

## Activities 2017

The year 2017 started with a session on 'Peace and Values' with the Principal of Kamala Nehru College, Dr. Kalpana Bhakuni. The session held on 3rd April 2017 was aimed at providing an insight into the objectives and workings of Shining Network. The student members of SN prepared small couplets and citations on what values they cherish in their daily lives. To commemorate the event, a bookmark was released with the quote, 'Values are the pearls on the string of life'. The traditional 'Celebrating diversity through Chutney' event was held wherein Chutneys from different states of India were prepared by the students to understand the value of togetherness while respecting diversity for building a culture of peace. This session concluded with ten minutes practice of meditative silence.

On 18th September 2017, Mr. Nitesh Jain from the 'Rally for Rivers' campaign of 'Isha Foundation' interacted with students of Shining Network on the value of rivers in human life. 'Rally for Rivers' campaign aims to mobilize citizens of India to contribute in saving the rivers of India which are gradually waning. Mr. Jain elucidated the concept through various models like The Saturation Model, Compulsory Crop and Livestock Distribution Model, Consumer Awareness Generation Model, Production of Quality Plants Model, Special Economic Zone Model and lastly Convergence of Nodal Model. He reiterated the importance of rivers and requested the youth to become more aware and cognizant of the environment. He spoke of three simple steps namely Awareness, Policy Creation and lastly Implementation to nourish the rivers which have nurtured the civilisations over many centuries. The session concluded with planning of events in association with 'Isha Foundation'.

An interactive session on the 22nd of September 2017 was held to promote the concept of Poetry and Peace to create a beautiful window of tranquillity for a period of two hours. The chairs, arranged in a circle, were filled by the members and also friends from outside the society who had come to listen and experience this new tradition "Rendezvous with peace" that Shining Network had conceived for this year and years to come. Dr. Kalpana Bhakuni, Principal of the college and Dr. Geetesh Nirban, Convenor of the society shared their thoughts on peace which was followed by the members of the society reciting the poems and singing songs to showcase their ideas on peace. Shining Network had also held a creative writing competition ahead of the session. The winners of the competition were given an opportunity to recite their poems too. A peace pledge was taken by one and all present that solidified the motive of the meet. A bookmark was launched with the quote "Peace is the universal lyric of all of life's poetry". The session began and concluded with five minutes meditative silence.

To further the ideas of youth empowerment and value creation, the society in association with 'Isha Foundation' organised a 'Bookmark Making Competition' for the students of our college. The topic was 'Youth for Rivers', to commemorate the initiative started by the Isha Foundation under the aegis of Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev called 'Rally for Rivers'. The aim of this initiative was to create awareness and search for tangible ways of saving and protecting our depleting and endangered rivers. This event, held on the 25th of September 2017 in the Student Activity Centre was immensely successful and well received, seeing the enthusiastic participation of students from all courses and years. The participants worked with all their heart on their bookmarks and the judges after much contemplation decided upon the winning bookmarks. There were attractive cash prizes for the winners.

While understanding "Mindfulness is offering your genuine presence to yourself in every moment.", SN organised a workshop on 'Mindfulness' on 1st February, 2018 in collaboration with 'The Ahimsa Trust', a non-profit organisation which assists in cultural, social and educational work that endeavours to enkindle tranquillity and euphony. The resource person was Mr. Shantum Seth, a Buddhist practitioner, an ordained teacher in Zen tradition of the Vietnamese Master Thich Nhat Hanh. He was accompanied by his fellow practitioners and teachers of mindfulness, Ms Mala and Ms Rakhi.

The workshop was initiated with a song by the members of Shining Network. Mr. Seth enlightened students about how mindfulness practice can help mortal beings to become cognizant of themselves, and to ascertain the essence of living. Students were taught simple mindful exercises like breathing and body awareness. The session was concluded by walking and eating meditation activities.

The convenor, Dr Geetesh Nirban and Team Shining Network have been awarded with the prestigious 'Seed Grant' from Society of Philosophers in America (SOPHIA) to start the 'Shining Network SOPHIA Chapter' in India to initiate the interactive series on Public Philosophy to encourage the application of philosophical concepts in daily life and for public policy. This is the first international collaboration of Shining Network through which they plan to strengthen their value based activities for peace building using the western and eastern philosophical traditions thus creating a sub-branch of Shining Network as SOPHIA chapter in India through this international connect.