

## **‘We need views and critiques of the youth to correct mistakes of earlier generations’: Heidi Wetz-Kubach**

The Partners for the Future (PASCH) Project organized the three-day event to create a network between young learners and local, national and international partners in the field of sustainability.



More than 110 students between the age of 14 and 16 years

attended the inauguration of the Youth Congress 2019 — Conference on Environment and Sustainability at Goethe Institut, Max Mueller Bhavan, Boat Club Road on Sunday morning.

The Partners for the Future (PASCH) Project organised the three-day event to create a network between young learners and local, national and international partners in the field of sustainability. “We are all aware that we need to preserve our planet. Now is the time we can achieve something, but only when we act together,” said Heidi Wetz-Kubach, director, Goethe Institut, as she addressed the students.

She spoke of the need for the youth to learn as many new ideas as possible to lead sustainable lives. “We need the views and critiques of the youth to correct the mistakes of earlier generations,” she said. She narrated an incident about her daughter, in which her daughter taught her to lead a sustainable lifestyle by avoiding bottles.

“You are born in the digital age, where you can use your ideas and creativity for subjects like waste management and come together at the global level,” said Marja Einig, German Deputy Consul General Mumbai, German Consulate Mumbai.

Over the next two days, people from different fields will conduct interactive workshops to sensitise students about environmental, economic and social sustainability and train them to take up related projects. At least six parallel workshops addressing the issues and concerns of sustainability will be conducted.

“Waste is a man-made concept that never existed in the past,” said Dr Binish Desai, who held a workshop. Desai said that nature is no longer able to break down the complex materials created as a

result of advancing technology. He said even paper isn't completely recyclable and only 40-60 per cent of the recycled paper is turned into paper again.

Desai, who was inspired by the cartoon 'Captain Planet', said his aim is to cut down waste. Over the years, he encountered waste from different industries and created a "salon" for different types of waste to be converted into eco-innovations. From building bricks to phone cases, he has created a wide range of eco-friendly innovations to lead a sustainable lifestyle.

Other workshops at the Congress include 'Fair trade and sustainable development goals' by Aileen Böckmann, a theatre workshop titled, 'What matters most?' by Constantin Hochkeppel, 'Participative governance' by Aneetha Gokhale Beninnger and Lawrence Siddhartha Beninnger, 'Waste-Water-Wildlife' by Arun Krishnamurthy and Sanjay Prasad and a horticulture workshop by Dr Shankar Laware.