

## **The Bee is back: HDFC Life Spell Bee presents "India Spell 2010"**

*~ Darsheel Safari and Derek O'Brien take the spelling extravaganza to 25 cities across India ~*

**Mumbai, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010** - The third season of the much awaited HDFC Life Spell Bee is back once again. Alternate Brand Solutions India Limited (ABSIL) and HDFC Life, today, announced the launch of 'HDFC Life Spell Bee - India Spells 2011', which is the Indian counterpart of the highly acclaimed Scripps Spelling Bee, USA.

With the first two seasons receiving a phenomenal response, season three promises to get even bigger. This year 13 new cities have entered the competition taking the total to 25 cities. Bollywood child prodigy **Darsheel Safari** and the noted quiz master **Derek O'Brien**; launched the competition.

Announcing the association of HDFC Life with India Spells 2011, **Mr. Sanjay Tripathy, Executive Vice President and Head - Marketing & Direct Channels, HDFC Life** said, *"English language occupies an integral part in our professional and personal lives. With the changing world environment and exponential growth of the use of English all over the world, a greater emphasis has been laid in India on teaching and learning of English. . The key thought is to engage students on a different competition route - testing their knowledge of spelling, thereby engaging them in the English language practice. Through this initiative, we support each and every parent's dream of seeing their child develop their inherent potential.*

*"This exciting talent hunt has witnessed tremendous response with lakhs of students participating in this competition across the country over the last couple of years. HDFC Life is therefore keen on supporting such events which aid a child's development and we hope to connect with parents through such associations and help them plan for their little geniuses' future needs well in advance."* **Mr Tripathy added.**

Speaking about HDFC Life Spell Bee **Mr. Amit Sharma, Business Head, Alternate Brand Solutions India Limited**, – *"HDFC Life Spell Bee – India Spells 2011 has spawned tremendous response this year. It is a distinctive and an academic series formatted to be filled with fun and excitement, under the patronage of Spelling Bee USA, a prestigious annual event in the US with a lineage of 85 years. The last season of HDFC Life Spell Bee –India Spells 2010 received an overwhelming response from parents and teachers. This year 25 cities are going to be a part of this prestigious competition, where students will be battling out for their school, city, or rather for the fame of the nation. HDFC Life Spell Bee intends on amplifying the basics of English language amongst Indian students. The success of HDFC Life Spell Bee can be witnessed from the fact that HDFC Life has partnered with the event for the third consecutive year which stands testimony to its phenomenal success over the years"*.

Speaking on this occasion **Child Prodigy Darsheel Safari** said, *"I love HDFC Life Spell Bee because it is a very unique way of making spelling interesting. I have always enjoyed spellings as I learn new and interesting words in the process. I have been associated with HDFC Life Spell Bee since the last year and I am really excited to continue to be associated with this competition this year too. Last year HDFC Life Spell Bee received a superb response and I am confident that*

*this year will definitely be even better. I am glad that kids like me are enjoying HDFC Life Spell Bee as much as I do and I wish all the contestants good luck.”*

**Mr Derek O’Brien, the noted quiz master** said, *“There are many ways to make knowledge exciting as well as intimidating for the young mind. Spell Bee an activity acclaimed all over India, is not only engaging but also provides challenges to the young mind to grow and explore new avenues”*

The HDFC Life Spell Bee competition is a unique and scholarly education series in a fun-filled quiz format that was launched a couple of years ago. The third season of HDFC Life Spell Bee, this year aims at helping students improve their spelling skills, vocabulary, learning concepts and pronunciations leading to correct usage of English words and improving their command over the English language. This competition will engage the contestants in a variety of methods to test them on their spellings, offering the perfect pronunciations and supplying the etymological meaning of each word.

The winner of the Grand Finale will be sent by The Times Group in association with HDFC Life to experience Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington. While the winner of HDFC Life Spell Bee India 2011 will not participate actively in the Scripps National Spelling Bee, he/she will certainly experience and get a flavor of the magnitude and standard of Scripps National Spelling Bee as a learning process.

The first two seasons of Spell Bee received a phenomenal response and generated lots of interest and awareness about the importance of spellings. A research conducted by HDFC Life in association with ‘A to Z Research’ among schools that participated in last year’s Spell Bee, parents of last year’s participants and Principals / English dept HoDs of these schools revealed:

#### **Importance of a competition as HDFC Life Spell Bee and eagerness to participate (among parents)**

Almost 100% parents agreed that spelling abilities was very important for their children and extremely important skill if they wished for a successful career. Apart from improving vocabulary (66%) and scoring in exams (53%) it was important as it helped students understand new concepts more easily (63%). It also helped improve pronunciation and confidence (53%).

63% of the parents believed that there was a need to provide further opportunities such as HDFC Life Spell Bee among kids to sharpen their spelling skills. There is overwhelming interest amongst parents (99%) to participate in next Spell Bee.

Also HDFC Life’s association with Spell Bee has a positive implication for the brand and we have achieved good TOM (23%) and Spont (65%) awareness esp. in a category that’s almost synonymous with LIC atleast at a TOM level.

#### **Generated lots of interest, enthusiasm, and new internal initiatives in schools**

Spell Bee has resulted in many schools (68%) adopting new initiatives to prepare their students for Spell Bee. 63% (Principals / English dept HoDs) have testified that the same have been incorporated after requests from parents and students for such school level preparations and competitions.

Schools have started internal Spell Bee contests (44%), incorporated spelling checks to identify probable contestants (36%) and some have also started specific sessions that focus only on spelling (28%).

Teachers feel that these activities and Spell Bee have resulted in increasing enthusiasm (54%) and keenness (48%) towards increasing spelling skills.

There is great enthusiasm and interest amongst schools to participate in the next Spell Bee.

The research was conducted in Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Kolkata.

### **About 360 degrees experience**

The Intellectual Property Rights team at 360 Degrees- Times Group has continuously managed to create smart properties in the space of Fashion, Lifestyle & entertainment with meaningful content, always in tune with the present day thoughts. Alternate Brand Solutions (India) Limited ("ABSIL") is a wholly owned subsidiary of ENIL. ABSIL was incorporated with the objective to carry on the business of event management. ABSIL manages large format events as well as own event brands.

### **About HDFC Life**

HDFC Life, one of India's leading private life insurance companies, offers a range of individual and group insurance solutions. It is a joint venture between Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC), India's leading housing finance institution and Standard Life plc, the leading provider of financial services in the United Kingdom. HDFC Life's product portfolio comprises 23 solutions, which meet various customer needs such as Protection, Pension, Savings, Investment and Health. Customers have the added advantage of customizing their plans, by adding optional benefits called riders, at a nominal price. Apart from several retail and group products in its portfolio, the company also has five optional rider benefits catering to the savings, investment, protection and retirement needs of customers. HDFC Life continues to have one of the widest reaches with more than 500 branches servicing customer needs, along with a strong base of Financial Consultants.