

Press Release

UNV launches its flagship publication on Volunteerism

On

International Volunteers Day



New Delhi, 07 December 2012: “The Government of India is committed to promote and recognize the important role volunteers could play in national development,” said **Jitendra Singh**, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports (MOYAS) (Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Defence, Government of India (GoI). “The values of volunteerism are relevant in strengthening a community’s capacity to achieve secure livelihoods, and to enhance physical, economic, spiritual and social well-being,” he further added. The Hon’ble Minister also recommended engaging the country’s youth— a potential and powerful resource — for nation building.

He was speaking at the launch of UNV's flagship publication 'Volunteering in India: Contexts, Perspectives and Discourses,' organized by UNV on International Volunteers Day. The publication presents the perspectives and experiences of eminent people and volunteers from diverse backgrounds and disciplines on the ethos, tradition and diversity of volunteering in the Indian context. To strengthen the spirit of volunteerism in India, the Hon'ble Minister declared joint annual International Volunteers Day (IVD) celebration by MOYAS and UNV next year onwards.

The publication was launched by an impressive panel of dignitaries that included **Shri Jitendra Singh, Ms. Lise Grande**, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative; **Dr. Vandana Shiva**, Director, Research Foundation for Science, Technology & Ecology, New Delhi and **Ms Yvonne Maharoo-Marathovouniotis**, Portfolio Manager for South Asia, Development Division, UNV, Bonn, Germany.

"Volunteerism allows people to work with little but impacts more. It fosters a culture of sharing and not exclusion. The values of volunteerism are the road for the future. Young people today need to understand the futility of their ever-increasing needs and means of self-aggrandizement," noted **Dr. Vandana Shiva** in her special address on the occasion.

Commending the work of volunteers in the field of social development, **Ms. Lise Grande** said, "Globally, India is an inspiration for volunteerism and solidarity. The publication is particularly significant as it reiterates the tremendous opportunities there are in India to harness the power of volunteerism". Reiterating the important role played by volunteers, Ms Yvonne Maharoo-Marathovouniotis stressed, "On International Volunteer Day, let us celebrate the role of volunteerism in building the future that we want and recognize the contributions volunteers make worldwide."

Published by UNV, the publication not only recognizes the value addition that volunteers bring to national development priorities and the society in general, but also seeks to draw attention to the dedicated community of volunteers. In addition to this, the report also outlines news trends in volunteerism in the 21st century.

International Volunteers Day is celebrated on 5 December every year to recognize the commitment of volunteers and volunteer organizations, to inform people about the impact of volunteering on peace and sustainable development, and to applaud volunteers for their dedication and impact.

About UNV:

United Nations Volunteers (UNV) is the nodal UN agency that contributes to peace and development worldwide through volunteerism. UNV believes in 'Volunteerism for Development'. The concept of volunteerism for development centers on optimizing impact of volunteerism on peace and development. Volunteerism by many millions of people is critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Please visit: www.undp.org.in/unv

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offices in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations. Please visit: www.in.undp.org

About the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports:

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has been bifurcated into two departments, namely, the department of Youth Affairs and the department of Sports under two different Secretaries w.e.f. 30th April 2008. The specific subjects covered by these two departments are contained in the Order of the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961. The youth, i.e., those falling within the age group of 15-35 years, constitutes nearly 40 percent of the total population of India. To optimally tap their constructive and creative energies, the Department of Youth Affairs pursues the twin objectives of personality building and nation building, i.e., developing the personality of the youth and involving them in various nation-building activities. Please visit: <http://yas.nic.in>

Photo caption:

(From left to right) Ms Yvonne Maharoo-Marathovouniotis, Portfolio Manager for South Asia, Development Division, UNV, Bonn, Germany; Ms. Lise Grande, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative; Shri Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports (MOYAS) (Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Defence, Government of India; and Dr. Vandana Shiva, Director, Research Foundation for Science, Technology & Ecology, New Delhi

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