

## Parliamentarians Association Launched in India

Krishna Adhikari  
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New Delhi, India—The International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) was launched in India at a conference UPF co-organized with the North East MPs Forum of India.

More than 100 current and former parliamentarians from India and Asia and foreign diplomats in India attended the event, which was held from April 6 to 8, 2017, in New Delhi.

On April 7, the Inaugural Ceremony took place in the Main Committee Room of the Parliament House Annexe.

UPF-India chair, Ambassador K.V. Rajan, who served as India's ambassador to a number of countries over a diplomatic career spanning more than 35 years, gave the welcome address. The deputy chairman of the upper house of the Parliament of India (Rajya Sabha), Prof. P.J. Kurian, gave the inaugural address on behalf of the vice president of India, Hon. M.H. Ansari. He was followed by the president of UPF International, Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, who introduced the IAPP, and the chair of UPF-Asia, Dr. Chung Sik Yong, who introduced the founder of the IAPP and UPF, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. The founder's address was delivered by WFWP International president, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon.



Afterwards, certificates of appointment were given to the board members of IAPP-India.

During the second half of the session, speeches were given by Indian member of parliament, Hon. R. Ramakrishna, who was representing Hon. Dr. Jitendra Singh, minister of state for the Indian Prime Minister's Office Personnel; IAPP International co-chair and five-time speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippines, Hon. Jose de Venecia, Jr.; former speaker of the Parliament of India and former union minister of India, Hon. Shivraj Patil; and IAPP-Asia co-chair and former minister of Nepal, Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal.

Closing remarks were given by the IAPP-India chair, Hon. Bhubaneswar Kalita, and IAPP-India board member, Hon. Vijay Jolly, former member of the Legislative Assembly of Delhi, delivered the vote of thanks. UPF-India secretary general, Mr. Krishna Adhikari, served as the emcee.

The second session was held on the theme of the conference, “Addressing the Critical Challenges of our Time: The Role of Governments, Civil Society, and Faith-Based Organizations.” UPF-Asia secretary general, Mrs. Ursula McLackland, was the moderator. The speakers were International Association of Youth and Students for Peace president, Dr. Robert S. Kittel; Indian member of parliament, Hon. Jayant Chand; Malaysian member of parliament, Hon. Dr. Mohd Hatta Bin Md Ramli; Philippines congressman (House of Representatives), Hon. Leopoldo Nalupa Bataoil; vice chairman of the Regional Representative Council of Indonesia, Hon. Farouk Muhammad; Indian member of parliament (Lok Sabha), Hon. Sanjay Jaiswal; and Indian member of parliament (Lok Sabha), Hon. Geetha Kothapali.



A special highlight of the three-day conference was the meeting of the IAPP-India delegation with the President of India H.E. Pranab Mukherjee at the Presidential Palace (Rashtrapati Bhavan). There, a special session was conducted. The IAPP-India chairman, IAPP International co-chair, and UPF International president delivered special remarks explaining the founding purpose of the IAPP.

After the successful inauguration of the IAPP-India, a special review meeting was held at the residence of Hon. Kalita. All those in attendance shared their experiences during the conference. Hon. Kalita said in all the 30 years he has been in parliament, no event like the IAPP inaugural conference has been held in the Parliament of India through an NGO. In his speech on the first full day of the conference, on April 7, the deputy chairman of the upper house of the Parliament of India, also said the same.



All five board members of IAPP-India and the organizers of the conference applauded and expressed their appreciation to Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, founder of UPF and the IAPP, for giving the vision to establish the IAPP, and for her unconditional support to organize the IAPP-India Inaugural Conference. Also, at the meeting, IAPP-India decided it will continue its activities by organizing at least one program, such as a seminar, every month or two months.