swami Bhadreshwananda-Ramakrishna Mission

A special message of Hiroshima Mayor Mr. Matsui Kazumi was read during the meeting by Mr. Takaichi Mukai, representing Mayors for Peace from Hiroshima, Japan. Mr. Kazumi in his message mentioned the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of observance of bombing was a milestone for the citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as all those who wish for peace around the world. Mr. Kazumi, who is also the President of Mayors for Peace was expected to be in Kochi, but could not make it as he has been attending the NPT Review Conference in New York. Later he presented the footage combining all programs held at Kochi at one of the side events of NPT Review Conference at UN Head Quarter, New York.



Figure 4- A view of thickly packed City Hall

The 8-member Hibakusha delegation also interacted with 75 students, who were selected from various city schools. Students asked various questions regarding the Atomic Bombing, the survival of Japan after Second World War, steps to eliminate nuclear weapons etc. Ms. Kotani Takako and Mr. Horie Soh shared their personal testimonies along with puppet show and video presentations during the interactive session. The interactive session of students with Hibakushas was covered to include in "I was Her Age" Film. Mr. V.R. Raju, Secretary, Kochi Municipal Corporation and Mrs. Soumini Jain, Works standing committee chairperson, Kochi Municipal Corporation participated actively the interaction meeting with the youths and Hibakushas.

The entire program held on 27<sup>th</sup> April at Kochi City will be included in the film, which is expected to be released on August 6, 2015 at Hiroshima, and eventually will be broadcasted by international Medias. "I was her age." is a joint project of Mayors for Peace and Peace Boat to give the warning and concern of child-survivors of Hiroshima & Nagasaki out to the whole world.



Figure 5- A student interacting with Hibakusha Team



Figure 6- A student interacting with Hibakusha Team

Ms. Rika Watanabe, Peace Boat proposed vote of thanks. She thanked Kochi City and SEEDS India for organizing such wonderful meeting under the leadership of Mayor Tony Chammany and Dr. Thomas Mathew, Vision 2020 campaigner of Mayors for Peace. Mr. Takaichi Mukai, Mayors for Peace Secretariat interviewed Mayor Mr. Tony Chammany. Various visual and print media reported the event nationally and internationally. Heart-breaking stories of Hibakushas were also published in various news papers. Some of the leading Television channels interviewed Hibakushas and broadcasted nationally.

The 8-member delegation of Hibakusha (survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) onboard Peace Boat was able to give the heart touching personal testimony and call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. The entire program has drawn international acclamation to Kochi City. The visit of 8-member Hibakusha Team to Kochi, India is the largest group of any Hibakusha Team visiting the nation ever since the A-bomb tragedy in Hiroshima-Nagasaki. Earlier a three/two/one member Hibakusha Team in various times had visited India for Peace Campaigns organized by SEEDS India in different parts of the India.

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### Programs at YMCA Kerala Region Head Quarter, Aluva-Kochi

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After the program at City Hall, the Hibakusha team left to YMCA Kerala Region Head Quarters at Aluva, Kochi. The YMCA team welcomed the Hibakusha team in traditional style with *Chendamelam* (Drum beat)



Figure 7- A view of traditional welcome given to Hibakusha Team



Figure 8- A welcome banner placed in front of YMCA Kerala Region Head Quarters

## Global Wave (Global Action to Wave Goodbye to Nukes!)

Following the reception SEEDS India and YMCA Team along with Hibakushas took part in 'Global Wave', a symbolic action to wave good bye to nuclear weapons. The event was held at the YMCA South West India Region Office Aluva, situated on the bank of Holy River Periyar, which is considered to be a holy one as far the Hindu community of Kerala, India is concerned.



Figure 9- A view of 'Global Wave' held at YMCA Aluva, Kerala

## Peace Pole Installation



Figure 10- Hibakusha team along with dignitaries and guests at Peace Pole Installation Ceremony.

YMCA Kerala Region in association with SEEDS India planted a permanent Peace Pole at former's head quarter premises at Aluva as a token towards their campaigns for world peace. Former moderator of Church of South India (CSI) Bishop Dr. K.J. Samuel in the presence of 8-member Hibakusha team, unveiled the Peace Pole, bearing the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth". Aluva MLA (Member of Kerala Legislative Assembly) Mr. Anwar Sadath, Bishop Mathews Mar Aprem, Metropolitan-Jacobite Syrian Church, Mr. Lebi Philip Mathew, Chairman of YMCA Kerala region and other leaders of YMCA Kerala Region attended the ceremony. Dr. Thomas Mathew introduced the Hibakusha Team to the dignitaries and guest gathered in front of Peace Pole.

## Peace Congress



Figure 11- Justice Shaji P. Chal (Justice of Kerala High Court) inaugurating the Peace Congress.



Later the Hibakusha team participated in the Peace Congress organized by YMCA Kerala Region at its Head Quarters at Aluva. Mr. Lebi Philip Mathew, Chairman of YMCA Kerala Region presided over the program. High Court Justice Shaji P. Chali inaugurated the Congress by lighting the lamp. Hibakushas and other dignitaries also joined with the Chief Guest in inaugurating the Congress. Former moderator of Church of South India (CSI) Bishop Dr. K.J. Samuel, Aluva MLA (Member of Kerala Legislative Assembly) Mr. Anwar Sadath, Bishop Mathews Mar Aprem, Metropolitan-Jacobite Syrian Church, Dr. Thomas Mathew, Vision 2020 and other leaders of YMCA Kerala Region addressed the gathering. YMCA Kerala region consisting 600 rural YMCAs is the most active region of the worldwide network of YMCAs.

Mr. Miyake Nobuo, Hiroshima survivor and Ms. Mitamura Shizuko, Nagasaki survivor respectively shared their personal testimonies at the Congress. Followed by the testimonial session, the entire participants pledged to advocate for world peace.



Figure 12-Mr. Miyake Nobuo sharing his personal testimony during the Peace Congress.

Later the Hibakusha team had an interactive meeting with selected youths. Youths from different local YMCAs gathered at the Congress Hall shared their concerns for the abolition of Nuclear weapons and various other topics ranging from Japanese technology in general and response to nuclear weapons and nuclear power stations.



Figure 13- A view of interaction between Hibakushas and Youths

Chairman Mr. Lebi Philip Mathew presented (draped with) traditional Ponnada (shawl) to each Hiroshima-Nagasaki Survivors and Youth Communicators.

Later Mr. Takaichi Mukai interviewed three promising youths from India and one Hibakusha and Hiroshima Mayor Mr. Matsui Kazumi presented the footage at one of the side events of Mayors for Peace held at UN during the NPT Review Conference, next day.

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### Official Delivery of the Flame taken from the “Flame of Peace” at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park



Figure 14- Dr. Thomas Mathew with Mr. Takaichi Mukai, Official of Mayors for Peace Secretariat and Mr. Shinohara Akira, Cruise Director of Peace Boat

Later in a special meeting arranged at Beaumonde The Fern Hotel, Kochi, Flame taken from the Flame of Peace at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was officially handed over to Dr. Thomas Mathew-the 2020 Vision Campaigner to install at Kochi, India. Receiving Peace Flame from Hiroshima was indeed a Historical event. Earlier the Peace Boat carried the Peace Flame all the way from Hiroshima and Mr. Shinohara Akira, Cruise Director of Peace Boat handed over to Mr. Takaichi Mukai, Official of Mayors for Peace Secretariat at Kochi Port on 27<sup>th</sup> April.

The Peace Flame at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park is a monument to the victims of the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima, but it has an additional symbolic purpose. The flame has burned continuously since it was lit in 1964, and will remain lit until all nuclear bombs on the planet are eliminated and the planet is free from the threat of nuclear annihilation.

According to the best of our knowledge it is for the first time, Peace Flame is brought outside Japan. Indeed it's a historical step for all peace advocates across the globe that the message of peace will be carried towards to every human being and foster the hope of eradicating wars and nuclear weapons. Since India is the country of Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi, it is the need of hour to shine before the rest of world with the message of world peace. Hope India would succeed through this mission by installing this Peace Flame taken from the Flame of Peace as a symbol of peace, harmony, and brotherhood to all citizens of the world.



Figure 15- Dr. Thomas Mathew with Hibakusha Team upon receiving the Flame of Peace, brought from Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

All programs scheduled at Kochi City went well. Peace Boat official Mrs. Rika Watanabe shared her heartfelt thanks to the organizers especially to Dr. Thomas Mathew and his team. Dr. Thomas Mathew presented personalized mementos to each members of the Peace Delegation Team during the farewell gathering held at Hotel Fern, Kochi. The members of the team were very much impressed by the hospitality of Kerala People and loved the green nature of Kerala. They really felt the warmth of Kerala the Green state of India known as God's own country. They also even assured to come back soon. By 09:00pm after dinner the Hibakusha Team left to Port.



Figure 16- Dr. Thomas Mathew being presented with a memento by a Peace Boat official representing the Hibakushas and Peace Boat.

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For more **Photos** click [here](#)

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**PS: New Paper Clippings (Selected)**

## Sailing the seas to share their quest for peace

Special Correspondent

**KOCHI:** A world peace mission led by the atom bomb survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were accorded a reception in the city on Monday.

The meeting was held at the council hall under the auspices of Mayors for Peace of which the Kochi Mayor is also a member.

The visit attains significance in the wake of the 70th anniversary of the atom bombings of the Japanese city.

Eleven survivors came to Kochi for the 87th world tour of the Peace Boat.

The meeting paid homage to the victims of the nuclear bombing by holding a candle light vigil.

Major Arch Bishop Cardinal George Alanchery led the candle light vigil. Deputy Mayor B. Bhadra, Works Standing Committee chairperson Soumini Jain and Swami Bhadreswanda of the Sree Ramakrishna Mission attended.

Kochi Mayor Tony Chamman presented mementos to the visitors.

In his message, Matsui Kazumi, Mayor of Hiroshima, who is also the president of Mayors for Peace, said the 70th anniversary observance of the bombing was a "milestone for the citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as all for those who wish for peace around the world."

Lauding the peace initiatives, Mr. Kazumi said the visit of the Peace team and the commemoration event in Kochi was the first in the series of events planned across the world. A project titled "I was Her Age" will be implemented in various world cities in association with the Peace Boat, said the message which was read out at the meeting.

The visiting delegation also interacted with 50 students, who were selected from various city schools.



*The team of peace activists, who arrived in Kochi on Monday by the Peace Boat attends a reception at the Corporation of Cochin.*

Figure 17- Clipping from widely circulated daily in all over India

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

**SAILING FOR PEACE** 11-member team travels around the world in the ship

## Japanese 'Peace boat' visits Kochi

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KOCHI, APRIL 27



A 'Peace Boat' from Japan, with passengers of various countries on board, arrived in Kochi on Monday with a message of peace, friendship and sustainability. The city corporation council, in association with 'Mayors for Peace,' an international organisation working for global peace, accorded a formal reception to the 'messenger of peace' Mayor Tony Chamman and Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alanchery welcomed the 11-member team representing the 'Peace Boat,' a Japan-based international organisation that travels around the world on a ship.

This is the 87th global voyage of the ship.

During the reception, a commemoration ceremony was organised to remember the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombing. "Peace is a blessing of God and all religions exist for the peace of believers," the Archbishop remarked. He complimented the corporation authorities for organising the event. Swami Bhadreswanda of Ramakrishna Mission also attended the ceremony.

The Mayor said that Kochi was committed to coordinating the activities for world peace and moulding public opinion against nuclear weapons.

Hiroshima Mayor Matsui Kazumi, who was expected to be in Kochi, could not make it as he has been attending the NPT review conference in New York. His message was read out during the function.

After the reception, the Peace Boat members had an interaction with selected students from various schools in the city. Seeds India and YMCA Kerala region also supported the event.

Figure 18- Clipping from the largest circulated English daily in South India.



Figure 19-A clipping from the largest circulated regional daily in India with a subscription of around 2149012.