International Youth Day, 2018

Introduction

The International Youth Day (IYD), celebrated on 12th August each year, was established by the United Nations in 2000, as a means of raising awareness of issues affecting young people around the world as well as providing a platform for the celebration of Youth and their contribution in the development of society. The theme for the year 2018 is 'Safe Spaces for the Youth' as decided by the Secretary General of the United Nations. Taking inspiration from the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals which clearly talks about the requirement of provision of inclusive and sustainable urbanization, safe spaces reflect upon the idea of requirement of spaces wherein youth can participate and present their diverse opinions with dignity, respect and equality. It is understood that Youth needs safe spaces wherein they can engage with other young members of the society and carry out activities related to their diverse needs and interests and be able to freely express themselves and engage in decision making processes in a democratic manner. Digital Safe Spaces allows the youth to engage in meaningful interaction with other young members of the society virtually, spread across the world. The session organized was designed to make the participants understand the concept of 'safe spaces' especially in the Digital world.

Inaugural Session

The celebration commenced with a welcome address and introduction by Arun Sahdeo, Programme Officer, UNV India, who introduced the guests present in the session.

1. Welcome by Mr. Arun Sahdeo, Programme Officer, UNV India

Mr Arun Sahdeo introduced the theme for International Youth Day 2018: Digital Safe Spaces for the Youth; highlighting upon the intensive nature of 'network society' he points to the fact that in contemporary society our way of interaction and thinking is very much shaped by our digital interaction, understanding and making digital space safe becomes highly necessary. Focusing on the Youth of the country and the immense potential of 'demographic dividend' that India is experiencing, he emphasized on the importance of utilizing the dynamism and vitality of the

youth in a positive way for the development of the community which is to be done by raising awareness among the youth regarding the vulnerabilities as well as the opportunities of the cyber-world.

2. Opening Remarks by Mr Asit Singh Joint Secretary (Youth Affairs), Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Mr. Asit Singh initiated his opening remarks by appreciating UNDP/UNV, New Delhi and Government of India for their efforts in developmental work benefitting the Youth and engaging the Youth in community development through various activities in several districts of the country. Focusing on the theme of International Youth Day 2018: Digital Safe Spaces, he highlighted on the marginalization of the rural youth and the various challenges they grapple with due to lack of digital resources in their

locality. The solution which Mr. Asit Singh pointed out was on creating an active engagement and understanding by the urban youth to channelize their energy for the marginalized sections of the community. Mr. Singh also highlighted the important to understand what 'safe space' means for different categories of youth: rural and urban youth. Mr Singh further stressed on the fact that how 'Digital Space' provides a challenging arena for all: government organizations, parents etc. Contemporary times are marked by the presence of significant proportion of Youth in cyber-space and therefore, it becomes imperative to raise awareness on different challenges of the Digital Space to allow them to take better decisions. He iterated that it is the responsibility of every individual to introspect how their Digital presence is influencing their professional and personal space in one's own lives.

3. Address by Marina Walter, Deputy Country Director, UNDP New Delhi

Ms Walter began by thanking MoYAS for their support to the UNDP/UNV. She went on to share the significance of celebrating the International Youth Day and why the youth have an important role to play in pursuing the SDGs. Reflecting upon the importance of International Youth Day; she states it provides one a chance to acknowledge and celebrate the engagement and contributions of the Youth in community development. She congratulates the effort of UNDP India along with UNV and the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs for

their various efforts in different sectors with respect to the Youth like: Peace prevention, community development. Focusing on the theme of 'Safe Spaces' and the demographic dividend of India, she emphasizes on the importance on getting the dynamism of youth for a focused engagement in the development. She iterates that Safe spaces for youth are important as it provides them with a platform to voice their opinions and allow for active inclusion and engagement. She states the importance of certain rights as being necessary for the youth in digital spaces to engage and promote physical and psychological development.
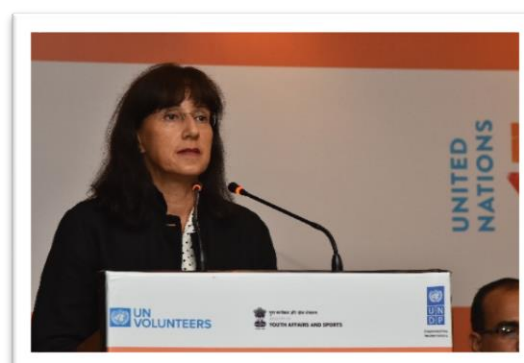
She emphasized on the importance of UN Habitat agenda which focuses on creating safe spaces for both genders and especially for women to come together and participate and contribute in their society.

Iterating on the importance of the theme chosen, she states how Digital space allows for interaction across various barriers like religious fragments, social groups and exposes the youth to alternate viewpoints, however, at the same time increases their vulnerability. It is the need of hour for various stakeholders to come together and contemplate regarding proper engagement with digital space.

Releasing of Manual on Youth Engagement

The manual on Youth engagement was released during the inaugural session. It is meant to provide Technical guidance to facilitate youth engagement and participation in democratic governance and various development initiatives. It provides various easy to use tools for youth volunteers and organizations working with the youth to engage them in diverse voluntary activities and community work. The manual is intended to serve as handy guide for different youth related organizations and state agencies that are working in diverse areas of youth development in different parts of the country.

Launch of V-Awards

The V-Awards were introduced to celebrate the efforts of various Youth volunteers for their active engagement in different developmental sectors and to empower them for their pro-active participation in a sustainable manner. The official website was launched by the Joint Secretary (Youth Affairs), Mr Asit Singh.

The inaugural session of the event concluded with a vote of thanks by Arun Sahdeo, Programme Officer, UNV India. Mr. Sahdeo thanked the Government of India, especially the MoYAS for their support to the event. He also thanked UNDP's partner organizations for participating in large numbers. A mention was also extended to students and volunteers for their enthusiasm. Mr. Arun Sahdeo commended the hard work of the internal team of UNDP, responsible for organizing this event.

Voices of the Youth: Experience Sharing by Youth Volunteers on Cyber Bullying/Cyber Harassment

1. Ms Saudamini Sharma

Sharing her experience with Digital/Social media, she focuses on how social media is meant to connect people and allow them to share their ideas and opinions. However, with the misuse, the digital world presents with new sets of challenges like cyber bullying. Providing an example of a girl committing suicide due to bullying by her own friends for a picture she posted and the dress she was wearing, she brings it to everyone's attention; the extent of cyber bullying faced by the Youth and that India is the 3rd largest country with recorded cases of suicide due to cyber bullying. She brings to focus how India has one of the youngest populations in the world and also has one of the most cases of suicide due to cyber bullying.

She highlights how contemporary times are marked by 24*7 surveillance where we are constantly updated on people's whereabouts and their day to day activities and with easy access to such personal information, it becomes easy to misuse the information. She talks about how one experiences a kind of monologue with oneself whenever we share a post online: if one will get more likes or comments? Am I the first to upload a picture about an event I am attending, the constant fight to be the first one, to have the most likes?

She uses an important concept of 'Social currency' to talk about the importance and deep penetration of Digital Space in 21st century as one is constantly striving to achieve more followers, likes, popularity, being a personality. She points how this has led to making people insensitive, without realizing how one's joke or a random comment can affect an individual mentally and emotionally. With its vast horizon, cyber space provides people with a sense of anonymity and the associated power being misused to post online comments without thinking about the consequences.

However, she iterates the fact that social media in itself can be a source of empowerment for the Youth if one understands the potential rather than misusing it for one's leisure.

2. Ms Niharika Dabral

As a final year student of Humanities and Social sciences, Delhi University, Ms. Dabral describes herself as Feminist, and admires Arundhati Roy.

She initiated the session by bringing to the fore how it gets difficult to understand the depth of what online harassment is as it has become so normalized and one tends to ignore it than actively deal with it. Talking about her experience by working as journalist for DU Beat (Student run newspaper),

she recalls one of the incidents that acted as a watershed movement in student journalism; the Ramjas incident in 2017. Providing a context for the same, she mentions how one of the workshops titled 'cultures of protest' was being organized by the Ramjas College and the panel included students from JNU and it was during the time of infamous JNU controversy. Performing their job as student journalists and reporting the event, she recollects how the incident caused a stir as various correspondents associated with DU Beat, received threat calls and messages for doing their jobs. She mentions how easy availability of everyone's personal information online made them vulnerable.

She talked about the idea of self-censorship as means of ensuring their personal safety and it being a sub-conscious thing that started happening since the incident.

One of the most important aspects about online harassment is that the abuser drives its strength from the fact that the person being abused is alone and she emphasizes on the importance of support from one's close friends to help face the abuser and to not present yourself as vulnerable.

She concludes her talk by mentioning how sometimes legal framework and various procedures to help deal with cyber bullying is difficult to comprehend for the general population and the young people, it is important to realize that any form of online harassment should not be taken lightly and it is important to take necessary actions. It is essential to make oneself aware of various legal mechanisms available to protect oneself from different kinds of online harassment and can serve as a way towards making digital spaces safe and provide empowerment to the youth.

Important Points Discussed During World Cafe

The World Café session was designed to divide the participants into numerous working groups of 7-8 people and various concepts related with understanding "Safe Digital Spaces" were discussed in different groups and a moderator was present in every group to help regulate the discussion towards productive and fruitful discussion on how to contribute towards making 'Digital Safe Space for the Youth.'

Certain ideas like 'Empathy' were being focused upon on how to be effective and sensitive users of Internet and to make oneself understand perspective from other people's point of view. One of the contemporary issues that people are grappling with in Digital spaces is the spread of Fake news and how can one be aware and responsible for identifying what kind of news circulated online is fake. Various recommendations were made by Participants regarding this like: to identify sources of the news etc. Making the Digital space safe requires one to take certain steps like ensuring better security on apps being used, to keep a check on one's list of followers and look out for non-authentic profiles etc.

One of the major concerns while being online is that people tend to be pretentious and engage in certain acts and behaviours to be 'liked' and achieve temporary fame on any online platform. In here, it becomes essential to sensitize the users of Internet by appealing to their emotional quotient and provide public encouragement for being empathetic users.

Another important concept surrounding Digital Space is 'Freedom of Speech and Expression' as that right is exploited and misused under the cloak of anonymity for people writing content from any source and not taking responsibility for the content being shared. The freedom to express comes with certain online etiquettes that people must follow, especially, when discussions are done on sensitive and political issues. The question of monitoring and regulation becomes essential and tricky in such situations; to what extent can online interaction be regulated without infringing upon one's freedom

of expression. One has to be careful while sharing any content and to not simply believe the content shared on Internet but to keep an open mind and check the sources.

Digital Illiteracy is also one of the major concerns facing the young generation as many people who know how to use various apps are unaware of different kinds of cyber-crimes being committed and are unaware of how to detect fake news and fake accounts that are present in significant numbers in the Digital Space. It is imperative to create a digital literate population through various campaigns and awareness programmes and provide technical knowledge to help people deal with issues of fake news and associated violence, differentiate between fake and impersonated profiles, to make oneself aware of online discussions before getting involved and be aware of laws that help deal with cyber harassment like: Cyber cell and Data Protection Act 2018 etc. It is highly necessary to be aware of one's account settings and privacy settings on any social media app and for social media to monitor content and oppose people who are attempting to misuse the digital space and are posting trolls or defamatory comments to achieve fame.

All this leads towards the idea of 'Trust' in virtual world and if it is possible to trust people you meet online and how to identify those one can trust and cannot. As one has become increasingly aware, Digital media is used to create certain impressions and image and with such levels of hypocrisy, poses immense challenges for individuals. Various crimes like financial fraud, blackmailing, kidnapping as individuals lack technical knowledge regarding various online and social platforms they are connected on and makes them an easy target for such fraudulent activities. Instead of blaming victims of online frauds and harassment for their lack of knowledge and awareness, it is imperative to create an atmosphere for the perpetrators that an intended and timely action would be taken when faced with such situations and to educate the youth of various mechanisms available to deal with such situations in an effective manner rather than feel scared and ignore cases of online harassment.

Like any other social space, Digital space allows for people with diverse opinions and interests to come together and engage in interactions. Therefore, as responsible 'Netizens' it is essential that one follows simple rules to ensure a safe and inclusive space for people. One should always be tolerant and provide space for expression of opinion different from oneself. One should take responsibility for verifying the sources of information before sharing and to realize the importance and how words can affect someone emotionally and mentally and to be careful in what and how are we expressing ourselves on Digital platform. It is important for everyone to be aware of their Rights as well as their duties in the cyber-world and initiatives should be taken to establish portals that would be effective in spreading these as more and more people are connected to the wider world through Digital space.

Panel Discussions

Panel Discussion on "Building a Safe Digital Space for Young People." Representations from Institutions working towards making Digital Space safe for the Youth of the Country.

The panellists included:

1. Anyesh Roy, DCP- Cyber Crime: Currently working as a Delhi Commissioner of Police- Cyber Crime, Delhi Police, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, Mr. Roy has worked extensively in field of law enforcement and has intensive experience in Training and capacity building of the Investigating Officers of Delhi Police in the field of cyber investigation and have worked on leading Intensive awareness campaigns among the common public in the field of cyber safety.

2. Mahima Kaul, Director, Public Policy & Government, Twitter India & South Asia: She is currently heading the Public Policy & Government for Twitter India & South Asia comes with an extensive experience of working on different platforms on internet governance issues, information and communication technology, cyber-security, digital inclusion and internet freedom.

3. Osama Manzar, Founding Member, and Digital Empowerment Foundation: He is a global leader on the mission of eradicating information poverty from India and global south using digital tools. He is a social entrepreneur, author, columnist, impact speaker, angel investor, mentor, and sits on several government and policy committees in India and on international organisations working in the areas of Internet, access, and digital inclusion.

4. Pavan Duggal, Cyber Law Expert and Advocate Supreme Court of India: He is one of the top 4 Cyber Lawyers around the World and is working in the pioneering area of Cyber-law. He has made an immense impact with an international reputation as an expert and authority on Cyber-law and E-Commerce law.

5. Vineet Kumar, Founder of Cyber Peace Foundation: He is a serial Social Entrepreneur, Social activist, Founder and President of Cyber Peace Foundation and has over 17 years of experience in the field of cyber security.

The session was moderated by Ginnie Mahajan: one of the popular Radio Jockey in the country's capital city – Delhi who works towards representing the common man by constantly raising their questions, issues to the authorities.

The moderator set the stage by enumerating the important points for discussion and laying a structure for the discussion to follow. She set the stage for discussion by asking certain questions: If youngsters believe that they know Internet better than their parents and proceeded by asking how youngsters would behave and deal if they faced online harassment. She raises the most important question that sets the stage for the discussion which is;

"Do youngsters feels safe on the Internet?"

The panellists were asked to discuss their perspectives and the various social institutions that are relevant and are working towards making Digital Spaces accessible and safe for the population in the country. Most importantly, she urged the panellists to share their experience and insights for the Youth and provide them with knowledge of how to handle issues related with cyber harassment and bullying.

Anyesh Roy brings to the fore that most common types of cases regarding online harassment are in the form of financial fraud, fraudulent profiles and blackmailing. He talks about the dangerous effect of 'half-literate' digital population wherein most of the users are unaware of the cyber-crimes that can be committed and therefore, it becomes important to raise awareness regarding the same. Reflecting upon the element of 'fear' being present among the youth in reporting cases of cyber-bullying to the police, he states that how the first step to deal with any form of cyber bullying is to report it on the platform itself than the police and since, in most cases, victims of cyber-crimes are aware of the identities of their abusers, victims are not empowered enough to report their cases. However, it is essential to raise concerns and report instances of bullying to actively address the issue.

Vineet Kumar introduces the concept of 'Netizens': natives of the Digital world and the importance of empowerment of the Netizens. He talks about basic cyber hygiene or 'netiquettes' regarding how one should treat others on digital platform and how one behaves and expre sses their opinions on cyber world. He moves on to provide a strategic framework that can be follow when dealing with any kind of cyber-bullying/harassment with the foremost task being reporting the incident and mentions various legal mechanisms and protection acts to do the same anonymously, especially for youngsters below the age of 18. Talking about raising digital awareness; he mentions various initiatives taken by various governmental organizations like: Information Security Awareness Initiative and also efforts taken by educational institutions in teaching students about necessary guidelines on how to use social media for good for school kids etc. He talks about Cyber cells as part of an initiative by Government of India to handle the emerging cases of online harassment and to provide a platform to youth to feel empowered and raise their troubles and challenges. He emphasizes on the importance of Street plays and 'Nukkad naataks' to make people aware of the various challenges confronting the digital world in their own language and provide a space for them to come up with their issues and have a conversation. He urges the youth to aspire and be a responsible Digital citizen and Digital role-model.

Pavan Duggal talks about the idea of 'online footprints' and that humans in 21st century are 'data producing entities' and therefore, cyber-security has become one of the fundamental concepts to ensure a dignified life for individuals. Providing his insights on how to effectively deal with cases of online bullying, he states the importance of collecting the necessary evidence to prove factually the incident of online harassment. He iterates on Being safe online is a challenging task due to numerous challenges and vulnerabilities and with high online presence of youngsters on different applications, it is important for one to be mentally prepared and be rational while dealing with incidences of online

bullying. He iterates that it is our right to insist for safe cyber-space and to have that as a legacy for the future generation. He calls for the Youth to be 'Instruments of Change' and to think actively about the consequences of sharing one's personal information on online platforms. He brings to the attention the important right of 'Right to be Forgotten' in the Digital era as one of the important rights for users of Internet and talks of provisions wherein one can request and ask service providers to not display or to take down certain information as has been stated in Shri Krishna Committee being set up by the Government. He calls for the Youth to make Cyber-Security essential part of their lives and strive towards making Cyber Space secure for humanity and all.

Mahima Kaul talks about how safe spaces can take on multiple interpretations depending upon the nature of social platform and therefore, to understand digital safe spaces require one to understand the motive of different social platforms that are available in the contemporary times. She points to the fact that Digital space is a constantly evolving space and to ensure a safe environment, she talks about the presence of policies and regulations for the same. She focuses on the importance of reporting of incidents of cyber-bullying for the policy-makers of cyber-world to understand the changing nature of abuse and be able to evolve and develop their mechanisms to deal with them in an effective and timely manner. She points to the fact how constantly evolving technology is deployed to detect and address malicious content on different social platforms. She focuses on the debate of self-expression and the challenges posed on the same through censorship and monitoring of content social applications and states that one needs to be aware of the context and the situation in which words are expressed to be able to interpret them properly and identify instances of harassment and that it is a continuously evolving activity which requires various stake-holders to actively engage in.

Osama Manzar talks about digital empowerment in the rural context and points to the divide that India is facing with having the most number of youth being online as well as most unconnected people because of its sheer population in the urban and rural areas. He brings to light an essential differentiation: Internet of Yesterday and Internet of Today wherein the former refers to the browser to look for information whereas the latter is about our personalised devices like phones, tabs (individualised) wherein we have our different and customised social apps like: YouTube, Instagram, Facebook etc. Internet is being associated with social applications. He raises an important question to reflect upon: Are you a conscious user or unconscious consumer of your Internet? He iterates that it is important to be a user and not just a consumer of Internet and that Digital world is to be handled with a conscious mind and a sense of responsibility. He states how rural and urban population faces different issues with respect to cyber-world as rural youth has more issues related with accessibility and are first time learners of Internet whereas for the population of the youth it has to do with the essential question of differentiating between being an 'user' or a 'consumer.' However, the question that every responsible Internet user needs to ask oneself is: Why should one use Internet?

Key Recommendations of the Conference

- **Creating a common platform for youth from diverse sections of the society** to come together to participate on key discussion related to safe space wherein everyone is respected and heard. Initiating a common platform to explore their needs and interests in an inclusive and respectable manner.
- The idea of 'Digital Safe Spaces' is one of the **fundamental ideas of 21st** century as more and more people have increased online presence and we are striving towards a more networked and connected world.
- **Creating awareness among young people through various workshops/sessions**: The youth needs to be made aware and achieve high 'Digital Literacy' with respect to different challenges and vulnerabilities one is exposed to with online presence and to understand what constitutes 'cyber-bullying/harassment' and to sensitise the youth regarding the same.
- **School curriculum needs to incorporate modules** to teach students about digital literacy.
- **The idea of 'Netiquettes'** becomes important when dealing with safe digital spaces as it could serve as a framework towards the kind of behaviour and language one ought to be using when interacting in cyber-world and be responsible digital citizens.
- It is important to **understand the evolving nature of Digital world** and to be a conscious user of Internet and the various social media platforms present on Internet.
- **Designing roadmap for dissemination of Information for mitigating the risk of cyber harassment**: There are various legal frameworks and policies available for the general population to deal with incidents of cyber-crimes: Data Protection Act 2018, cyber-cells, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Cybercrime.gov.in (website by Ministry of Home Affairs to report crimes).
- One needs to **learn to mistrust and question the information and news online through verification of sources** and to learn the techniques for differentiating between various fake profiles and fake news and not fall victims of cyber-crime.

Social Media Campaign Report

As part of celebrating International Youth Day, along with the main event social media campaign was initiated with online volunteers across India with the theme of Safe spaces for Youth by conducting interesting, informative and engaging online and offline activities like quiz, poll and discussion on Facebook, twitter and Instagram.

The key outcome of the social media campaign was focussed on the key following components:

- Online Engagement and spreading outreach of campaign
- Spreading awareness about the campaign and the theme of IYD 2018
- Provide a boost to the Online Campaign by engaging the OVs and their friends, colleagues and peers
- Engage Online Volunteers in tasks which would create awareness about numerous aspects of gender issues and exchange views, suggestions and stories.

The social media campaigning for the international youth Day began with the live coverage of workshops held at different colleges on all UNV India social media handles including Facebook, Instagram and twitter.

Hashtags: #BeSafeOnline #SafeSpaces4Youth #YouthDay.

Date	College
1 August	1.Lady Irwin College
2 August	2. Lady Sri Ram
3 August	3. Ramjas, 4. Sree Ram College of Commerce
6 August	5. Hindu College 6. Jamia hamdard

In addition we ran a survey on bit.ly/IYD_2018, to spread awareness about safety Digital Space. The survey got 290 plus responses online. The survey helps us to get to know the online pattern of people and spread awareness about the treats online.

We also kept on sharings posters, and videos online to promote the event and also about the Day.

Finally on 9th August , we covered the event live on twitter and got amazing responses from people.

Posts on social media	More than 20
Survey	Responses 300+
Outreach	7000+