

Glimpses of Youth Festival 2018-19

Beginning the Cultural Confluence

10th June 2019, marked an unusual excitement in Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University, Nasik. The Yuva Mahotsav (Youth Festival) commenced with a sprightly rally making the campus thunder with the echoes of ***Hum Sab Ek Hain***.



The Yuva Mahotsav, organized as a year long culmination of all School for Social Change (SSC) initiative running in four different languages (Hindi, Odia, Marathi & Tamil), was a beautiful depiction and celebration of the diversity of India. With great energy and fervour, 250 participants from different corners of the country came to partake in the 4 days of hustle-bustle and festivities that lay ahead.

It started with all schools carrying a 'Peeda' marked as a symbol of flaws which exist in society, that they were asked to prepare before the rallies began. In this ritual practiced in central and North India, villagers collect things of no use, tie those on bamboo and take it outside the village boundary while singing their traditional songs with a belief that with the 'Peeda', all the troubles will also leave the village.

The campus echoed with the slogan of ***Naya Zamana Kaun Laayega? Hum Laayenge, hum Laayenge!***



Amit Bhai a mentor leading SSC from the front, formally inaugurated Yuva Mahotsav by throwing light on its vision: *the collective resistance and struggle we need to set out on, to spell out what is wrong and should be removed and what is the society we envision and would like to fight for.*

Drawing a parallel between the YCMOU (Mukt Vidyapeeth) and the School for Social Change initiative as both envisioning of bringing education to masses in creative ways to develop scientific temperament, and rationality among youth, Ulka Tai thanked the Vice Chancellor of YCMOU and energized the audience by celebrating the glorious history of Nasik, a fertile ground for many Jan Andolans and the birthplace of art forms.

Speaking about the YCMOU's main objective of educating people of all strata of the society, the Vice Chancellor emphasized the importance of youth festivals like this and with that positive welcome note, he formally opened the Yuva Mahotsav for all.



After that, a formal presentation was given by participants from different schools who shared their enriching experiences of SSC camps, each School making the hall roar in unison to - **अमू आखा एक छे!**

Changing the Pedagogy of Learning

With an impactful inaugural of the Yuva Mahotsav, the festivities saw the coming together of all the participants, to collectively engage in a constant learning process through various activities and sessions.



A renowned thinker and writer, Raosaheb Kasbe took a lecture where he talked about the increasing anarchy in the country and the plague of the widening gap between the rich and poor, atrocities against women, and an environment of fear.

Tushar Gandhi, great-grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, also took a session. He talked about the sad reality of India's freedom, about how we struggle as a society even after the departure of the British, how political parties divide people through propagating agendas, and how the essence of democracy, i.e to raise questions, is being lost.

A screening of the documentary film **Vivek / Reason**, directed by **Anand Patwardhan** was also organised. The participants grouped themselves according to their interests for the 6 sessions/workshops for activities of poster making, song making, social media, film making, theatre, and superstitions & science.

The two days of group work of different workshops saw people bustling around the campus, working hard to give in their best. The Make A Song group facilitated by Rahul Ram from the Indian Ocean band,

rigorously practised their music, while the theatre group under the skillful hands of Vinod Kumar from IPTA rehearsed their skit. Participants in the social media under the guidance of Abhijeet Gosavi and participants of film making with the supervision of Mohan Bhai, Prem bhai and Siddharth covered every part of the campus trying to record bytes on the various themes they were documenting. Participants of the workshop on Superstitions and Black Magic conducted by Dr Gorane and Shahji Bhosale from Andhsradha Nirmoolan, were trying to learn and demonstrate all the tricks the resource persons showed. The poster making participants unleashed their artistic side as they made posters on the different themes allotted, under the facilitation of Sandeep, Sachin and Yogesh.

Moderated and facilitated by Abeer Kapoor, a parallel session of Election game was organized for SRUTI fellows and karyakartas. A session was taken by Andhshradha Nirmoolan who wanted to bring to light the science behind the various superstitious practices of religious gurus performed to relieve their followers of ailments and troubles.

The four days long Yuva Mahotsav left no moment untouched of coming together for a collective celebration and cultural remniscence. Each of the days ended with all the participants joining for a night full of dancing, singing and sloganeering. Cultural performances created the perfect ambience for each night of rejoicing the comradeship and unison.



Convocation Ceremony

The culmination of the Yuva Mahotsav saw the campus immersed in beautiful colours with a display of posters, banners, and flexes of sangathans, slogans, and issues. The colour-coordinated t-shirts of the different schools added the final touch to the beauty of the entire event.

All the participants were facilitated with Participation certificates and jholas by Resource Persons. The schools with their previously prepared *peedas* rallied together zealously to the amphitheatre of the campus, shouting slogans and filling the air with joy. The open space of the amphitheatre served as the perfect setting for a night full of dance, music, theatre, and collective rejoicing. As the cultural performances commenced, the stage was illuminated by performances from Awadh Peoples Forum, DYAF, Tamil group, Barwani group, Marathi group, Odia group, Andhra Pradesh group.

Resource Persons shared their experiences of the Mahotsav and were facilitated followed by the display of skills and teamwork of the participants grouped in the different workshops. The theatre group facilitated by Vinod Ji from IPTA performed a thought-provoking skit on the problems of banking, corruption, and school functioning in the rural areas, as well as gender issues.

The Make A Song group, sang **Poore Desh Se Aaye Hain hum**, with the participants singing their parts in their languages and giving the entire composition a personal melodious touch. The evening was concluded with the screening of gripping short films made by the participants of the film making workshop on issues like water crisis, climate change and agriculture, and gender issues.

With one last round of sloganeering together, the Yuva Mahotsav was successfully closed, with everyone taking back home a bagful of memories of enriching experiences, new learning's and celebrations of amalgamation of different cultures and ideologies, and with a hope that **Naya Zamana Zaroor Aayega**.

