

# People run against drug abuse

by OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, June 26: Just a couple of months back hundreds of them gathered at the India Gate with candles in their hands screaming for justice in Jessica Lall murder case. Then they braved water cannons and batons at the same venue protesting against the reservation policy just a few weeks ago. And once again scores of them — the people of Delhi — assembled in front of the historical monument on Monday urging humanity to stay away from the drugs and embrace a healthy

lifestyle. Commemorating the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, people from all walks of life and of all ages took part in the race against drug abuse on Monday morning at the India Gate. Organised by the department of social welfare of Delhi government, the two-hour long event carried across the message to the general masses against drug abuse to eradicate this menace.

The enthusiastic participants also included a group of senior citizens of Triveni Apartments at Sheikh Sarai Phase — I with a couple of them even

suffering from arthritis and other old age problems. "So what if I could not participate in the marathon. At least my presence contributed to the crowd that has turned up in such huge numbers for the noble cause," remarked Mr S.P. Wadhavan, crippled by inflammation of joints. "Everybody should avoid drugs so that we can think in the right direction for own upliftment and also that of the society.

Recently, the high-profile drug abuse case hitting the headlines has shown how drugs not just ruin the health but also bring

bad name to the family," he said.

However, Mr and Mrs Luthra, participating for the second successive year, felt that the authorities would do well to take the message to obscure corners of Delhi such as Jehnagirpuri which accounts for most of the drug-addicts in the capital. Delhi health minister, Yoganand Shastri, Union minister, Mr Oscar Fernandes and former Asian marathon champion, Sunita Godara were also present at the occasion.

Mr Joginder Singh and Ms Reena were adjudged as marathon winners.



**RUNNING FOR A CAUSE:** People take part in the "Race Against Drug Abuse" on the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking at India Gate in New Delhi on Monday. A photograph by Pritam Bandyopadhyay