

# News story: India's young people heralded for outstanding success

34 young people from nine schools and organisations across India were recognised and presented with a top international honour after receiving their Gold Award from the International Award for Young People, India.

The Awards were presented at the Gold Award Ceremony held at the India International Centre in New Delhi on 7 February 2018, by His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex, Chair, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation.

His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex said:

It has been a great honour to meet such inspiring young people, hear about their Award journeys and celebrate their achievements.

Achieving your Gold Award is not an easy task – it requires commitment, tests your resilience and challenges you to step outside your comfort zone. But it also opens up many opportunities for young people and enables them to be their own agents of change, both for themselves and their communities.

Kapil Bhalla, National Director of the International Award for Young People, India, said:

The Award helps India's young people to challenge themselves, experience life and find their purpose, passion and place in the world. The Gold Award challenges participants over 18 months and more, in five areas – physical activity, skill development, service to community and by taking them outside of their comfort zone, through an adventurous journey and residential project.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a global, non-formal education framework which challenges young people to discover their potential and celebrate their achievements. It operates in more than 130 countries and territories around the world, helping to inspire over 1.3 million young people every year.

## **Further information**

The International Award for Young People, India – also known as The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – is the world's leading youth achievement Award, available to all young people aged 14-24, regardless of their background, culture, physical ability, skills and interests.

It is delivered around the world by schools, colleges, universities, employers, social clubs, uniformed and non-uniformed youth organisations, young offenders' institutions, religious organisations, sports clubs and other civic organisations.

Founded in 1956 by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, the Award enables young people to learn, develop and thrive through non-formal education, equipping them for life.

It challenges participants, pushing them to their personal limits and helping them to discover they are capable of so much more than they ever thought possible.

Since its launch over 60 years ago, millions of young people have participated and received Awards, with millions more benefiting from its impact in communities around the world.

In India, the Award was first introduced in 1962 and has since equipped over 100,000 young people and is delivered in more than 260 Award units, schools, universities, community organisations etc.

In 2017 alone, more than 42,000 participants were doing the Award programme in India.

The Award in India also has a strong commitment to work with young people who are considered at risk or marginalised; those with social, physical or economic challenges. The Award aims to ensure at least 20% of all enrolment encompasses young people from these backgrounds.

The International Award for Young People has established key partnerships with NGOs working within the marginalised youth sector, including rural and urban migrants with economic and social challenges and young people with special needs.

The Duke of Edinburgh's [International Award Foundation](#) is a registered charity in England and Wales (1072453). The Foundation's headquarters are in London and it has regional offices in the Americas, Africa, Asia Pacific and EMAS (Europe, Mediterranean and Arab States).

## **Media**

For media queries, please contact:

Stuart Adam, Head,  
Press and Communications  
British High Commission,  
Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110021  
Tel: 24192100; Fax: 24192400

Mail to: [Asad Mirza](mailto:Asad.Mirza)

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## **[News story: Update on investigation into Whitstable oyster farm activity](#)**

The Marine Management Organisation has provided an update on [the investigation it began in early 2017](#) under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This related to alleged unlicensed depositing of oyster trestles on a privately owned area of Whitstable Beach by the Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company or its manager Mr Green.

After investigation and careful consideration the MMO has concluded there was insufficient evidence to prove a criminal offence in relation to its remit under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The MMO licensing team has also considered the facts and circumstances of the deposit of trestles on Whitstable Beach and has concluded based on an [independent navigational risk assessment commissioned by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency](#) that the array of trestles do not currently constitute an obstruction or danger to navigation. This activity benefits from an exemption relating to shellfish propagation and cultivation under [the Marine Licensing \(Exempted Activities\) Order 2011 as amended \(Article 13\)](#).

The MMO is dealing with the issue [in line with its compliance and enforcement strategy](#) and does not intend to take further, retrospective legal action.

The MMO has a difficult task in managing competing uses of the marine area and appreciates there has been much public debate about the issue. It previously met with a number of local representatives, including the former MP for the area, on the matter. As it is important that the MMO carries out its duties and obligations impartially and fairly it did not feel it appropriate to open this process to a wider audience during an ongoing investigation.

Whilst this investigation has concluded the MMO will continue to monitor the situation and consider issues raised on a case by case basis.

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