

India, Pakistan peace meet to focus on trust building

With trust deficit said to be ailing India-Pakistan peace efforts and Pakistan too preoccupied with its own problems, a [New Delhi](#) based research institute has decided to step in with a workshop focussing on coexistence and confidence building.

The annual peace building and conflict resolution convention by WISCOMP (Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace) that brings together students, activists, policymakers and experts from both countries will kick off here Sunday.

Among the 43 participants expected are former Pakistani minister Javed Jabbar, former Indian Army commander Satish Nambiar and prominent writer Yoginder Sikand. Students and activists from Kashmir and the northeast states are also participating.

The sixth conflict transformation workshop - Coexistence and Trust Building: Transforming Relationships - by the Delhi-based research and training institute will be held at the India International Centre annexe.

'With the improvement, though slow, in relations between the two countries, the convention would explore new avenues of multi-track efforts that will help expand circles of peace in the region,' said a WISCOMP official.

The convention is aimed at facilitating 'meaningful and sustained dialogue between young practitioners, researchers, media persons and students from Pakistan and India', the official said.

'The workshop will promote wider civil society ownership of the 'peace process'. Some of the sessions will focus on education and stereotyping, and will include panel discussion and interaction with school and college students.'

Through films, panel discussions and other interactive events, the five-day meet will look at the dialogue initiative between Indian and Pakistan teenagers, perspectives from Kashmir, issues of stereotypes and coexistence in multicultural societies.

There will also be a panel discussion on stories of coexistence in Gujarat. Besides, the programme includes a visual presentation on stereotypes of Indian Muslims as depicted in the media to analyse how cinematic images and textbooks influence interpretation of events, narratives and perceptions.

The workshop will look at the role of religion in conflict and peace building in South Asia as well as women journalists in conflict areas, with special insights from Kashmir.

In February this year, WISCOMP had organised a similar convention in Lahore but it was cancelled after Pakistan turned down visas for Indian participants.

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