

Malala Yousafzai

Malala was born on 12th July 1997 in Mingora, in Pakistan. She has two younger brothers. Malala's father was a teacher and she grew up with a strong belief in the power and importance of education.

In 2007, a group called the Taliban began to take control over the area where Malala and her family lived. They did not believe that girls should go to school and they also banned many cultural activities, such as watching television and dancing. Malala continued to believe in her right (and the right of every girl) to an education and became quite critical of the Taliban's actions.

Significant Action

In 2009, Malala began to write a blog for the BBC Urdu service. She wrote this using someone else's name (a pseudonym) and in it she described her desire to go to school and her fears living under Taliban rule.

Women were even being stopped from going out shopping. Even when Malala and her father received death threats for speaking out and sharing their fears with the world, they did not stop reporting what was happening in their local area and they became well known in Pakistan for their beliefs. Malala was awarded Pakistan's National Youth Peace Prize for her work in 2011.

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Attack on Her Life

Whilst travelling home from school on a bus on 9th October 2012, when she was 15, Malala was shot in the head by a masked Taliban gunman. Two of her friends were also injured in the attack. Malala was flown to Birmingham in the UK for treatment; she stayed in hospital for three months. In March 2013, she was able to go to school in Birmingham. Later that year, she published a book, 'I am Malala', describing her experiences.

Securing Human Rights

The Taliban's attack on Malala led to wide-spread protests across Pakistan and worldwide shock. Over 2 million people signed a right to education petition, and the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Bill was passed in Pakistan. Now, every child in Pakistan is given the chance to go to school.

In 2013, the Malala Fund was set up. This organisation campaigns for all girls to have 12 years of education. Malala is still an active campaigner for the rights of girls around the world to have an education.

Malala's tireless campaigning work was recognised in 2014 when she was named a Nobel Peace Prize winner. Malala donated the prize money of more than \$500,000 to build a secondary school for girls in Pakistan.