

ISHITA KATYAL OF VIBGYOR HIGH BALEWADI OUTSHINES AT THE TED YOUTH CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK.

SHE BECOMES THE YOUNGEST INDIAN TO DELIVER A TALK



"WHAT DO you want to be when you grow up?" Like every other kid in an average Indian household, Ishita Katyayal too was inundated with this age old question by guests visiting her house. But she didn't want to wait too long to be someone; she wanted to make an instant impact.

And her dream came true on Children's day, when she became the youngest Indian to deliver a talk at the TED Youth conference in New York. A student of VIBGYOR High School, Balewadi, Ishita delivered her talk titled 'What do you want to be now', challenging the system which thinks children are too small to make any difference. Her 4-minute speech received a huge applause from the crowd.

The TEDx Program is designed to help communities, organizations and individuals to spark conversation and connection through local TED-like experiences. Ishita's journey with TEDx began earlier this year, when she visited an event organized by TEDx Pune, founded in 2009.

"She enjoyed the sessions thoroughly. After the event, she took the initiative and asked the organizers if she could also be a part of their team. The response from the organisers was positive; however, the only condition was that she had to pass two rounds of Skype interviews, conducted by Global TEDx volunteers. She cleared both the rounds to become the youngest organizer of TEDx youth events in the Asia-Pacific region "said Ishita's mother Nancy Katyayal.

As a youth organizer, Ishita successfully organized the first TEDx event in her school on February 7. When the opportunity to go to New York came, she grabbed it "She is very clear about what she wants. She didn't hesitate for even a second. At the main event, when she stood on the stage to speak, I felt nervous because she was the youngest and had to speak without holding any paper in her hand. But she spoke well" said Nancy.

Ishita admitted that she was a bit nervous when her name was announced, but said that as soon as she went on stage, everything became normal. "When I finished my speech, I was relieved because it was exactly how I imagined it to be. It was midnight in India, but my friends and relatives called me after the talk to convey their best wishes" said the fifth grader.