

## CHILDREN'S DAY EVE 2011 AND PRAYAS

### Delhi watched its biggest Children's Day event – Prayas, NGOs & Schools in Action

#### Children run and perform to claim their rights

#### Delhi Government and Police reaffirm their commitment to protect children

**New Delhi:** On the eve of Children's Day (13<sup>th</sup> November 2011), a 4KM "Run for Children" at Central Secretariat Ground, Vinay Marg, adjacent Nehru Park, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi was organized by Prayas Juvenile Aid Centre Society with active participation by the leading NGOs of Delhi and some Schools. The 'Run' was flagged off by Mr. P.K. Tripathi, Chief Secretary, Govt. of NCT of Delhi and Mr. B.K. Gupta, Commissioner of Police Delhi, along with the former Chairperson of Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) and the General Secretary, Prayas, Mr. Amod K. Kanth. The event was a major departure from the Children's Day and Prayas Founder's Day celebrations that are held every year on or around 14<sup>th</sup> November, Pandit Nehru's birthday.

About 2000 children of 6-18 years of age, who participated in the Run alongwith by a colourful program of song, music, dance & feast, were mostly from under-privileged sections of the society. They included street and working children, deprived children from slums and villages of Delhi, who all ran along with the children of relatively affluent families in complete solidarity on the Children's Day eve. They sent a strong message to the society, administration and police that they seek protection of their rights from them.

"Delhi Government in coordination with the Central Government has implemented quite a few schemes for children, including Mid Day Meal and Right to Education. Presently, we are working on a health scheme in which health check up of every school going child is mandatory", said Mr. Tripathi after flagging off the Run.

Mr. B. K. Gupta reiterated his commitment towards children, "They are special for all of us and their security is close to my heart. Delhi Police is taking additional measures to protect them. "

Mr. Kanth, whose' love for children dates back to his Policing career as an IPS Officer which motivated him to found 'Prayas' after tragic incident of fire in Jahangirpuri jhuggis, said, "The civil society organizations participating here are doing tremendous job in protecting children's rights. They are the ones who are realizing the dreams of Panditji by taking care of under-privileged children. That is the real commitment towards Children's Day. "

The Run for Children started at 7:30am from Central Secretariat Ground, Vinay Marg Chanakya puri (adjacent to Nehru Park) and proceeded to Laxmi bai Nagar on Brigadier Hoshiar Singh Marg and return back via Leela Palace hotel by about 9.00 am. Before and After the Run the Children put up colourful performances that enthralled everyone, who sang together and danced. This included, among others, a lively and electrifying performance by ‘Paranoid’ and ‘Aayudh’- a band comprising students of different schools, added by an equally energetic performance by ‘Attack’ - an Anti-Human Trafficking Group, all formed by the students of Amity & Mangalam and other Schools.

Forty Winning children (20 boys and equal number of girls) were awarded beautiful medals by the real life sporting heroes - National level Sportspersons like Vijaypal Singh Tomar, Dinesh Rawat, Sandeep Sarkaria, Naresh Maan, besides Mr. Satyendra Garg, the Joint. Commissioner of Police (Traffic). Mr. Tomar is the former Asian Masters Gold Medalist in Pole Vault and the only Indian holding national record holder in all three categories - Junior, Senior and Veteran. Mr. Rawat is an Asian Games Medalist in 400-meter athletics and Asian Master’s Gold Medalist. Mr. Sarkaria is an international level athlete and Mr. Maan is the former member of Indian Football Team.

First of its kind and the biggest Children’s Day event of this year, the Run and witnessed participation of more than 2000 children - mosaic of both under-privileged and public school children, NGOs like Salaam Balak Trust, Mendu Bal Gram, Nature, Child Line 1098, Khushi, schools such as Lotus Valley Public School, Birla Vidya Niketan, Raja Rammohan Roy Public School, Amity International School etc. A number of cultural presentations were staged by the little kids of Birla Vidya Niketan and the children of participating NGOs.

Such a colourful and grand program could be put up only by an organization of Prayas stature, which has grown into a movement and set up unparalleled network of projects across the country. Twenty three years after its inception on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1988, today, Prayas run 231 centres in 8 states/UTs i.e. Delhi, Bihar, Gujarat, Assam, Haryana, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Andaman & Nicobar Islands with Alternative Education, Vocational Training, Homes, economic empowerment, SHG-microfinance, health, sanitation and other programs accessing over 50,000 marginalized children, youths and women.