

UNIC observes Human Rights Day with Delhi youth



‘Everyday is Human Rights Day’ was the resounding theme at Springdales School, Pusa Road as children from 47 schools across Delhi came together to observe Human Rights Day on 10 December. The event was the first in a series to commemorate 70 years of the United Nations in India and arose from the recent partnership between the United Nations Information Centre for India and Bhutan and the National Progressive Schools’ Conference (NPSC)

The eventful morning began with competitions – enactments, jingle

writing and group discussions – which were on the theme of the day, Human Rights 365. Students staged various performances as part of the enactment including poetry and dance in teams of two. The group discussions saw many spirited discussions take place on basic human rights – equality, freedom of speech and expression, life, education, juvenile justice and these themes were also addressed with music and lyrics through a jingle writing competition. Three UNIC representatives were part of the judging cycle for these events. All the participants displayed enthusiasm and creativity through the competitions

and their performances reflected their keen understanding of the subject of human rights and the importance of the day.

The energetic morning was brought to a close with a valedictory session to felicitate the winning teams and launch the UNIC– NPSC 2015 annual calendar. **Mrs. Ameeta Mulla Watal**, Principal, Springdales School, Pusa Road and Chairperson, NPSC welcomed the gathering. The Guest of Honour, **Ms. Kiran Bedi**, former IPS and Chairperson, India Vision Foundation, served as a fitting beacon

for the day, having championed various equal rights campaigns and activities. Speaking at the occasion, she traced the history of human rights across the world – from the Bhagvad Gita to the American Declaration of Independence to the Indian Constitution – while marking important milestones in humankind’s quest for an egalitarian society. She vividly recounted her time spent as a UN Civilian Police Adviser and encouraged all the students to actively pursue their dreams. **Mrs. Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman**, Director, UNIC expounded on the chosen theme Human Rights 365 and carried the message of the Secretary-General for the observance. “On Human Rights Day we

... speak out. We denounce authorities who deny the rights of any person or group. We declare that human rights are for all of us, all the time: whoever we are and wherever we are from; no matter our class, our opinions, our sexual orientation. This is a matter of individual justice, social stability and global progress. The United Nations protects human rights because that is our proud mission – and because when people enjoy their rights, economies flourish and countries are at peace”, she quoted.

The UNIC-NPSC calendar 2015, launched on this special occasion featured artwork of children from across Delhi on themes of peace,

... equality and human rights. Students from several schools had earlier come together for a poster competition (see photo, top left) on the above themes. The calendar carries the top selection of images. The ceremony also included a solo performance by **Mr. Parnab Mukherjee**, eminent quizmaster and theatre person. Through a comic sketch of Hamlet, he presented various human rights violations that have occurred across the ages.

Through such efforts, UNIC wishes to engage and connect with a wider audience of young leaders and future change agents, to promote internationalism, diversity and equality for all. ■



Photo: NPSC

Photos: UNIC/ S.Dhillon