

International Youth Day - 12 August 2021

SMS, Meera Bagh commemorated the International Youth Day on 12 Aug- with "An open House"-an Event by, for, and of the youth.

Agenda on the Table was--"Youth for Truth-Right to Equality -a Myth in absence of Gender Equality with sp. focus on rights of the LGBTQIA community"

The session was moderated by one of our ex-students – Ms. Devanshi Mehta and attended by students of Class 12.

Ms. Mehta is currently pursuing Sociology Honours from Delhi University and has conducted various dialogues under the United Nations SDG campaign on gender sensitivity.

The session began with role of United Nations in protecting human rights of all people irrespective of their orientation.

"I appeal to all governments and societies to promote the values of tolerance and respect for diversity, and to build a world where no one has to be afraid because of their sexual orientation and gender identity." – UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Despite the fervent appeals under the aegis of United Nations the stark reality as per the reports of UNHRC is that the LGBTAI people are often among the most persecuted, marginalized groups at risk for violence and discrimination. All over the world, LGBTAI people are routinely subject to discrimination simply because of who they are; 70 countries continue to outlaw the LGBTQAI groups.

The moot issues highlighted in the highly interactive session were-

- basic understanding of the terms LGBTQIA
- Gender sensitization and Societal inclusiveness.
- Debate on -Even after abrogation of Section 377 there is lack of clarity with regards marriage laws in LGBTQIA community.
- Is Homophobia justified by societal norms? Do you think that it is a bit utopian to wish for a world where people accept "everyone" for who they are?
- Representation of LGBTQIA in the entertainment industry needs to be talked about simply because of the kind of influence that Bollywood has in this country.
- How can we make our School and Society a more inclusive space?

The key takeaways from the session were-To realize a world of equality and dignity for all, we will have to change laws and policies; we will also have to change hearts and minds. Every sector and every person can play a role, speaking out to remind the world that it should not be illegal to live your life as you are...The words of Desmond Tutu (Nobel Peace Prize winner) aptly express our sentiments

"We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all of the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome: black, white...rich, poor, educated, not educated, male, female, gay, straight, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God's family."