

UPF Religious Youth Service Island Friendship Service Project in Sri Lanka

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Participants of RYS-Sri Lanka at the worksite. A total of 56 participants and staff participated with 13 International delegates from 9 countries

Youth at the Forefront of Community Development

The Religious Youth Service (RYS), a project of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), has been conducting service projects in Sri Lanka, since 1991. For the last 17 years, RYS projects were held in the island nation every year.



Dr. Robert S. Kittel, UPF Asia Director of Education giving lecture on the teaching of the Founder, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon.

Through the continued efforts, RYS Sri Lanka has been actively supporting sustainable initiatives to nurture and nourish a culture of peace in the fertile minds of our young generation. Since peace prevailed after closing a long chapter of violence in the island nation, RYS Sri Lanka has taken bold steps to strengthen the peace process and unify the youth, beyond region, religion and language.

This year, RYS Sri Lanka has successfully organized a service project from 12th to 19th August 2016 at Wijayapura in Ampara District, with the theme “Youth for Eradicating Poverty and Achieving Sustainable Development”.

From Around the World to A Remote Hamlet!



A community center for the people of a farm village donated by UPF.

RYS Sri Lanka 2016 was held in Uhana, a part of the Wijayapura Township in Ampara District. Ampara, 329 kms away from Colombo, is situated in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Wijayapura is a small village about 20 kms away from the Ampara town.

Almost all people in this region work in agricultural fields. Their lives are totally dependent on the weather and crops. RYS project this year built a community centre which was located at the Cemetery. The villagers had been struggling to find a dignified place to conduct the religious rituals before burials or cremations.



International participants working together with local participants for the community

Including the staff, 56 participants, from various religious traditions and 9 different nations, spent a week on 12th to 19th August in Ampara. The project plan was to work with local villagers to make the building ready for the community centre at the cemetery which was in a dilapidated state, urgently requiring maintenance. After the completion of the project, the building is now ready to be used. Villagers belonging to all walks of life have expressed their immense gratitude for this much sought-after help, enthusiastically rendered by RYS volunteers.

Dr. Robert Kittel, Education Director of UPF Asia, clarified the vision of RYS Sri Lanka, 2016 themed “Youth For Eradicating Poverty And Achieving Sustainable Development” which was also on par with the theme “The Road to 2030: Eradicating Poverty & Achieving Sustainable Consumption and Production “ which is the theme of this year’s United Nations’ International Youth Day. Ms. Dinesha

Liyanasuriya, RYS Sri Lanka General Secretary, delivered Ban Ki Moon's message on International Day of Youth during the Opening Program of RYS.

Dr. Robert S. Kittel, led the education programme on leadership, life development and taught the greatness of living for the sake of others. The young participants had a profoundly life-changing experience as Dr. Kittel had effectively and efficiently conveyed the essence of life based on universal principles formulated by the founder of UPF Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon.



The hardworking RYS participants leveling the ground and securing the perimeter of the community center