

Jain Heritage School students changing garbs to become world leaders for a day

What if you become a world leader for the day? This was the challenge posed to the students of Jain Heritage School (JHS) recently when the school authorities in collaboration with Inter Mind Global organised a workshop named “Young Global Leaders Programme”. The students from grades 6–10 simulated the UN Assembly, took up the role of representatives from various countries, and discussed a broad range of issues. The discussions did not shy away from controversial topics and the young debaters brought many current economical, legal, and political issues to the table from across the globe. The leadership and diplomatic qualities of the students were tested to the core, as they had to literally act as ambassadors of countries representing different economic and political ideologies.

Lakshya Mittal, a grade 9 student of JHS, was the youngest member of his committee and represented Lithuania, a small Baltic nation in Europe. Lakshya did extensive research on Google to get in-depth knowledge about the country he represented and its foreign relations. “It was a great experience for me as I got to know about the economy and foreign policies of a nation which I was unfamiliar with. I also learned that there is no point in arguing for the sake of arguing during the debates. I had to understand the perspective of other nations and consider their interests too,” he said. The main topic on the agenda of the UN members was to pass resolution on the Jammu and Kashmir border dispute between India, China, and Pakistan. The day saw another major crisis developing in the form of an ISIS threat that demanded a permanent seat in the UN; the young diplomats had to resolve the situation. The negotiation and diplomatic skills of the students were challenged again when they had to stop an imminent World War III from breaking out due to the power bickering between NATO and the CIS.

The model UN or mock simulation of the UN was a concept incubated by Harvard University initially as the Model League of Nations. The strategic thinking, teamwork, coordination, negotiation, drafting of documents, and problem-solving skills involved in these debates and simulated situations mould the intellectual acumen of students. It enables them to gain insights into the functioning and dynamics of the United Nations and give them perspectives on balancing national interest with the demands of international politics.