



The Sentinel

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Director's Message



*Mr. Atul Khanna, Director,
Strawberry Fields High School*

On behalf of Strawberry Fields High School, I welcome all our participants, special invitees and student leaders from schools pan India. Yes, this year the MUN is a virtual event which, thanks to technology and enthusiasm of the organising committee, could still be held without succumbing to the decision of not cancelling it. The two days will see active deliberations and a cultural performance, like we have every year. My compliments to each one of you and best wishes for a most fruitful set of discussions. Looking forward to the recommendations and next steps. Meanwhile stay safe, stay healthy and stay engaged with issues that matter.

Opening Ceremony

Courage in the Face of Adversity

The first online edition of the Strawberry Fields High School Model United Nations 2020 took off on a jovial note. The strangeness of an online forum did not seem apparent due to the warm ambience created by the soft score of Richard Clayderman in the backdrop and a warm welcome by Zorawar Singh, an alumnus of our School. We were fortunate enough to have the gracious presence of Former Chief of Staff General Ved Prakash Malik, who also served as the Army Chief during the Kargil War. He is the brains behind 'Operation Vijay', recipient of the Ati Vishishta Seva Medal, the Param Vishishta Seva Medal and author of multiple journals and books.



General V.P. Malik, Former Chief of Army Staff

We had the pleasure of listening to his rousing speech encouraging determination and resilience even during times of adversity. Spoken like a true soldier, General Malik said, "It's the man behind the gun that matters," articulating the need for quality leadership in all institutions, not just on the battlefield. According to him, good leadership is synonymous with high standards in value and ethics. This set the tone for his keynote address. He elaborated in great detail, on the importance of courage and its physical, mental and moral embodiment. Aligning perfectly with the ethos of the MUN he stated that courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition and taking hard decisions.

We were also delighted to hear from Dr. Mrs. Ranjana Malik who did her M.B.B.S from Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi. She served in the ONGC for 20 years and was the President of the Army Wives' Welfare Association. Emotions were running high as Dr. Mrs. Malik, a true humanitarian and philanthropist at heart recounted her experience of working with wounded soldiers and consoling families that had suffered great personal losses.

When questioned about the recent skirmishes that took place, earlier this year at the North-Eastern border, the General answered by stating that it reminded him of the intelligence failure that occurred during Kargil War. When asked to comment on the Kashmir conflict, he very aptly stressed on the fact that while he stands firmly against the violation of human rights, he does understand that the armed forces require legal cover while working in such a tense environment.

After an enlightening address by this distinguished couple and an interactive question -answer session, the stage was taken by the Secretary General, Nehmat Sandhu who declared the Strawberry Fields High School Model United Nations 2020 open!

By Chaharika Uppal & Paavna Pannu
Heads of Department - International Press

China is not the only Red Flag

‘Every country has the right to protect itself,’ as stated, rightly, by the delegate of China. This statement is fundamental in nature. It is extremely easy to comprehend. The complications attached to this issue however, gradually unraveled today, in the first committee session of the UNHRC.

Delegates representing the countries of the European Union also stated that China has infringed upon the autonomy of HK. However, India too, has revoked the special status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and has even established a full military state. Yet, it has successfully steered clear of such blatant accusations. The only difference between the two is that India finds its allies in the western world, and China, does not. Evident from the debates that took place in the committee sessions today, it all boils down to the inability of the Western World to accept anything less than Western “democratic” ideals. China, too, is a democracy that finds its roots in socialist values, and abides by them.

HK is an inalienable part of China. It is a local administrative region that comes directly under the Central People's Government and the Communist Party

Matters relating to HK remain China's internal affair. No other state has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, in such internal affairs.



Image Source: www.unhrc.com

The national security law is entirely aligned with the morals and values of Chinese constitution as well as the state. It is lawful, rational and reasonable as a national security measure whilst providing justice, protection against terrorism and upholding the rights of Chinese Citizens.

By Pankti Shah
Reporter - Xinhua News Agency

Disclaimer: The views expressed do not represent the views or wider sentiments of Strawberry Fields High School. They are written in the context of the simulation and do not intend to represent or speak on behalf of any individuals or organizations, and are solely inspired by views of individuals part of the conference. Views or discussions here do not intend to cause harm or offend current individual, political and religious views.

ECOSOC

Honey, I shrunk the economy!

The Economic and Social Council passionately deliberated upon the global economic slowdown and bankruptcy of firms worldwide stirred up due to the shockwaves of the Covid-19 pandemic. The International Monetary Fund has revised its global GDP growth estimate from 3.3% just 3 months ago to a contraction of 3%, creating an even more alarming situation than the financial crisis in 2008 and the Great Depression in the '30s.

The unprecedented ruin that bubbled out of the cesspool of our economy was pondered upon by the delegates. The crisis could be a catalyst for overhauling the world economic order or give way to the contradictory crossroads of its own decision making.

Although the ECOSOC was united in its stand against insolvency, the committee was torn between their approach to rectify the situation. On the one hand, the delegate of India proposed expansionary fiscal policies and relaxations, but on the other, the delegate of the United Kingdom insinuated that 'national protectionism was counterproductive'.



by Abhishek Rao

Moving back into the GSL, the policy of subsidizing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises was at odds with helping the bigger cash-strapped firms. Therefore, the committee urged countries to increase their threshold limit to benefit both sectors of the economy. The delegates concurred that Covid-19 pandemic had exposed the weak points of the US-China trade war and the inherent fragility of the global economy, along with resulting in the loss of numerous jobs.

For the welfare of citizens around the world, cutting bank interest rates was deemed a vital factor in the monetary policies. The delegate of Russia took a commendable stance and advocated that, "Contractionary policies should be used when growth rate of GDP of a country is negative." This policy is used when there is a high inflation rate and slow economic growth, contradictory to expansionary policies.

There was much debate about the US-China trade war conflict and the committee whirls a wave towards a more holistic approach to discuss topics like protectionism and the role of OPEC tomorrow. At this pivotal moment, a revitalized Economic and Social Council at the heart of networked, inclusive and effective multilateralism can help the delegates initiate reforms.

By Shaina Singh,
Reporter - Sputnik News

A Conference of Caucuses

The first committee session of the United Nations Children’s Fund began on a note full of vigor with the agenda of ensuring basic necessities for the welfare of children in Yemen, interspersed with a few glitches when it came to the selection of topics for the moderated caucuses. The session started off with a roll call which is customary to a typical sitting in the UNICEF committee. A motion was passed by the Delegate of Saudi Arabia to hold a moderated caucus dealing with increasing accessibility and quality of healthcare for children in Yemen which was accepted by a majority of the delegates.

The representative of Saudi Arabia went first and clarified the nation’s stance on the same by outrightly declaring Iran at fault for working hand in hand and in close conjunction with the Houthi terrorists in Yemen. The delegate went on further to issue a plea to all nations present and said, “The kingdom urges all member states to impose economic sanctions on Iran”, solidifying the stance of the member state regarding the agenda. Certain delegates opted for a neutral stance in the matter. The delegate of India being one such representative who explicitly stated that, “India has a neutral stance and considers both parties at fault.”



Image Source: www.unicef.com

The “anarchy of the Houthis” was shunned by a majority of the delegates and rightly so, as they have carried out a myriad of heinous crimes against the Yemenis people. The delegates came up with two solutions on tackling the Houthi regime, thus increasing accessibility of healthcare to children in Yemen, the first being cutting off all aid given to the militia, rendering them powerless and the second being imposing sanctions against countries that refused to do so.

The quality of debate went up by quite a margin in the latter half of the session when Points of Inquiry bombarded delegates from all possible corners. The delegates harped upon what their government had done as a part of resolving the conflict pertaining to the agenda. The session culminated with the proposition of another moderated. caucus directed towards the improvement of the education sector in Yemen.

By Ahaana Guleria,
Reporter - International Press

Racism in 2020? A Liberal Conspiracy

“Black people commit more crimes, it’s a fact,” said the delegate representing journalist Ben Shapiro, as he answered tricky questions in response to his opening statements.

The first session of the Citizen’s Dialogue of the United States of America (CDUSA), was dedicated to hearing, analysing, and then questioning the views of nearly 30 delegates on Police Brutality and Systemic Racism.

Democratic representatives present in the committee such as Michelle Obama (former First Lady of the United States), Nancy Pelosi (Speaker of the House of Representatives) and Joe Biden (presidential contender) pledged their support to the anti-racism movement and demanded justice and reforms. The delegate representing Biden, went as far as suggesting the payment of reparations to the black community, a move questioned by many. Most members declared their support for the Black Lives Matter movement, while neglecting to comment on the massive economic damage it caused, in already difficult times.



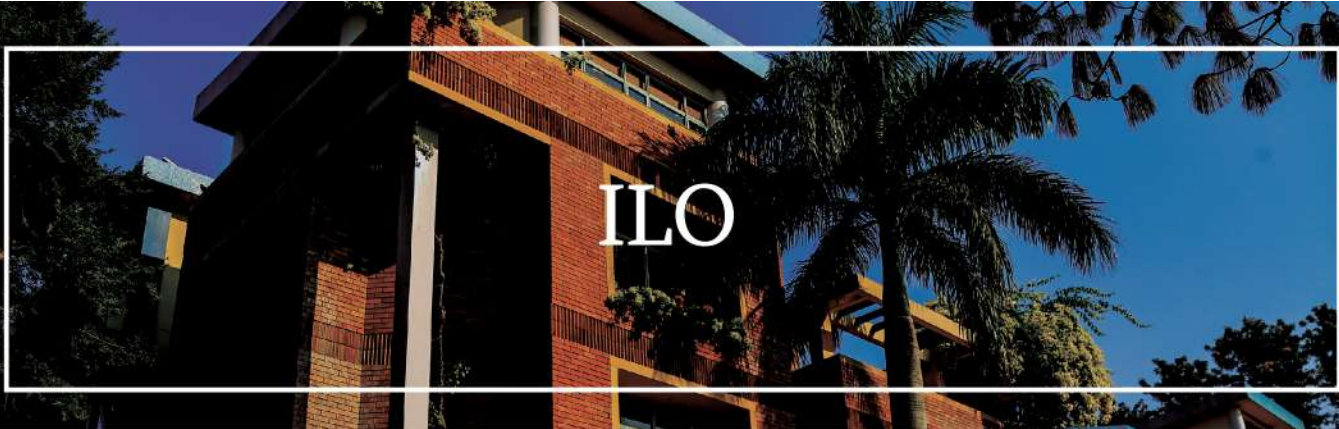
Image Source: www.bloomberg.com

The Conservatives, however, repeatedly questioned the existence of discriminatory practices today and supplemented many replies and examples. The delegate representing Ben Shapiro brought up data suggesting that police brutality is not a race issue as more white people fall victims to excessive force than black. Cyndi Hyde-Smith, the Senator of Mississippi, defended the need for strict policing in rough neighbourhoods, and President Donald Trump showed no regrets towards bringing in the Military, to prevent violent protests.

While many constantly demanded defunding of the police force, the Republican Delegates stood firmly against this plan of action and instead defended the Policing System, asking for stricter policies such as compulsory usage of body cameras while on duty. Despite emotional statements by the delegates representing Courtney Ross, the partner of the late George Floyd, and Michelle Obama, the Left was unable to provide proof of the existence of systemic racism, in our legislature today. Instead, their motives were questioned by Shapiro, as he doubted the sincerity of the democrats and wondered whether they were the ones being racist, using black people as merely a vote bank.

As the committee moved forward towards a moderated caucus, discussing the impacts and consequences of police brutality and systemic racism, the Republicans still maintained their stance. The notion that every problem in this country is related to racism is a liberal myth, propagated by the biased Media. While the excessive use of force by the police is an important issue, isn’t it time we move towards actual equality, and fight for the lives of All, not just Black Americans.

By Raeka Sharma,
Reporter - Fox News



A Lingering End

With chargers plugged in, ties knotted up and hair pulled back, the first online session of the International Labour Organisation commenced. Though all the delegates were pumped with energy, one could see a hint of nervousness on their faces.

With the Agenda being, ensuring the basic standard of living and human rights for the domestic and international labour, the delegates took up with the General Speaker's List with the delegate of Saudi Arabia speaking first. During The GSL the delegate of UAE said, "we have the labourers best interests at heart and are looking towards taking up viable and sustainable solutions to actually make a difference". While the other delegates exchanged similar views, the delegate of Brazil started her speech by empathising with the labourers by commenting, "Imagine working 16 hours a day and earning hardly enough to buy 3 meals and that to for only one person."

After the GSL the floor was open to motions though, the delegates had already decided upon a number of topics to cover in the moderated caucus yet they were not passing the motion to move into one. Finally after quite a while, the motion proposed by delegate of France was passed on the topic - Child Labour and Human Rights violation with respect to the agenda. During the moderated caucus there was intensive debate between the delegates of USA, Qatar and Syria, each presenting different views on the topic. During the debate the delegate of Qatar rightly stated, "NGOs should be set up and an effort should be made to educate the Children about their rights and inspection units should be set up to avoid violations of these rights." The heated debate between the delegates really added to the excitement of the committee.

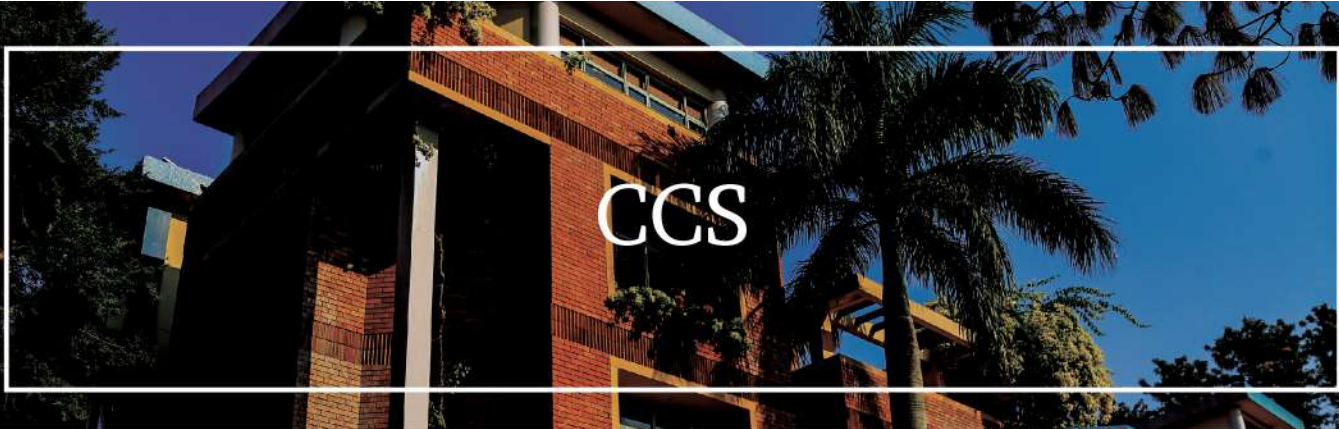
The overzealous Delegate of Turkey kept asking questions to every delegate and without fail left them speechless. The Delegate of Philippines honestly commented on their economic situation and how they are trying to combat the current situation with labourers in the country.

Though the committee seems to be headed towards plausible resolutions one can still wonder whether this lingering end does not fail the high expectations that today's sessions have created for tomorrow. However, I am of the opinion that the committee feels strongly for the agenda and will push forth to bring about the required change.



<https://foreignpolicyblogs.com>

By Kaira Mahajan,
Reporter - Aljazeera



Menaces from Home and Abroad

On August 5, 2020, a cyber attack had been reported on a server of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Bangaluru, which was said to have taken place on July 20, 2020. According to 'Arun Srinivasan', the author of the report which detailed the attack, the hackers obtained critical components of India's military satellites, cryogenic propulsion system charts designed by Indian Space Research Organisation and a scrapped navigation chip designed for the AGNI III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. On the basis of the severity and complexity of the attack, Arun Srinivasan was able to deduce that China was responsible for this attack and requested the Cabinet for funding and guidance in order to pursue his "hunch", which was later confirmed in a following report.

The (virtual) atmosphere of the committee was filled with an aura of tension and anxiety. As the first session of the committee commenced, the Cabinet's first order of business was to deliberate on the report sent by Arun and to determine the cause and exact origin of the attack. Statements made by the Chief of Air Staff, Director of the Intelligence Bureau and the honourable Home Minister Amit Shah showed that the data banks and servers of the DRDO are not stored online and could not have been accessed from the outside. They also made remarks that the now "rogue" data could be used by the Chinese to keep track on Indian military movements in Ladakh by taking control of India's military satellites, but also could be used by the Pakistanis to develop an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile.

The members of the Cabinet concluded that the data theft was an inside job which suggests that there was a mole within the DRDO, who may possibly be Arun himself. After receiving a background report of Arun, the Cabinet hesitantly agreed to work with him. They proposed a plan of action stating that six clandestine RAW operatives would be placed inside Arun Srinivasan's team with an external team to work alongside them and to conduct reconnaissance on Arun.



<https://www.dynamicciso.com>

This "horrendous attack on the sovereignty of our great nation", as stated by the honourable Finance Minister, will not be taken lightly. The Cabinet Ministers stated that they shall not indulge in any military actions, but shall resort to peaceful yet effective methods to get to the bottom of the situation.

By Uday Jagat,
Reporter - Republic TV

In Conversation With

Interview with Ms. Sangeeta Sekhon

The school has tried to inculcate the culture and ethos it provides in the MUN. Would you like to share your thoughts on the same?

Ms Sangeeta Sekhon : The school has always valued every individual, has had a democratic and fair approach, ensuring that we build a community that is characterized by mutual respect, equality and inclusivity. We have always worked hard to ensure that SFHS is a place where pupils find security and respect for themselves, their families, other people and their traditions. We ensure that each member of the school community respects others and is respected, takes part in the full life of the school, achieves his/her potential, has the opportunity to exercise choice and is allowed to express, reason and articulate thoughts freely.

The entire Organising Committee has worked very hard to make the MUN happen. What would you like to say about them?

It has indeed been one of the most challenging events to organize, given the pandemic situation and the completely virtual format. Without doubt, this organizing student body has met the challenge with finesse. They have exhibited great leadership skills and a high degree of independent working skills, planning each aspect meticulously, paying attention to detail. They were professional, creative, efficient and above all very receptive and responsive. They made for a great team exhibiting synergy through good delegation and allocation of roles and responsibilities and respecting each other's space and opinions. We are proud of them!

By Anoushka Prasad
Head of Department - International Press



Ms Sangeeta Sekhon, Principal
Strawberry Fields High School

Heads of Department - International Press

Beeya Jagat

Siya Ahuja

Kaveri Sharma

Chaharika Uppal

Paavna Pannu

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