



# THE SARALA BIRLA ACADEMY ROUND SQUARE CONFERENCE FOR STUDENTS AGED 14 TO 18



## SBA ROUND SQUARE CONFERENCE - 2018

Founded in 1966, Round Square is a global network of more than 200 like-minded schools in 50 countries on six continents that share a passion for experiential learning and character education. The Round Square approach is built around six IDEALS of learning: Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service. Sarala Birla Academy became a member of the Round Square Community in 2011 and from 2013 onward, we have been hosting Round Square Conferences every year reflecting one of the pillars of the Round Square IDEALS.

Today, the world is facing many challenges and one of them is environmental pollution which occurs in many forms like air, water, soil, noise, light, to name a few of them. Therefore, Sarala Birla Academy Round Square committee chose "Let's Change Ourselves ... Not Nature" as the theme for this year's Round Square Conference which reflects the pillar - 'ENVIRONMENT' - one of the Round Square IDEALS. We, the students of SBA, took up the challenge of providing a platform for meaningful collaboration to contribute towards the tackling of the critically dangerous rising environmental pollution levels in the world. The Committee wanted to imbue the delegates with a sense of environmentalism and so ensured that the conference schedule contained more of activities to help conserve nature rather than having debates or talks on them.

Most of the delegates arrived at the SBA campus by the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> of October, 2018. The same evening, after the registration, the ice breaking session was conducted. During this session, the delegates were involved in various fun filled activities which helped them get acquainted with each other and facilitated a healthy interaction among them. These activities also helped them to gradually transform from strangers to friends.

On Friday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2018, the conference officially started with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp and the hoisting of the Round Square and the respective school flags by the delegates of the participating schools. The renowned Environmentalist and actor of the Kannada film industry, **Mr. Suresh Heblikar**, was the key note speaker for the opening ceremony. Mr. Heblikar has shown great concern and has championed the promotion and preservation of the environment. To popularise the subject of environment he has produced nearly twenty short and documentary films on various subjects like Water, Solar

Energy, Greening the Barren lands, Alternative Sources of Energy, Importance of Western Ghats [Biodiversity hotspots of India]. He has delivered several lectures at national & international institutions, Universities and other social and educational institutions in addition to being a panelist on major conferences & seminars with eminent scientists from the UN and the World Bank. Mr. Heblikar has also set up the environmental organisation called "**ECO-WATCH**" in 1998 which is very active in the area of afforestation, biodiversity conservation, water conservation, environmental education and energy alternatives. His speech instilled in each delegate a thought, which was a seed sure to turn into a tree of actions. He cited man's insatiable search for affluence as the sole reason for the disturbance of the environmental equilibrium and urged the youth to stop craving for 'more'. He spoke strongly against monoculture and asphaltting while keenly promoting the segregation of waste material. Mr. Heblikar also pointed out that economic growth can be constant only if the environment is sustained. With these thought provoking words, he set the tone for the conference and declared the conference open.

Thereafter, the conference photograph took place and the Barraza sessions were conducted. The delegates were divided into six groups to discuss and present their views on the theme- ENVIRONMENT. Various theme-related aspects were talked about and videos were also shown to enhance the knowledge of the delegates on the theme. These fruitful discussions led to a plethora of ideas. The barazzas were named in honour of places/resources to be conserved such as plentyfuel, atlantica and pacifica. Following this, the delegates were involved in an art activity, organised by the Art Department of SBA, called "**Hues of Nature**" where delegates were required to make paintings on cloths using acrylic colours to help understand the diversity of Mother Nature. These activities turned out to be adventurous and exciting, enjoyed by both the teachers as well as the students. Post the activity, all delegates went on a trek to a nearby temple built in the 11th century AD. Although it was a little exhausting, the view from the hill top was quite breathtaking. A cleanliness drive was also conducted during the trek. The final event of the day was the Principal's Dinner during which the delegates were entertained by the live band performance by SBA students. The highlights of the Dinner were the **FLASH MOB** and the photographs taken at the photo booth.

The second day of the conference started early in the morning with "**Yoga Session**" for the delegates. The Yoga session was thoroughly enjoyed by the students as they learnt the importance of Yoga in their lives to keep their body fit and fine. After breakfast a trip to the **Bannerghatta Biological Park** was organized for the delegates to educate them about of flora and fauna prevalent in our country. Thereafter, delegates visited three (lion, tiger and bear) safari and the Bannerghatta zoo. During the second half of the day a workshop on "**Waste Management**" was conducted by an NGO called "Environment Support

Group" explaining to the delegates the importance of three r's (reduce, reuse and recycle). It was followed by a session on composting called "**Feed the Soil**". The evening was a much awaited one as it was the jam night during which the delegates and the host school had many memorable moments to be cherished.

The third day of the conference started off with the Zumba Session in the morning hosted by Mr. Danny, a renowned actor and choreographer. The Zumba session was enjoyed by both teachers as well as students as they learnt new steps of aerobics and tapped their feet to energetic music. Post breakfast, the students assembled for the Treasure Hunt. After the rules were read out, the group leaders collected their first clues and as the whistle blew all the delegates dashed out of the assembly hall and ran helter skelter all over the campus searching for clues and finally the treasure! The specialty of the activity was that all the clues were based on environment and it was about one and a half hours by the time the Treasure Hunt came to an end.

Post lunch, the delegates were seated in the assembly hall for the closing ceremony. The colourful closing ceremony was the highlight of the afternoon where different schools put up cultural performances. This was followed by the distribution of certificates and mementos to the participating schools. Later, the Principal, Mr. Santanu Das, addressed the gathering, read out the conference statement and officially declared the conference close. This was followed by a video which was a sum up of the three days of the conference, which brought many to tears at the realisation that it was finally over. The ceremony came to an end with the vote of thanks by the School Cultural Captain.

The conference was attended by 130 delegates from thirteen different schools of India. Like all good things, the three day conference came to an end with lots of sweet memories to cherish and bonds of friendship to be maintained. In the evening and the next day, delegates departed for their respective schools hoping to meet again some day.