

PRIORITIES OF NCCI—YOUTH CONCERNS

- Encouraging young people to be part of the National Ecumenical Movement.
- Networking with the Local and International Ecumenical partners for sponsorship and partnership.
- Connecting member churches and local youth movements with NCCI Youth Concerns ministry through organizing programmes both at regional and national levels.
- Strengthening direct partnerships with youth fellowships of the member churches and NCCI Youth Concerns ministry and encouraging them to create ecumenical platforms for young people to promote grassroots ecumenism.
- Identifying young people to engage them in a process of articulating their faith and understanding about God.

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Youth Concerns—National Council of Churches in India

To Know When The Limits Have Been Reached

With the declaration of the schedule for the General elections-2019, millions of Indians have raised their hopes high for a better governance. On the other hand, battles for the thrones have taken place nationwide. Given these battles, we need not go out of our way to analyze the performance of the politicians. The opponents make the task way too easy. In a democratic country like India, elections are one of the biggest opportunities to bring about changes. But, the politics of India has taken panoply of decaying democracy. It ranges from ever deepening polarization to democracy that comes at a huge cost. Politicians are often driven with the incentives not to bring about thriving nation but to be re-elected. As a result, the hopes of millions of Indians seldom get their way to the reality.

In the wake of such political reality, it is constantly a pressing question: What is our personal and communal responsibility as citizens of our nation? We have far too long been a mute presence being subservient to political actions of state. Whether we agree or not we are all ensnared politically. Though we claim to be apolitical, we by default support the forces of status quo and thus get ourselves politically involved. Therefore it's high time that we re-orient our stance in political arena.

Biblical principles concerning politics are as applicable today as when they were first given. God's people have lived under many forms of government. They had their own share of bad governance. But what is striking is the notion that political power is best served by justice and righteousness. Both the Old Testament and New Testament concurs the desired character of national ruler to just and righteous. This indeed reminds us of the responsibility both of the rulers as well as of the ruled. Bestowed with democratic system we are equally responsible of electing a just and righteous government. This is possible when we are able to differentiate between orderly rule and tyranny.

Not much trumpeted story of Jonathan, son of king Saul and dear friend of king David is worth recollecting here. Jonathan, being the rightful heir to his father's throne, stepped aside and ushered David in becoming the new King of Israel. I see in this story a perfect archetype of responsible citizenship in which Jonathan, worthy of emulation sees the limits of his father's authority and sees in David an appropriate political king who would execute God's rule at best. Jonathan was not taken over by the personal gains guaranteed with his allegiance to his father which I think, in today's time is a very difficult yet an indispensable venture, required of every citizen in order to emancipate a nation from her corrupt system. Keeping this in mind, let us draw a clear line of distinction between obedience to illegitimate influence and subversive existence for the wellbeing of our nation. After all we exist not to conform uncritically to any powers but to have ourselves a better political system which will not fail to count our existence.

Ms. Biri Ania

Worker - Nyishi Baptist Church Council

PRAYER POINTS

- We pray for a governance that caters to the needs of the margins.
- We pray for our farmers who are integral to our civilization yet are denied justice.
- We pray for our country. May the ethos of democracy never be sullied for the vested interests of the powerful.
- We pray that each citizen realizes his/her responsibility towards the country and world at large.

INVITATION TO WRITE



Constituent members of NCCI, especially Member Churches of NCCI, are requested to share recent reports of youth programmes with the NCCI Youth Concerns department for publication in the E-Newsletter.

National Ecumenical Youth Assembly - NEYA 2018



One of the prominent endeavours of NCCI – Youth Concerns in its attempt to augment the sense of accountability among the youths, is its quadrennial youth assembly entitled National Ecumenical Youth Assembly widely known through the acronym NEYA. NEYA – 2018, organized by NCCI – Youth Concerns from **7 – 9 November 2018** was hosted by the Mar Thoma Youth Center, Adoor, Kerala. The theme of NEYA – 2018 was **“Fostering Responsible Citizenry”**. The quadrennial assembly bore witness to around 140 delegates from different church traditions. The programme commenced with a beautiful worship led by Mar Thoma Yuvajana Sakhyam (Youth wing of Mar Thoma Church) with the Reflection being shared by Rev. Merin Mathew, a Priest of the Mar Thoma Church. Rt. Rev. Dr. Abraham Mar Paulose Episcopa, Bishop – Adoor Diocese delivered Episcopal Greetings. Following the Episcopal greetings, Rev. Asir Ebenezer – Director of CSI SEVA (and General Secretary Designate of NCCI) delivered the Keynote address wherein which he urged the youth to be more proactive by being well versed with our fundamental rights and duties as citizens of this nation. Thereafter two youth, namely Mr. Praveen (CSI Church) and Ms. Manna Prasad (Mar Thoma Church) presented their reflections on the theme “Being Responsible Citizens.” The assembly concluded with Thanksgiving worship and declaration of the Youth Manifesto. Kindly access the link below to read the detailed Report of NEYA–2018. <http://ncci1914.com/2018/11/17/report-of-national-ecumenical-youth-assembly-neya-2018-and-youth-manifesto/>

NEYA – 2018 YOUTH MANIFESTO

We, the Youth delegates of the National Ecumenical Youth Assembly (NEYA), organised by The National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), at the Mar Thoma Youth Centre, Adoor, Kerala from 7th to 9th November 2018, deliberated on the theme, **“Fostering Responsible Citizenry”**.

During the course of the three-day discussions and reflections, we realised the urgency for youth to address the contemporary challenges in our country. The youth need to act individually and collectively as responsible citizens of India, giving expression to the noble values and principles of the Indian Constitution: Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, along with all the Fundamental Rights and Duties enshrined in the Constitution.

We affirm that God, who is just and inclusive, calls us to be citizens of the diverse, pluralistic, beautiful oikome. We firmly believe that we all are respectful members in the household of God, and are lovingly encouraged to live individual and community life in all its fullness.

We strongly condemn all the existing discriminatory practices that challenge life and perpetuate injustice; the injustice that repudiates the rights, dignity and identity of every creature. We also condemn the politicisation of identity for ulterior motives and strategies for gaining supremacy and power over others.

We realize and identify ourselves as peacemakers. We therefore, are committed to breaking barriers of exclusivity that deny the flow of justice and harmony in the socio-politico-economic and religious context of our country. India should always be a land which sustains and enhances diversity in terms of creed, culture, tradition, language and gender, thereby strengthening our **“SOVEREIGN, SOCIALIST, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC, REPUBLIC”**.

Keeping in mind that the General Elections are due in our country in early 2019, and following the model of Jesus' Nazareth Manifesto (Luke 4:18-19), we as Youth of this country declare our Manifesto.

We are committed to foster a holistic and ecumenical cognizance of responsible citizenry while networking among all youth.

We shall cultivate political consciousness among all youth so that they exercise their right to vote during the elections, in a responsible manner, rising above all narrow minded and communal considerations, thereby electing proper, mature, responsible persons as leaders in our country.

We shall eradicate all unjust discriminations based on generation, gender, patriarchy, sex, ability, health, caste, class, globalization, religion and culture, and usher in just and inclusive, mutually edifying societies.

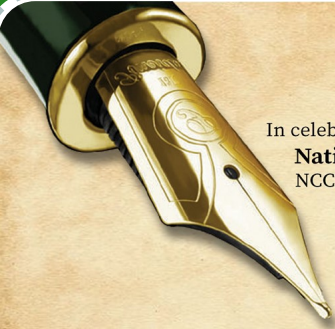
We shall facilitate inter-faith, inter-religious and inter-ideological dialogues among the Youth so that all fundamentalist and fanatical forces are decimated and respectful loving, kinship, fraternity and unity among all Indian citizens is fostered, as envisaged in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution.

We shall commit our lives to expedite environmental protection and sustainable development, promote an increased awareness and sensitivity towards ecological issues, and facilitate integrated living with all creation.

We dedicate ourselves as responsible citizens to serve as “volunteers”, strengthening unity and the sense of belonging to a multifaceted integrated country thereby ushering a land of justice, love and peace for all.

Our Election Slogan is

“No to Communalism, Commercialism, Corruption!”



Youth Concerns
National Council of
Churches in India

In celebration of
National Youth Day (12th January)
NCCI Youth Concerns announces

ESSAY

Competition

for the Youths pursuing their Graduate Studies

All eligible students are invited to write an essay on the topic:

Youth as a Vanguard of Constitutional Secularism

Last date of Submission 12th January 2019	Word Limit 2500-3000
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The best Essay will be published in NCC Review

General Term

- It is an INDIVIDUAL competition; each participant is allowed to submit only one essay.
- The essay must be original; it must not have been published previously in any form (both print and electronic).
- The prize will be awarded to the contestant with highest-scoring essay.
- Participants should furnish an attestation letter from their College Principal/Pastor.

Essay Format

- Essay must be in Microsoft Word format, 1.5 space, 12-point Times New Roman font and justify paragraph on A4 page.
- Furnish footnotes/endnotes wherever required.

Judging Criteria

- Appropriateness to the theme
- Originality and creativity of the essay
- Coherence and consistency in arguments
- Language proficiency
- Any form of plagiarism will result in disqualification

Cash Prizes

1st Prize: ₹ 5,000/-
2nd Prize: ₹ 3,000/-
3rd Prize: ₹ 2,000/-

Send your entries at:
youth@ncci1914.com

Note: Participants are requested to mention their names, college, class, email and contact number in the essay.
Result will be furnished on NCCI website - www.ncci1914.com on 26th January 2019 (Republic Day).
All entries will be judged by a panel of experts whose decision will be final.

ESSAY COMPETITION

By 2020 the demography of India would witness an unprecedented edge as India would be the youngest country in the world with every third person being a youth with an average age of 29 years. This populace dynamics could reap great benefits for the world at large if the perspectives of youngsters are not allowed to be colonized by fascist ideologies. Writing is one of the prominent means of initiating a revolution as George Gordon Byron remarks; "A drop of ink may make a million think."

The 12th of January is celebrated as the National Youth Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. To mark this occasion, NCCI – Youth Concerns organizes an Essay Competition for the Youths pursuing their Graduate Studies. In an era which fosters the deadly fusion of Religion and Country the topic of the essay would be; "Youth as a Vanguard of Constitutional Secularism"

The word limit of the essay would be 2500 – 3000. Appropriateness to the theme, originality and creativity, coherence and consistency in arguments and language proficiency would be the four criteria for judging the essay. Cash prizes await the winners;

1st Prize: Rs. 5000/-

2nd Prize: Rs. 3000/-

3rd Prize: Rs. 2000/-

Entries should be mailed to youth@ncci1914.com on or before 12th January 2019. The best essay would be published in NCC Review - the oldest Ecumenical Journal in India. Should there arise any queries kindly write to us at the aforementioned email.

PS: The participants are requested to write their name, college, class, email and contact numbers while submitting the essay. Also furnish an attestation letter from the respective Pastor. The results would be published on NCCI website – www.ncci1914.com on 26th January 2019.

Manifesto of Indian Farmers

Students Stand With Farmers!

**Stand in support
of the farmers who
have been debt
ridden and severely
ignored by our
Government**



WE, THE FARMERS OF INDIA,

The producers of primary agricultural commodities; Including Women, Dalit, Nomadic and Adivasi farmers; Land-owners, Tenants, Sharecroppers, Agricultural Labourers and Plantation Workers; Fishworkers, Milk Producers, Poultry Farmers, Livestock Rearers, Pastoralists, and Collectors of Minor Forest Produce; and, Everyone engaged in crop cultivation, shifting cultivation, apiculture, sericulture, vermiculture, and agro-forestry;

CONVINCED THAT

Wellbeing of farmers is not just about economic survival of a majority of Indian households, it is about retaining our national dignity and our civilizational heritage; Farmers are not just a residue from our past; farmers, agriculture and village community are integral to the future of India and the world; and, The demands of the farmers' movements are fully consistent with our Constitutional vision, Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy;

RECOGNISING OUR RESPONSIBILITY

As honest hard workers who face numerous odds; As bearers of historical knowledge, skills and culture; As agents of food safety, security and sovereignty; and As guardians of biodiversity and ecological sustainability;

RECALLING THE PRINCIPLES OF

Economic viability; Ecological sustainability; and Equality with social and economic justice;

Yet Alarmed At

Economic, ecological, social and existential crisis of Indian agriculture; Ecological degradation and destruction affecting farmers and their livelihoods; Unprecedented increase in diversion and destruction of agricultural land, privatization of water, forced displacement, deprivation and migration affecting security of food and livelihood.

Kindly access the link for the full script. <https://countercurrents.org/2018/12/09/manifesto-of-indian-farmers/>