

Sampreeti-E-Progati Boot Camp and Workshop Prevention of violent extremism through societal harmony

As recent news trends and stories show, humanity is facing tough challenges every day. The hardships of the disadvantaged, the doubts in the minds of youth, the abuse of power by those in authority — all this and more are contributing to a world without harmony and peace. The dialogue among people is slowly muted, the messages remain undelivered. Violence ensues, lives are lost.

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The campaign “Sampreeti-E-Progati”, supported by Manusher Jonno Foundation and organised by Event Exposure, recently concluded after months of planning, campus activation rounds, an immersive workshop and boot camp and a grand finale.

Such a project had never been undertaken by any organisation. Under the broad topics of “harmony” and “violent extremism”, the project acted as a platform for the youth to speak their minds. These young members of the society shared their stories, opinions and suggestions; the open mic speech competition aimed to create “Harmony Ambassadors” in academic institutions.

The campus activation rounds of the project began a few months ago. The organisers, Event Exposure, arranged in-house open mic speech competitions at eight private universities: Asian University of Bangladesh, City University, Eastern University, Northern University, Stamford University, Southeast University, University of Asia Pacific, and World University of Bangladesh. Added to this list was College of Home Economics, Madrasah-e-Alia Dhaka, Uttar Badda Islamia Kamil Madrasah, and Misbahul Ulum Kamil Madrasah.

Interested participants registered and spoke on the podium for a given amount of time, on a given topic. The jury panel consisted of representatives from the organisers and faculty members from respective institutions. At the end of the day, a

total of two participants from each institute were selected to attend a boot camp and workshop ahead of the grand finale.

The boot camp and workshop was held at Bishwo Shahitto Kendro on July 23, 2019. The venue adorned banners and festoons carrying wise words and quotes from important historical figures, intended to plant the seeds of positivity and courage in the young minds.

The highly informative and interactive event of that day included sessions by renowned university professors and industry experts; knowledge was disseminated on topics that included international context and radicalisation in Bangladesh, cyber safety and security, possibilities of youth in social harmony, and many more. The speakers at the event mentioned that

Bangladesh was going through turbulent times and how hope and harmony could work as a preventative tool against violence and extremism.

The day began with the student participants introducing themselves to the present audience as the guests took their respective seats. An introductory video created with the numerous stories of the campus activation round was then displayed.

The first session was conducted by Umme Wara, Assistant Professor, Department of Criminology, University of Dhaka. Her topic was “Violent extremism in Bangladesh and its international context”. She introduced the students to some keywords and their definitions, explaining different concepts in the process. As part of this session, she presented the participants with



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