

# YOUNG LEADERS CONCLAVE 2016



YLC  
MODERN SCHOOL  
VASANT VIHAR

## “Move out with goals inside”

-Ms. Meenakshi Sahni

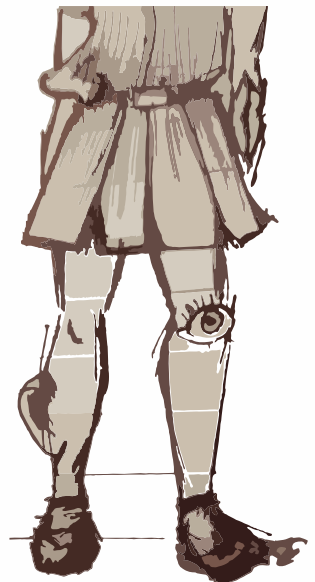
Fresh new faces fill the auditorium which fizzles with eager energy; and in this electrifying atmosphere a brand new cycle of Modern School Vasant Vihar's highly anticipated Young Leaders Conclave begins. To mark the commencement, the Principal Ms. Meenakshi Sahni addressed the “young, wise and aspirational leaders” and urged them to “explore future responsibilities” beyond the boundaries of their schooling and upbringing in the arms of their birth country – India. Ms. Sahni then moved on to introduce Mr. Parnab Mukherjee and Ms. Agrima Bhasin who return as Facilitators.

The first activity – dubbed “Introductions full of Love” by Ms. Bhasin - kicked off Session One on a self reflective, psycho-dramatic

note. The Fellows had to introduce themselves in third person, through the eyes of someone who knows them, the way they see them. While some were modest, others happily declared themselves (through the eyes of others, of course) to be “ten on ten!”

From here, Mr. Mukherjee took the wheel and let a round of ice breakers roll in his own unique style. He asked the Fellows to go into a state of “active sleep” i.e. to close their eyes and relax without losing a conscious state of mind. He, then asked them to find their way to the stage (while still blind) and climb up on it. The act of finding one's way without the advantage of sight symbolized the need to “trust the processes” and one's own body – which led them to Trust Exercise number two. Mr. Mukherjee's second Trust Exercise revolved around appreciating one's own body.

In the peculiar turn of events, the Fellows were seen walking around, pretending their ears were on their knees or that their eyes were on their tongues. A video depicting a man thriving despite having no arms was also shown. These activities centered around the physical being were aimed at making the audience aware of their bodily privilege and also of the fact that physical strength is as important as mental health when it comes to Leadership – but that being said, if one is strong enough mentally, physical disability is reduced to a minor obstruction on the road to achieving one's dreams.



*“I envision that 20-30 years from now a guild of professional politicians will take over and turn India into the country of our dreams.”*

-Ms. Meenakshi Sahni





# Do we see what we see?

The Interactive Session conducted by Mr. Parnab Mukherjee began with him sharing a small personal experience about racism. Is beauty standardized or divergent?" and "How would you define beauty?" were some of the questions raised by the Fellows. The conversation touched upon a myriad topics such as racism, objectification and misogyny in our daily lives.

The consensus amongst the Fellows was that the issue is not with being fair or dark, but with the notion of being 'fair and

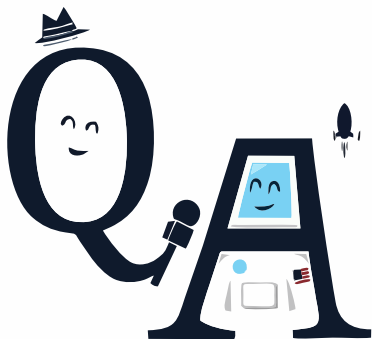
handsome.' The notions of beauty embedded in our minds from a very young age are also to blame. Our fairytales emphasize the difference between the 'beautiful' and the 'ugly', and how the 'beautiful' is always good and virtuous, and the 'ugly' is always evil.

After this, an exciting debate on whether non violence is practical today or not took place. Wide ranging opinions were voiced, and ideals ranging from Gandhi's principles of Ahimsa and

Satyagraha to his views on national security and territorial integrity were discussed.

*"Six pack abs,  
but one pack  
brain!"*

– Mr. Parnab Mukherjee



What does  
Leadership  
mean to you ?

"...bonding together as friends, and discovering our mutual passions" – Trisha S, Sanskriti School

"...fearlessly taking charge, and being accountable for the whole team" – Madhav B, The Doon School

"...an example of how a herd of sheep led by a lion can defeat a herd of lions lead by a sheep"  
– Aashna S, Hiranandani Foundation School

"...creating a path that people want to follow, not because you want them, but because they want to"  
– Ria A, Mayo College Girls' School

"...not merely getting people to work under you, rather it is getting people to work with you"  
– Anadya K, Modern School Vasant Vihar





# The Power Mirror

The post lunch session began with the Fellows and the Facilitators heading out to the field for a “Power Walk”.

The Fellows were assigned identities which ranged from doctors and lawyers to the children of rickshaw pullers and members of the LGBT community. The Fellows took a step forward or backward based on their answers to basic questions such as “Do you eat three meals a day?”

The intent was to make them aware of the wide gap that exists between the sections of the

society. In this sense the activity emphatically clarified the meaning of power struggle which is central to our society today. The trip to the field was followed by everyone returning to the 'Stage of Development' for a highly engaging and reflective Panel Discussion.

The consensus achieved was that “the gap was widening with every step, and this growing distance mirrors a reality.”

*“How hard was it for the people at the back to hear those in the front?”*

*- Ms. Agrima Bhasin*

A thought provoking question highlighting the nearly unbridgeable chasm between the haves and the have nots.

## Panel Discussion

The session started with the Fellows being asked to share questions that may have arisen in their minds after observing various disturbing photographs. The first photograph, captured by Kevin Carter in 1994, was set in famine stricken South Sudan. It showed a malnourished child crawling towards the UN food camp and a vulture stalking him from behind, making it one of the most moving pictures of the twentieth century. The Fellows came up with various intriguing questions such as “Does a human deserve to live like this?” and “was the photographer responsible for the child’s death?” The second picture, showed a similar scenario with a child washed away on the shore. This is also considered one of the most influential pictures of the twenty first century. All this was shown to explain to the

Fellows the importance of observation.

In the end, the Fellows were given a briefing about the upcoming field trips.









# What were your **expectations** from the field trip and were they answered?

*"...The most astonishing thing was that even though there was a lot of crowd, the people were happy with the doctors and the services provided to them. So a lot of people actually did not mind waiting there for hours even though it was taxing. That actually shows that our government is actually doing a good job with the hospitals. For the school, even though they are managed by the government, the teachers still giving their best and give them (students) a lot of opportunities."* – Anoushka, MSBK

*"...I expected to learn the difference between our lifestyle and those who are not as fortunate as we are. I found a huge difference and it was better than what I expected it to be. I got to know how privileged we are and how we take so much for granted."* – Tanya, Daly College

*"...what I expected from today's session was to actually communicate with people at the grass root level and we got to know so much more. We got to know what the people go through at the school and hospital. Overall, it was a really enriching experience."* – Soham, The Sanskriti School

*"...I expected to know more about the Gandhian philosophy and movement. We got to know how he inspired a sense of national belonging amongst us. My expectations were completely fulfilled."* – Ammiya, MSVV

## VISIT TO RAJ GHAT AND GANDHI MUSEUM

-Anadya K, MSVV

*What struck me the most about our visit to Rajghat was how the memorial was made in a way which is often described as inter fate. I was extremely fascinated with how these elements of Hinduism, Jainism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism came together holistically. The museum was so descriptive and had so*

*many pictures that I was actually living Gandhi's life with him. The trip started with a walk around Raj Ghat and Parnab Sir acquainted us with the unique architecture and distinct design of the memorial. It was a real eye opener to understand the significance of each minute detail of the*

*memorial. The second location was the Gandhi museum, and it was an equally enlightening experience with rare photos, unheard stories and personal belongings of Gandhi Ji. The excursion ended with a much needed lunch break and a fun bus ride back to Modern School.*



# Visit to Safdarjung Hospital and Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya

- contributed by Utsav J, MSVV

A group of Fellows visited the Safdarjung Hospital and the Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya on the second day of the YLC.

The day began with a visit to the hospital where we were given an hour to interact with the patients and visitors. This hour deeply moved as well as shocked us as we came face to face with the harsh realities of

everyday healthcare. We learnt that the lines were unrealistically long and even after hours of waiting the medicines were sometimes not available.

However, there was a ray of hope as most of the patients said that at the end of the lines, the treatment that they received was satisfactory and the doctors were patient.

The second part of the trip saw us walking through the corridors of the Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, and interacting with teachers and students. This visit forced us to question our clichés and view these 'underprivileged' students in a new light.

## Leadership of the Future

## The Question of Ecology

“Everyone cannot be a leader. Taking leadership role is something everyone can and should try to do.”

Mr Nadeem Qadri spoke about his concern about environmental issues and emphasized on the importance of Eco- Leadership . He told the Fellows about his personal experiences being an environmental activist and a lawyer at the same time.

He talked about the depressing condition of Jammu and Kashmir, informing us about the deterioration in the condition of the Dal lake and that of the plants and animals. The condition of Kashmir has gone from bad to worse due to the negligence of the government and the individuals residing there.

He also informed us about his endeavors launching the ‘Green Seasons

Council’ and formulating the ‘Environment Social Group’ which is the first professional approach towards environmental safety in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said that the only solution to this is consolidating and unanimously coming together and doing what we can to protect the environment.

“Stand up and do what you can because the environment needs you.”





# Independence Day Celebrations

The third day of the Young Leaders Conclave began with the celebrations of India's 70th Independence Day. Mr. Shekhar Gupta, a prolific columnist and renowned journalist, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The day began with the hoisting of the Tricolour and the singing of the national anthem. This was followed by a cultural performance by the students of Modern School, Vasant Vihar.

This performance included mesmerizing music and dance performances such as the instrumental ensemble 'Rise of the Phoenix', the dance performance 'Light of Life', and sunny musical renditions by both the junior and senior school students.

In his speech the Chief Guest urged the youth to step up and take their role in nation building seriously. In a very witty and humorous manner, Mr. Shekhar Gupta compelled the students to think outside the boundaries of their limitations and decide to contribute towards national integrity before attending to personal interests.



*The beautiful campus of MSUV comes alive  
in the colours of the nation*









## WHAT DOES INDIA'S 70<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE MEAN TO THE YOUTH ?

“...according to me even though things have changed, they haven't changed as much as everyone expected them to when we did get independence. Even though we're participating in the Olympics, it's still a big thing to even qualify for the event, let alone winning a gold medal. This can either be due to lack of facilities or the lack of opportunities. Things could have got a lot better.

– Shrey A, MSVV

“...I feel that India has not progressed much. Since 1947 we still see Kashmir burning. Equality is not the way it was enshrined in our constitution. This is the period where nationalism is being redefined with the rise of people like Kanhaiya Kumar. So yes, it is a significant year for our country as we are challenging what our government actually stands for.”

– Kamya Y, Vasant Valley

“...seventy years seem like a very long time but, our country has seen a lot of dynasties and a lot of leaderships that have not been conducive to our growth. So, we just need time to grow better as a country.”

- Abhiraj M, The Mother's International School

“...in one word, I would say confused. This is because after seventy long years and multiple policy changes, our country is still in a state of dilemma which only means one thing, confusion.”

– Aanvi, Maharani Gayatri Devi Girls' School, Jaipur

“...the youth recognizes its priorities in terms of safety and freedom of expression so the 70th year of our independence will find the youth not only demanding from the country but making it happen for itself and the nation.”

- Ms. Shalini D, Faculty, MSBK





# 1

# Panel Discussions

After a morning of enthralling performances, the Fellows interacted with **Major Ashish Chadha** in a PANEL DISCUSSION. The discussion began with Major Chadha sharing his experiences from his time in the Indian Army and from his travels across the globe. He drew upon these very experiences to give the Fellows several valuable lessons, such as “learn to hear and respect another's opinion” and “be a good follower before being a good leader”. Major Chadha shared his concerns about our future in the form of 'challenges', ranging from the map of India and the territory on ground not being the same to Indians perpetually being late, no matter what the occasion. The Fellows engaged in a highly interactive question and answer session and were enlightened by Major Chadha's words.

# 2

*Now it's time for India to transform.  
We have already laid the platform.*

*- Mr. Jaijit Bhattacharya*

Post tea break, the Fellows had a panel discussion with **Mr. Jaijit Bhattacharya**, a noted Government Transformation Expert and a partner at KPMG.

The discussion began with Mr. Bhattacharya sharing his experiences as a Professor at IIT Delhi. He spoke to the Fellows about various issues of public policy and gave them several valuable lessons, such as, 'once you are determined, no one can stop you', 'the pursuit of knowledge has never and can never be stuck' and 'you earn less, you spend less'. He expressed his concern about India having the youngest population of the world and still not taking advantage of it.

The Fellows engaged in a highly Interactive Session with Mr. Bhattacharya and he answered pertinent questions asked by the Fellows on development, education, vision of the future and the role of India's youth as the Indian economy continues to grow and expand.







After an energetic and refreshing morning 33 Fellows had an outdoor session with **Mr. Mayur Sharma**, one of India's leading experts on street food and regional cuisines.

The Fellows enthusiastically participated in two activities to gauge and assess their potential by trying to fit as many people as possible in a tube and making a square while being blindfolded. From these activities they drew a number of lessons such as to trust other people, to identify their own potential, adjust in uncomfortable environments, being patient with others and being good listeners.

The Fellows engaged in a highly interactive question and answer session with Mr. Mayur and he answered pertinent questions on being a good leader, engaging in team work, types of resources available and how the success and failure of a person lies in the way they use and minimize the use of resources available to them.

*"Humans are the most important resource of an organisation."*

- Mr Rocky Singh

From highway hopping on our television screens to conducting a session of YLC'16 - **Mr. Rocky Singh**, corporate trainer and an illustrious alumnus of Modern School, Vasant Vihar and Mr. Mayur Sharma – both co-hosts of 'Highway on my Plate' graced us again on Day 4 with their electric, youthful energy.

The session started in the school field with challenging group exercises, designed to test the Fellows' physical coordination, facilitate teamwork and serve as a warm up. The Fellows were then split into two groups – one of the groups accompanied Mr. Singh to the auditorium.

The session in the auditorium began with an immediate emphasis on "Effective Communication". Mr. Singh a.k.a Rocky (or His Highness, as he prefers it) discussed with the Fellows the nuances of tonal differences and body language and their importance in communication. Interestingly, he informed the Fellows that only 7% of communication occurs verbally. The discussion, then, transitioned into a complex activity consisting of "safe spots", "planks" and "explosions", the end goal of which was to make "profit". There was a hidden goal too, though – and that was to get the Fellows to plan effectively through conversation to complete the task.



# Rights and Duties

The post lunch session was conducted by Ms. Agrima Bhasin and involved a discussion on the Constitutional Rights granted by the Constitution of India.

The Fellows were asked questions about their rights and duties and why they thought so many people were unaware of the exact number of fundamental rights? This served as an eye opener for them. The correlation between rights and duties and how they go hand in hand was also discussed in detail.

Mr. Parnab Mukherjee took over from here and spoke about the role of a leader in the context of social welfare. To explain this point further he presented an extraordinary theatrical demonstration that left the audience speechless. He made it abundantly clear that the role of a leader in defining the future of a country is huge.

The session ended with dramatic group performances by the Fellows on the rights and duties discussed earlier.





## Reflections

The Fellows had an early morning that began with a briefing and an address by the Facilitators.

This was followed by an Interactive Session on how the Young Leaders Conclave had impacted the Fellows and the fond memories they would carry back home. They were advised to consciously develop attributes of Perseverance, Trust, Focus, Dignity and Patience.

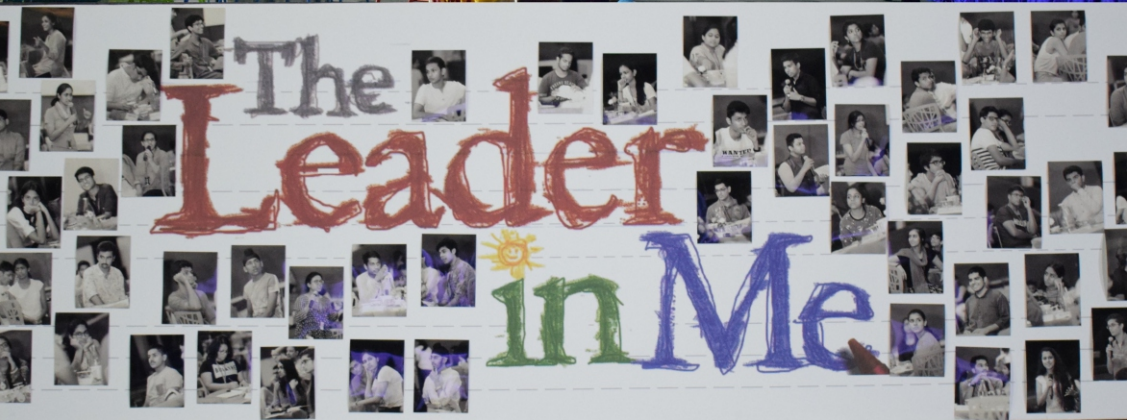
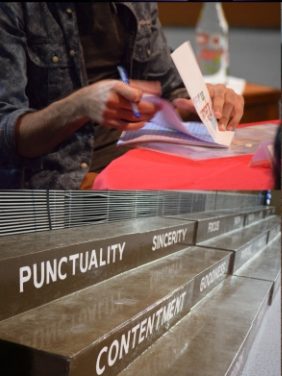
The Fellows pondered upon their duties as leaders and the role they can play in bringing about changes in their surroundings. They also understood the true meaning of “Leaders do not help people instead they take part in their lives and guide them.” The meaning of ‘growing tall’ and ‘being rooted’ at the same time became abundantly clear to the Fellows.

## Be The Change You Want To See

The second session of day 5 was addressed by Ramon Magsaysay Awardee Mr. Anshu Gupta who is also popularly known as the ‘Clothing Man’. He is the founder and director of ‘Goonj’ - an NGO working towards improving the condition of the country and its people in multiple ways.

Mr. Anshu Gupta shared his experiences and expressed concern about the lack of basic amenities in the country and the growing divide that exists between the actual needs of the people and the focus of governance. He encouraged the young leaders to question ‘the leaders’ of the country and be the change they wish to see in India. He also underlined the role of the youth in partnering with representatives of the government for community welfare and upliftment. The Fellows were inspired and could be heard discussing not to judge people by their clothes, donate to fulfil the requirement of others and not to answer personal will.

Later, the Fellows engaged in a highly interactive question and answer session with Mr. Anshu Gupta. He answered questions on the development of the country, lack of amenities, obstacles in community development and the role of the youth in social welfare.







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