

## Embassy of Sweden Partners with Heritage International Xperiential Learning School to Engage Youth in Dialogue on Climate Change, Ahead of Stockholm+50

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Editorial Team



On Wednesday, May 25, 2022 Heritage International Xperiential School, Gurgaon, in alliance with the Embassy of Sweden, organized intergenerational climate talks to put across the voices of the youth ahead of the Stockholm+50. The event hosted at Heritage School was organized in partnership with Sweden Alumni from the Delhi chapter and Sweden Embassy. The initiative held in a line up to Stockholm+50 focused on fostering youth discussions on climate change and environmental protection, promoting intergenerational dialogue, raising awareness of environmental issues in South Asia and inspiring youth to take action in their local communities for environmental protection.

Stockholm+50 is a crucial international environmental meet, scheduled to be held in Stockholm, Sweden on 2 and 3 June 2022. This year's high-level global meet will initiate climate talks under the theme "A healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity." The international discourse will follow months of consultations and discussions with individuals, communities, organizations, and governments around the world, ensuring the wellbeing of current and future generations.

The event at Heritage International commenced with a welcome address from the, Spokey Wheeler, Director and Head, Heritage International Xperiential School, followed by the opening remarks of Gautam Bhattacharyya, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Sweden. The session progressed with the screening of the Stockholm+50 movie, which received an overwhelming response from the attendees. It was followed by an interactive panel discussion around "South Asian Youth Perspectives ahead of Stockholm+50." The students participated in the event, and the teacher moderated the session.

Along with the dialogue, a Seven Day Challenge was also launched by the Embassy of Sweden and Swedish Alumni, starting on June 1, 2022. The seven-day challenge was launched to encourage students to design a #MyClimateCommitment plan, framing a more sustainable way of eating, moving and living for seven days. The week-long challenge, whose submission deadline is June 10, will be evaluated by the Embassy personnel. Based on the impact and creativity of the challenges designed by the students, the Embassy will pick three winners on June 15 2022. Winners will be invited to the Sustainability Showroom in the Business Sweden office, New Delhi.

Commenting on the urgent need for collective action, Gautam Bhattacharyya, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Sweden, said, "It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to be here today, representing Sweden. Every morning when I get up, I say a few words, taught by my elders as a homage to this land, Mother Earth, seeking its forgiveness for treading on it. The words always keep me reminded of the fact that we are a part of this world, not its lord, whose resources are to be shared and by no means should be taken for granted. I wish the younger generation will be able to find a new way of living which is better and away from the old practices as a lot was wrong with those, which is more beneficial and wholesome for all the lives including animals and plants dwelling on the planet.

"Fifty years ago, in 1972, during the UN Conference on the Human Environment, in Stockholm, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi initiated something with other leaders which became a global environmental movement. Today, if we look back and analyze what we have done. I am afraid, not much good. We have really gone the wrong way. I think what we discussed today we also need to practice it, starting with a seven-day challenge. I promise to take part in that challenge, along with you all, to see how we can make everyday life better by altering our choices. I urge you all to not buy extra clothes, don't go for that extra trip unnecessarily, and don't throw or waste food. We can make a big change starting with small decisions", Speaking on Stockholm+50, he added.

Speaking on climate change and environmental protection, Spokey Wheeler, Director and Head, Heritage International Xperiential School, said, " There is a desperate need for us as adults to provide our children with a planet which they can inhabit and value. It's the younger generation that is going to achieve that, as our generation and the previous one have not paid adequate attention to this issue, maybe due to self-interest or simply due to lack of farsightedness. On the bright side, the younger generation is today part of a world where their ability to question and collaborate will prove to be very significant. Now times are changing, and I am delighted to see that conversation concerning these issues is beginning to happen. I would like to thank the Embassy of Sweden for promoting the dialogue and extending this opportunity to talk about and work towards a better future."