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Indian youth brigade set to make waves at Copenhagen

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Even as the developed and the developing countries indulge in nuanced negotiations over how deep the binding cuts in Green House Gas emissions should be at the UN climate change convention at Copenhagen beginning December 7, a bubbly young Indian delegation is all set to make waves.

“All their hard bargaining to stabilise the quantum of GHGs in the atmosphere and prevent man-made climate changes is after all for the youth and the future generations and we plan to give our perspective”, K. Chaitanya Kumar, leading the youthful green brigade, told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

A computer science graduate from Hyderabad, he heads the 20-member Agents of Change (AoC) delegation to the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The AoC delegation of the Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN), an NGO, comprising key leaders in the youth climate and environmental movement from diverse backgrounds would launch a series of outreach and media campaigns designed to engage young Indians in the international climate negotiations and inspire them to take action.

The delegation includes Leela Raina, Economics honours student from Shri Ram College, Delhi. Her recent blog ‘Why I won’t date an Annex 1 guy’, a funny analogy mirroring the stance of developed countries created ripples in the Bangkok Climate Change Talks.

Others are equally smart. Aniruddha Sharma doing his PG from IIT Kharagpur, is an active member of ‘Clean Techies Around the World’. Saleem Khan is pursuing a Doctoral degree programme at the Centre for Climate Change and Adaptation Research, Anna University, Chennai. Swetha Stotra Bashyam, studying BSc at St. Francis College for Women, Hyderabad and a gymnast, heads Prakriti Club. Linkesh Diwan, B. Tech (Mech) final year student of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapetham, Kerala, is working on a windmill project. Swati Hingaroni works with Sanctuary Asia.

“We may not be able to make or break a climate change deal on binding emission cuts but we want to act as a ginger group from the sidelines and let our voices be heard. No change is possible without the youth”, said Mr. Kumar. Innovative actions include presentation of “Fossil of the day” award to ‘deal-breaking country delegate’ with Jurassic Park score played in the background.

The young Indian delegates will write a daily blog on their experiences engaging the youth on the issues debated on the conference floor. The blog includes a photo gallery as well as regular short video diaries from delegation members to be uploaded through a customised You Tube channel. This content will be shared on the social networks, Facebook and Twitter.

Base camps will be set up across the Indian cities to facilitate information flow from Copenhagen. These camps will serve as the public fora for debates, exposition of the arts and music performances on the theme of climate change.

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