



Build India Group

- **A good citizenry initiative for nation building**



Organisation

- Build India Group (BIG), a Delhi based civil society conceived and founded in 2008 by Biraja Mohapatra, a journalist turned advocate and supported by a multi-disciplinary core group drawn from diverse professional areas.
- BIG works through a nation-wide network of volunteers and some educational institutions as cause partners.
- BIG organization's administrative and financial structure is managed from voluntary participation and contribution of members and supporters for it's various programmes across the country.
- BIG works on a visionary Nation Building process and researched on the ways to address some of the core issues ailing the country like corruption and terrorism through an affirmative movement i.e. inculcating good citizenry and belongingness to the country and its constitution.



BIG Concept

- A nation's health depends upon its quality of citizens. BIG aims to achieve the following objectives through a wider participation of all citizens.
 - Promoting a sense of Indianness among all Indians.
 - Ensuring all Indian repose faith in the rule of law and constitution.
 - Fostering social harmony through unity of national identity and purpose.
- BIG proposes a model exercise in which citizens commit to keep country's interest paramount in their thoughts, words and actions in a simple, effective, entertaining and inexpensive manner to cultivate good citizenry.
- BIG aims to engage the student community to champion and propagate the message.
- Educational institutions facilitate the process as Cause partners involving students in the celebration of Pledge festival with individual and group actions.



National Pledge

- BIG envisions a National Day, a National Festival to celebrate in unison at all corners of the country with a National Pledge that binds people emotionally and commits them to a national character.
- National Pledge is drafted in 15 Indian languages with identical sentiments weaving simplicity of words, emotional appeal and national purpose in a manner that makes the rendition a joyful experience.
- National Pledge is conceived as a national Celebration that integrates into our faith system like any important festival that continues through generations with only distinction of being the festival that celebrates Indianness.
- Rendition of Pledge would be accompanied with symbols and rituals as per culture and religion like bang on the gong, ringing the bell, blowing the conch, crashing of cymbals that gives a message and joy at the same time.
- The book “My Call” by Biraja Mahapatra gives the conceptual framework of the BIG movement and the long term goal it aspires for the country.

The Pledge

***We the people of India today,
Do solemnly Pledge ourselves,***

***To the service of our nation,
With honesty, sincerity and commitment,
Always keeping our nation's interest paramount,***

***In all that we think, do or say,
For the greater glory of this land.***



BIG Journey so far..

- BIG started its journey on the 3rd Saturday of January, 2008 (January 19, 2008) with 1st public rendition of this Pledge when the BIG members along with many school students took oath of allegiance to the country and constitution.
- BIG is celebrating Citizens Pledge Day on the third Saturday of January every year for the last 5 years. The main event happens in Delhi with many schools and colleges participating across the country, celebrating in many different ways with lots of activities. A rider is given to the organizers that they must not hurt any one's religious sentiments.
- BIG has also organised several programmes and workshops on issues relating to corruption, terrorism and the relevance of promoting good citizenry.
- BIG outreach has increased manifold during the last 5 years with voluntary participation of renowned intellectuals of the country, educational groups, bar associations and thousands of individuals.



Participation and Support

- BIG gets active support from Institutions like DAV group of Institutions, Aditya Birla Public School, Chhatisgarh, SCS College, Puri, Odisha, Makhanlal Chaturvedi University of Mass communication, Bhopal, MP, Apeejay Group, City Prince Public school, Delhi, Mewar University, Sun Valley at Vaishali in Uttar Pradesh, Angel MHS School, Tamilnadu and many other institutions across the country.
- Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, Delhi, Supreme Court Bar Association, Delhi High Court Bar Association, CAT Bar Association of Delhi have officially supported and celebrated the Pledge festival among all their members.
- Justice AK Pattnaik of Supreme Court, Justice Kailash Gambhir, Justice PK Bhasin of Delhi High Court, Ram Jethmalani, Gandhiji's Granddaughter Smt Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, Sr advocates AS Chandihoke, Rakesh Khanna, Surat Singh among others have extended support, participated in different festivals.
- Salman Khurshid, Law minister, Gol has endorsed the BIG philosophy and administered the pledge in the 4th edition of Pledge festival.



Involving Students

- A recent HT-Core survey in Aug'12 mentions a whopping 74% among teen students surveyed, feels it OK to be dishonest if that makes them successful. A dangerous trend for the future of the country.
- BIG model involves students at all levels an estimated 25 crore in India to take and celebrate the Pledge and internalize the meaning and spirit of it through a unique **write-recite-commit** methodology.
- Students are asked to write the pledge in their own handwriting, encouraged to prepare a poster, an art or placard on their idea of the nation and its issues. On the Pledge Day, students come with their Pledge, recite in unison with their teachers and sign their pledge as an affidavit.
- Students also add cultural and other activities on nationalism as the theme to mark the Pledge Day occasion memorable.
- Students' creativities are displayed in common for all to see, enjoy and reflect.



BIG Experience with Students

- Principals and teachers of Schools have expressed the Pledge Day as the most exciting event for their students as many activities are bundled on the nationalistic theme in which students express their love and commitment to the country and anger and frustration on issues like corruption and terrorism.
- Students have generally shared the National Pledge concept with their parents and families and got them involved in their creative activities. This ensures the participation of a large population.
- Students express taking pledge for the country with a symbolic posture of head up and shoulder high extended hand as the most thrilling experience and give them the sense of worth and identity as Indian.
- At many instances students have shared their Pledge idea and experience with their parents and the Do's and Don'ts learnt to be a good Indian citizen.



The Suggestion

- BIG has show-cased the ability of the concept of National Pledge and the power of involving students in a nation building exercise. This needs to be broadened with participation of all students of this country.
- BIG plans to present a Delhi pilot in which all students of Delhi can participate through their educational institutions with leadership of Govt. of NCT, Delhi.
- Ms. Shiela Dixit, CM Delhi has been approached with the concept to lead and administer the Pledge, and she has shown keenness in taking the Delhi pilot ahead and making it a case for other states to follow.



The Outcome

- A National Pledge for the Country
- A National Day
- A National Festival distinct from religious festivals.
- A National movement to cultivate good citizenry.
- Attaching a sense of pride to the Indian identity
- Unleashing societal contempt against corruption and terrorism.
- Facilitating creation of quality leadership in the nation's polity.





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Jai Bharat

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