

MY VILLAGE MY PRIDE: A Glimpse of India's Heartland at NBB

14th November 2015, National Bal Bhavan, New Delhi

A glimpse of the heart of India's heartland at the inauguration ceremony of NCA and 126th Birth anniversary of Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru by Hon'ble Union Minister HRD

National Children Assembly and Integration Camp is an annual event which staff and members of national bal bhavan and affiliated bal bhavans look forward to every year. Last year NCA was the launch wagon for bal swatchhta mission. This year as well the camp which has been themed 'my village- my pride' was inaugurated by Hon'ble Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani.

"The National Children's Assembly and integration camp celebrates the integration of children from across the nation and world, which is a celebration of childhood colours, uniqueness, creativity, innocence, and the like. We at National Bal Bhavan take this responsibility seriously and are working towards the same. Every year we strive to give children a unique taste of national bal bhavan experience that remains with them for a lifetime. We have tried to enmesh the theme for this assembly –my village –my pride' in every aspect of nca-2015" – says chairperson, Smt Shallu Jindal .

It was indeed a worthy sight to see children of various state bal bhavans dressed in varied traditional attires of their villages, giving the traditional welcome to **Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani**. After visit of the model village created by artists of **National Bal Bhavan** on its ground, the minister launched the theme by releasing a chain kite carrying 126 kites in mark of children's day and 126th birth anniversary of Pandit Nehru ji. Throughout the duration of the program, the children were performing on various folk dance forms in the centre stage created as part of the village.

The minister then inaugurated the village exhibitions of the various states and thereafter proceeded to the Open Air Auditorium where she was received by the mass singing of approximately 2000 children with the song 'Bharat Ke Kone Kone Se Hum Bache Aaye Hai'.

The audience and guests witnessed a remarkable Village theme based cultural performances like folk dances, classical dances, folk songs, mime and orchestra on folk tunes.

After this Hon'ble Minister addressed the children, and at the outset she expressed her condolence at the loss of life in Paris due to the terrorist attack. She urged everyone to observe two minutes silence to pay respect to the victims of the attack. There was absolute silence in the auditorium packed with even small kids. The minister remembered last year's NCA theme-Bal swatchhta and appreciated the swatchhta song written and sung by bal bhavan children. She appreciated this year's theme and encouraged each child to take pride in his or her own village and not forget to mention the name of the village they belong to whenever they introduce themselves to others. She applauded National Bal Bhavan's mission in inculcating a journey towards the roots and traditions and preserving tangible and intangible heritage.

She stated that she is always delighted to witness the talent and artistic abilities of National Bal Bhavan children. She invited the Bal Bhavan children from across the country to participate in the Kala Utsav starting in December 2015. She also welcomed the children from Kabul and urged Bal Bhavan children to interact with them and learn from them about their cultural heritage.

Director- NBB, Dr Usha Kumari M.C. informed us that for the camp, one team each from affiliated Bal Bhavan was invited to showcase the uniqueness and cultural beauty of their own village. “i hope this year our camp will instil within children a greater sense of pride in their own villages and the nation as a whole”. During this one week of celebration at NCA children will get exposure to variety of workshops on traditional art and craft and lecture demonstration performances by renowned performing artists like Smt. Shovana Narayan, Smt. Madhavi Mudhgal, Smt. Darshana Zaveri, Smt. Anuradha Pal, Smt Pratibha Prahlad, Shri Shashadharacharya.

The NCA program is an annual National level program which is exclusively for member children of national bal bhavan and affiliated State Bal Bhavans. Founded in 1956 by shri jawaharlal nehru national bal bhavan is an institution which aims at enhancing the creative potential of children by providing them various activities, opportunities and common platform to interact, experiment, create and perform according to their age, aptitude and ability. it offers a barrier-free environment with immense possibilities of innovation, minus any stress or strain. bal bhavan’s endeavour is to provide opportunities that ignite curiosity and celebrate possibilities through immersive dynamic experiences in visual arts, scientific activities and physical activities and also to foster values that mould self-confident, holistic and responsible citizens of the world.