

**World Water Day-2015 Celebration by India Water Partnership (GWP-India) with the support of Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 at Ashoka University Campus**



**On Dias from left: Dr.AnantSudarshan, Mr. Manoj Misra, Mr.Rajender Singh, the Water Man of India & Chief Guest, Mr.VimlenduJha and Dr.VeenaKhanduri**

India Water Partnership (GWP-India) associated with Ashoka University, Sonapat (Haryana) for celebrating World Water Day. Dr.VeenaKhanduri, Executive Secretary, GWP-India participated as one of the Panellists in the Panel Discussion on **“Water - A Key to Sustainable Development”** organized on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 at Ashoka University Campus. The other panellists were; Mr.Rajendra Singh (Water

Man of India) who was also the Chief Guest of the event; Mr. Manoj Misra- Former IFS & Executive Director, PEACE Institute and Mr.VimlenduJha - Founder, Swechha. In the workshop, 150 copies of Briefing Note “In support of a Dedicated Water Goal” prepared by GWP was circulated. Mr.HimanshuShekhar, University Student and a member, World Youth Water Parliament facilitated the event.

Prof.Rundrangshu Mukherjee, Vice-Chancellor of Ashoka University welcomed the august gathering.

The event began on a high note with the Chief Guest’s address,Mr.Rajendra Singh. He pointed some of the ground realities of water related problems and their causes. He stressed the pure essence of water and its inevitability on the planet. Urging the audience to play an active role, he presented certain potential areas where we as the students could certainly help for water conservation activities.



**On Dias from left :Mr.Rajender Singh, Mr.VimlenduJha and Dr.VeenaKhanduri**

The gravity of the problem was underlined as he asserted that the next World War shall be fought over water. What stood out in his speech was his approach to dealing with such problems, accentuating the need for being aware and assertive but not 'aggressive.' This glimpse of a Gandhian philosophy added to the charm with which he managed to evoke the interest of the audience.

The address was immediately followed by Dr. AnantSudarshan, Professor of Environmental Studies at Ashoka University introducing the panel members to the audience. Serving as the moderator for the discussion, Dr. Sudarshan contextualised the discussion mainly in terms of inadequate access to potable water. Dr. VeenaKhanduri stressed the need for sustainable solutions that involved the use of 3R's i.e. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle to address the problem of shortage of water. She also highlighted that as diverse stakeholders compete for the common resource, each one plays an important role in contributing to as well as sharing the impacts of the water risks. Hence integrated approaches by building institutions and supporting partnership that work across sectors need to be strengthened. At the same time involvement of local communities and stimulating the stakeholders engagement is very necessary.

Mr.VimlenduJhaproposed a more aggressive approach that involvedquestioning the government and development authorities. Criticising the unplanned urbanisation and inefficient sewage plants, he commented that the war over water has already begun as some cities experience serious shortages of water. According to Mr Manoj Mishra,the sole solution to all the problems is to let the rivers flow.

At the end, the panel also showed students the silver lining in the cloud as they pointed out ways through which studentscould help.

**Ashoka University World Water Day Celebration**  
 17 March 2015 6:00-8:00 p.m Multi-purpose Hall

**Water-A Key to Sustainable Development Panel Discussion**

**Chief Guest**  
 Dr. Rajendra Singh  
 Magasayay Awardee  
 Chairman-Tarun Bharat Sangh

**Keynote Speaker**  
 Jairam Ramesh  
 Member of Parliament  
 Economist & Author

Sehail Haslam  
 Historian & Film Maker  
 Founding Trustee-SAHMAT

Dr.Veena Khanduri  
 Executive Secretary  
 India Water Partnership (IWP)

Daniella Bestrom Couffe  
 Communication Manager  
 UNWater

Manoj Mishra  
 Former IFS Officer  
 Executive Director-PEACE Institute

Vimlendu Jha  
 Founder-Swechha