

Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA

*Report for the
month of
December 2020*

Administrative activities

- a) **Virtual Departmental meetings:** The department staff had 8 virtual department meetings this month. The meetings were held to plan and implement the Christmas programme in the villages. Secondly, the meetings also focussed on forthcoming activities for our college students (especially current third years) to help them complete their social credit hours. Thirdly, the staff discussed various forthcoming outreach activities for village women, youth and children in the adopted villages.
- b) **Preparatory work for Christmas programme:** On 14th and 15th December, the staff members with support from Joris Corner staff, made around 400 goodie bags for the children. On 17th December, half of the bags were transported to Raghampur campus and the rest were delivered to three villages on 18th December 2020.
- c) **RUSA fund for rural activities:** The department received some allotment from RUSA fund for rural activities during this month. A list of needs based gadgets and infrastructural amenities, needs based training for rural women and youth were also prepared. Based on this the department prepared a budget which was approved by Fr. Principal. The process of procurement has been initiated and it is in its final stages.

Online activities for all semester students

- a) **Research assignments:** Around 1,300 students of semester – V (main campus) have submitted research assignments on contemporary social issues, namely – (i) Impact of COVID-19 on Youth; (ii) The need of re-skilling in the current pandemic situation; (iii) Gender based violence during COVID-19 induced lockdown; (iv) Rise of cyber – crimes and its impact on the mental health of the youth. Around 17 assignments were checked for plagiarism and 30 hours of social work was awarded to the students. We are thankful to Dr. Madhu Agnihotri (Assistant Professor and HOD, Department of Information Technology, Commerce Morning) for helping us with plagiarism check.
- b) **Quiz and opinion poll on HIV/AIDS:** From the main campus, 1,216 students of semester I and III participated in the quiz and opinion poll and 84 students (of semester I and III) from Raghampur campus participated in this quiz and opinion poll. Even though students from both campuses were aware and sensitive about the discrimination faced by HIV/AIDS patients, it was alarming to see only 59% of main campus respondents and 10% of Raghampur campus respondents were aware about what HIV/AIDS is and how it spreads.
- c) **Quiz and opinion poll on Human Rights:** From the main campus, 1,175 students of semester I and III participated in the quiz and opinion poll and 65 students (of semester I and III) from Raghampur campus participated in this quiz and opinion poll. Although most of the respondents from both the campuses were aware about Human Rights, it was worrying to see that 77% of the respondents from Raghampur campus felt that Human Rights were for the privileged and elite of the society. Majority of the respondents from both the campuses felt that the human rights situation in our country was at an alarming state. It was very heartening to see all respondents agreed that respecting and safeguarding human rights was a stepping stone towards a sustainable future.

Coordination and networking meetings

The department staff initiated a number of coordination and networking meetings with village contact persons.

- a) **Meeting with Dr. Dilip Swain of IIT Kharagpur:** On 6th December a telephonic conference call was scheduled with Dr. Swain of IIT Kharagpur regarding initiating organic farming in the adopted villages. The meeting was attended by the Department staff members and Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J. Vice-Principal of Raghampur campus. It was a fruitful discussion and it was decided that on a mutually convenient date next year, Dr. Swain will visit Raghampur campus for an orientation on organic farming for SHG members.
- b) **Meetings with village contact persons:** On 7th December 2020, a meeting was held with Ms. Nilima Dolui (village contact person) in Shalpukur village. In the meeting, the staff discussed about the Christmas programme as well as about initiating organic kitchen gardening with the SHG members. Numerous telephonic meetings were held with contact persons of Debipur, and Nurshikdarchowk villages to coordinate the Christmas programme which was held on 22nd December in all the three villages. Children in all these villages were mobilised with the help of these contact persons.
- c) **Meeting with members of Sampoorna Nari Kalyan Sangathan:** Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J. Vice-Principal of Raghampur campus scheduled a meeting with members of Sampoorna Nari Kalyan Sangathan on 7th December 2020. With the help of this rights based organisation, the Department was able to mobilise 120 children from Raghampur, Bakeswar and Magurkhali villages for the Christmas programme which was held on 20th December 2020 in Raghampur campus. In the meeting it was also decided that the members of the organisation will introduce SHG members/village contact persons of the aforementioned villages to the department staff, so that outreach activities can be initiated in these three villages soon.
- d) **Meeting with Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J. Vice-Principal of Raghampur campus:** On 7th December and 18th December 2020, meetings were held with Father to discuss and plan the Christmas programme in Raghampur campus. Two other important agenda were also discussed during the meeting, namely, (i) rural activities under RUSA fund and (ii) initiation of outreach work in Magurkhali, Raghampur and Bakeswar villages.
- e) **Meeting ADA of Bishnupur:** On 10th December, Ma'am Cheryl Francis had a telephonic meeting with the ADA of Bishnupur. The ADA introduced the staff of Naandi Foundation to Ma'am Cheryl Francis. Naandi Foundation personnel will send a proposal on how they can support in our outreach activities.

“Let's Care & Share” – Celebrating the joy of Christmas

In the midst of this pandemic situation, the NSS department decided to celebrate this season of Christmas with the village children of all the 6 adopted villages. With the Theme of “*Let's Care & Share*”, this programme was organised in two parts. In the first part, on 20th December 2020, about 50 children each from three villages namely, Raghampur, Magurkhali & Bakeswar were invited to the Raghampur campus with the help of Sampoorna Nari Kalyan Sangathan, a rights based NGO working in the area.

Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., College Principal along with Fr. Joseph Kulandai, S.J., Vice Principal and Fr. Anil Gomes, S.J., Asst. Controller graced the occasion along with the past and present Secretaries of the Alumni Association. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J., welcomed the guests who were mostly children. Fr. Patrick Walsh, S.J., the Superior of Raghampur Parish, shared his personal experience with the children, to whom he is known as “Dadu”

In his Christmas message, Father Principal expressed, *“Christmas is about spreading love, joy, taking care of each other and sharing whatever little we have with others around us”*. He helped the children understand the essence of Christmas. He also encouraged the children to study well and pursue their higher education in St. Xavier’s. Fr. Principal blessed the children at the end of the programme. Ms. Cheryl Francis, the NSS Director thanked Fr. Principal, the Alumni Association and everyone else who helped make the programme successful. Every child got a gift bag consisting of essential items that was arranged by Fr. Principal. They left the premises happy and smiling but with an unasked question – *when do we come again?*

The second part of the programme was organised on 22nd December 2020 in three other villages namely, Nurshidarchowk, Debipur and Shalpur. Around 225 children (75 in each village) participated in the programme. In all the villages, the children and the village coordinators gave a warm welcome to the staff and some student volunteers. In Nurshidarchowk, Shayani Sardar of class six, ran towards a staff member and said, *“Ma’am, ami roj prarthana kori jeno Corona taratari chole jai, tahole St. Xavier’s college er dada didira abar amader gram eh ashbe protek robibar”* (Ma’am, I pray every day that the pandemic is over, so that our *dada* and *didis* can resume coming to our village, every Sunday).

It was a cheerful moment for the children, the volunteers as well as the staff to meet one other after so many months. Ma’am Cheryl Francis in her address expressed that as adults we need to learn from children how to love without any barriers. She encouraged the children to continue to be messengers of pure love and continue to care and share. All the children received the gift bags as they left for their homes.

Sudeshna Swain from CMSA, our student volunteer was so touched to meet the children, that she later shared, *“I am spoilt with gifts and choices, that I hardly pause to be grateful, but today meeting the children, I realised that the real joy lies in sharing whatever I have with others. I am so glad I volunteered today”*.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

- a) Significant progress has been made to initiate activities under UBA in Bakeswar, Magurkhali and Raghampur villages. The department held a preliminary meeting with Samporna Nari Kalyan Sangathan to take forward development activities in these villages. The NGO consists of members from these villages, who would act as link between the villages and the College.
- b) **Webinar on Organic Farming for Sustainable Agriculture:** On 23rd December 2020, Ms. Shrawani Jha attended this webinar. The webinar helped to enhance understanding of improved agricultural technologies with special emphasis on organic farming. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Priyanka Kaushal (CRDT IIT Delhi) and input session was given by Dr. Rajeswar S. Chadel (Executive Director, PPKKY, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh). Unfortunately, due to technical problems, the other speakers were unable to present and the webinar was concluded.

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