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Fourteen-year-old Nithin H A from Arameri village in Kodagu who received the Hoysala Bravery award for rescuing his friend, Sufiyan, from drowning has only one regret. "I could not save Salahuddin who had also fallen in."

The two boys had accidentally fallen into the pond when Nithin acted swiftly, extending his umbrella and pulling Sufiyan in. Unfortunately, his umbrella broke and he could not rescue Salahuddin.

Nithin was presented the award at a ceremony organised by the Department of Women and Child Development in Jawahar Bal Bhavan, where children from across the state were felicitated for their achievements.

Four other children- Sukanya K S from Bagepalli, Chiranth D R from Shikaripur, Shreyas N Rao and Shashikumar G M from Mysuru- were conferred with the Hoysala and Keladi Chennamma awards for their presence of mind to save the lives of others. They each received a cash prize of Rs 10,000, a memento, citation and a medal.

Exceptional talent in the fields of art, sports, music, culture, innovation and scholastics was recognised through the Exceptional Achievement Award presented to 17 children, who had been recommended by the state government for the National Award.

Seema Ningappa Shettar from Indiranagar, Bengaluru, realised that rural schools lacked funds for lab equipment like microscopes. "In the regular microscope, only one person can view the specimen at a time. So I made a digital microscope which uses a mobile camera and a convex lens. It is much cheaper than other microscopes." she explained. The Class 9 student's innovation won her the fifth-place at 'Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE)', organised by Ministry of Science and Technology.

The Department also conferred 'Child Welfare Awards' on four individuals and four institutions for their commendable service in the field of child welfare.

Akshara Foundation, Bengaluru; Anthyodaya Social Service Society, Bagalkot; Margadarshi Society, Kalaburagi and Parents Association of Deaf Children received the award which carried a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh, a memento and a citation. Srirama Reddy from Byrapalli, Kolar, Sridhara Hande from Udupi, Nagarathna Sunila from Belagavi and Santhosh Bapu from Bidar received the award for their work in education, arts and healthcare for children. They received cash prize of Rs 25,000 each.

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