

With an objective to bring the Yi members of all the chapters on a common platform to create bonding amongst them, to create avenues for members to exchange ideas on Yi and to motivate the members towards better understanding of Yi for effective engagement towards nation building, the Young Indian's National Retreat was held at Ooty on the 28-30 September 2007. This was the fourth retreat of the members, after the first one at the Upper Ganga in 2004, Karnataka in 2005 and Chittrakoot in 2006.

It was a blend of learning sessions, out door activities, a trek through the beautiful countryside of Ooty in the delightfully chill weather and above all the ideal platform for the members from various chapters to network and have fun.

The retreat started with the welcome remarks from Mr Shankar Vanavarayar, Chair, Young Indians National Retreat 2007 – 08 & Chair - Young Indians, Coimbatore Chapter following which Mr Jayadev Galla, National Vice Chairman, Young Indians spoke of the importance of cross chapter bonding. He said, "As members of Young Indians, we should prepare ourselves for leadership and create networks of like minded people. Such activities widens one's horizons and creates a lot of teamwork", he opined. He said that the informal interaction and sharing of ideas and thoughts while bringing in the element of fun into the entire program provides the right blend

The first session was by Major T K Pant, Recipient of Shaurya Chakra, One of India's highest gallantry Award. "The battle hardened selfless soldiers are placed in circumstances which has far reaching consequences in their lives to protect the nation" he told. He concluded the session by pointing out the three foundations of the Indian Army, which are Namak –true to one mother land, Naam – upholding one's good name and Nishan – loyalty to ones country. Mr Ashwin Chandran, Immediate Past Chair, Yi [Coimbatore Chapter] & National Co-Chair, Education Committee, Yi gave the opening and the closing remarks for the session.

The second day started with the "Me, Myself and Young Indians" – An experiences session where Mr Narayan Sethuramon, Immediate Past National Chairman, Young Indians gave the opening remarks and shared his experiences with Young Indians. He traced the beginning days of Yi and how the movement has gained momentum over the years. He also shared his vision for Yi. The session saw Mr Ashwin Chandran, and Ms Bhairavi Jani, Past Chairperson, Young Indians National Retreat - 2007 & National Finance Chair, Young Indians sharing their experiences in Yi. This was followed by members from various chapters talking for a few moments about their experiences in Yi. This platform was an excellent one in terms of sharing and cross chapter bonding. Ms Gayathri Scream, Chairperson, National Committee, Young Indians moderated the session and set the tone for the members to share their experiences, while Mr Jayadev Galla summed up the session. He again said that it was time for the leadership role of the members of Young Indians and stressed that all chapters must do their best to engage the members and the students.

The Breakthrough team from Bangalore took over the program and led the members through a variety of activities designed to look into one's behavior. There were activities, which had some learning tips and others,

which was pure FUNN (Functional Understanding Not Necessary). Each activity included some amount of thinking and the same activity was performed in many different ways that was as different as day is from the night by the various teams that were formed. Each team tried to outwit the other and all thoroughly enjoyed the activities. Spider web, walking on the ropes tied between the trunks of trees, placing shoes the farthest distance by standing behind a common point as teams, pulling a log of wood as a team without their feet touching the ground and number games kept the members enthused and engaged, at the same time making them work as a team.

In the evening, Dr B K Krishnaraj Vanavarayar, Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan [Cbe Kendra] spoke on India at 60 -, "The role of Young Indians in the future". He spoke on preserving the Indian culture and urged the members to stand up for their rights. He spoke strongly against the inequality of income rampant in India and spoke on the importance of sharing amongst all. Mr Rohit Rajendran, Cochair, Young Indians [Coimbatore Chapter] gave the opening and the closing remarks for the session.

The third day morning found the members on a 6km trek. The way was picturesque with hundred-year-old Eucalyptus trees, velvety mosses and hoof marks of Wild bisons. Following the trek, there was a learning session by Dr M R Srinivasan, Former Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission on "India at 60- Past, Present & Future". He spoke on his experiences on the Indo US nuclear pact at length and clarified the questions of members. Mr Srinivasan spoke on the future of atomic energy in the world and the ideas that India can follow.

Dr G Lakshmi pathi, President, Coimbatore Humour Society took over the last session to give the audience some great time filled with his humour and laughter. Amidst giggles and guffaws, he ridiculed the latest trends in teleserials and the newspaper cartoons, "How not to tell a joke", and he gave some good pointers on this subject like, not beginning by saying that I am going to tell a joke, always making sure its not a very old joke, being brief, making the punch line really funny, not laughing too much on your own jokes, telling the right joke at the right place, not explaining the joke and that the final climax should not be told at the beginning!!.

Mr Shankar Vanavarayar gave the closing remarks for the session. He thanked all involved for their inputs, which made the 4th National Retreat of Young Indians a very memorable one. The retreat was attended by 50 Yi members from various Yi chapters and the feedback that all of them gave unanimously was, it was great!!!