Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative

Leading up to the UN Climate Change Conference COP28

30th Nov. to 12th Dec. 2023 Dubai, U.A.E.

This year, the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 is taking place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Around 70,000 delegates are expected, the biggest COP conference ever. Read more at unfccc.int. The Brahma Kumaris is an accredited observer organisation represented at the conference by an experienced team.

Meet the BK COP28 Team

Pre-COP Global Faith Leaders' Summit

Uniting Faith Leaders for Planetary Resurgence, Nov. 6 - 7, 2023, Abu Dhabi, UAE

More than 200 Faith Leaders, Scientists, Youth, Business Leaders, Women Leaders, and Politicians, came together in Abu Dhabi 6-7 November to unite their voices and adopt a powerful Interfaith Statement. The Global Summit was co-hosted by UNEP Faith for Earth, the Muslim Council of Elders, COP 28 Presidency, and the Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence of UAE. Inclusivity was the main message of the opening session. Twelve religious leaders shared their message including Vatican Secretary of State and representative of His Holiness Pope Francis, together with representatives from Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Brahma Kumaris.

Sister Maureen Goodman, Director of Brahma Kumaris in the United Kingdom, spoke of how the condition of the natural environment depends entirely on human behaviour. Behaviour has its root in our awareness. Our awareness has a profound impact on our planet. Our awareness defines our attitude; our attitude colours our vision; our vision drives our actions; our actions create our world. To restore nature to its original pure state we need to practice the deep prayer, reflection and meditation that lies at the heart of each of our traditions, and to deepen our connection with the Divine. This connection enables us to draw strength and courage to live by the most elevated ethics and values, to live by the religion of truth, purity and non-violence.

Sister Maureen met the President of UAE, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan during a Majlis at the Presidential Palace (special gathering or council).

Focus on Youth at COP28:

COP28 vibrant BK youth team: from bottom left: Biru, UK; Shantanu, India/UK; Shishir, Nepal; Chaitya, Dubai; Piyush, Dubai; Ankita M, Dubai; Priyanka, India; Ankita C, India.

Climate Positive Workshop

Environmentalist and acclaimed author of 'Home' Mark Ballabon held a two-hour training in climate change and spirituality for the youth team in the Raja Yoga Center in Dubai. Some points from the workshop:

- Whatever you do to yourself and others, you do to the planet.
- You can't cheat nature.
- Change happens on the inside first; come to a full stop and fall in love with the unknown.
- You are given this life; why not, therefore, give more than you take.
- The climate in you affects the climate around you.

Conference of Youth, COY18

BK Chaitya, Dubai, experiences from COY: "Marking my first-time participation in COY, my primary aim was to learn. With some background in Finance, Waste Management, and Peacebuilding, I sought out events focused on these themes, and fortunately, found precisely what I was seeking. However, the most memorable aspect for me was the opportunity to engage with numerous young minds from diverse countries, learning about their pet projects and gaining an understanding of the environmental issues in their respective area."

Climate Wisdom Youth Event

The first session in our newly set-up live studio "Care - Share - Inspire" at the Raja Yoga Center focused on younger generation. Chaitya Sanghavi, our local UN youth representative interviewed Mark and Sonja. The interview focused on stopping the blame game and taking full responsibility for one's actions and lifestyle. See the full session on Youtube

Chaitya interviewing Sonja and Mark Ballabon

Rebuilding Trust & Cooperation

The Brahma Kumaris' response to the crisis arises from a vision and way of life founded upon certain core principles. They include: strengthening trust; of being an inspiring example, the power of kindness, inner resilience and determination. Read more in the BK COP28 Statement

Launch of daily livestream Climate Wisdom COP28

The Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative was honoured to launch the daily LIVE panel discussion 'Climate Wisdom from COP28'. This exclusive series on "Care - Share - Inspire" aims to bring the latest in science, policies, and wisdom from the COP28 climate conference directly to the UAE community and our global audience. It is hosted by our local partner, the Raja Yoga Center in Dubai.

Golo interviewed the guest speakers: Hemavathi S Shekhar, Climate Justice Advocate, Founder and Director, Enact Earth Foundation; Dr. Iyad Abu Moghli, Director Faith for Earth UNEP, and Sister Jayanti. Direct link Youtube:

Golo touched on the topics of climate anxiety, morals and ethics in the context of climate change. Some points that came up:

- Connecting with moral principles helps to make the right choices.

- Living in harmony with nature is a topic in all scriptures and religions and the basis for a sustainable lifestyle.

- We have broken the law of nature, so nature reacts.

- On top of the climate crisis, there is another crisis of indifference.

Settling into Dubai

The Raja Yoga Center in Dubai is providing us with the best support and inspiration. Specially the classroom is beautifully decorated with nature motives. Logistical and content meetings have started to get us all on the same page. The kitchen team is getting busy in preparing tasty dishes and lunch packets for all of us.

Handing over the COP Flame in 2022

With fond memories of last years COP in Sharm-El-Sheikh we remember Ankita and Piyush receiving the COP flame of COP28.

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