

Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA

*Report for
the month
of June
2021*

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- i. **Departmental meetings:** The department staff had 15 virtual meetings this month. In these meetings the team discussed mainly about the implementation of various online activities for the students and rural development initiatives for the adopted villages.

COORDINATION AND NETWORKING MEETINGS

- i. **Coordination with Shalpokur SHG members regarding organic nutrition gardening:** Around 3 to 4 teleconferences were held with the members to monitor the progress of the organic compost and to plan a follow-up session with the trainers from DRCS.
- ii. **Coordination with Debipur and Shalpokur village contact persons regarding formation of COVID taskforce in the villages:** Around 4-5 teleconferences were held with the contact persons to discuss possibilities of forming a task force in the villages. The village contact persons welcomed the idea and were committed to be part of the task force which will help the villagers to fight the pandemic.
- iii. **Coordination with student volunteers from Raghampur campus to initiate Village Education Programme (VEP) in the adopted villages:** Around 5 tele-conversations were held with the students to re-initiate VEP in Debipur and Shalpokur villages. Students expressed their willingness to be part of the programme. VEP will be initiated in Bakeswar and Magurkhali villages as well. After their semester examinations, students will identify other volunteers from Raghampur campus in the above mentioned villages who would be part of the VEP. The department plans to kick-start VEP on 15th August 2021.
- iv. **Coordination meeting regarding vaccination camp in Raghampur campus:** On 29th June, the team had a meeting with Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, S.J. (Vice-Principal, Raghampur campus) and Prof. Subrata Sinha regarding vaccination camp that is scheduled to be held in the Raghampur campus. During the meeting, it was discussed at length the responsibility division between the faculty of Raghampur campus and the NSS team.

PRIZE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY-VIRTUAL SUMMER CAMP

The Prize distribution ceremony that was supposed to be held immediately after the virtual summer camp had to be postponed due to cyclone Yaas and its probable impact on electricity and internet connection. Therefore the Virtual Prize Distribution Ceremony was organised on the **3rd June 2021**. The objectives was to appreciate and acknowledge the participants and the volunteers who enthusiastically took part in the virtual summer camp held from 17th – 21st May 2021 for the high school students of Convent of Our Lady of Providence High School. Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., College Principal was the Chief Guest for the event and Sr. Josephine Melkias, FMM the School Principal, was the Guest of Honour. Around 55 children, 9 volunteers, 5 teachers of the Providence school, 5 Vice Principals and 4 staff members of the college participated in the ceremony.

The programme began with observing a minute's silence in memory of all those who lost their lives in the pandemic. After the opening prayer, the dignitaries present were felicitated with e-bouquets which was very innovatively done and much appreciated by all.

Two students of the Providence school set the tone for the ceremony with a wonderful welcome dance. This was followed by the welcome address and the camp report presented thereafter gave an insight into the weeklong camp proceedings.

It was very heart-warming to hear Sawmya Roy, a class 10 participant share how the camp was beneficial to the participants. She elaborated how from each session, the students learnt something new and how they felt motivated to utilise their skill and talent in productive ways especially during the current challenging times. On behalf of all the volunteers, Siddharth Prakash, shared how the volunteers were nervous initially with the thought of teaching young students whom they met for the first time, to being confident upon seeing the enthusiastic girls all geared for the sessions. He said, ***“Participating and contributing towards the Camp served as a positive distraction for most of us from all the sadness that is all around us. As we remain anxious about our studies and future, this camp helped us to channelize our energy and thoughts into something meaningful and constructive. The camp also helped us to rediscover ourselves and instilled a sense of responsibility in us towards others.”***

The Chief Guest, Fr. Principal, in his address, briefly explained how the Prayas Camp in the past had been instrumental in motivating rural high school children in continuing their higher education. However, with the onset of the pandemic last year, the camp was not held in 2020 but this year, the college successfully reached out to the children even though it was done virtually. He further encouraged the participants to study well and said, ***“The doors of St. Xavier’s College are always open for you if you want to continue your further studies in the college.”*** Father Principal then called out the names of the prize winners who received e-medals.

The prize winners were as follows: (i) Saara Shamim (class IX) and Bushra Jilani (class X) – drawing; (ii) Aditi Routh (class VIII) and Trisha Berai (Class IX) for dancing; (iii) Iram Kabir (class VIII) and Hadiqa Imtiaz (class IX) for dry cooking; (iv) Rajnandani Paswan (class VIII) and Faizah Ejas (class X) for art & craft; (v) Mabashshara Majid (class IX) and Anita Kumari Ram (class IX) for public speaking.

Sister Josephine Melkias, FMM, the Guest of Honour and School Principal thanked St. Xavier’s College and appreciated how the College turned a challenge to an opportunity by successfully conducting a virtual summer camp for the children. She encouraged the Providence students and the Xaverians to ***“become a part of the solution rather than just identifying a problem”***.

The programme concluded with a dance performance by volunteer Khushi Priyadarshini who through her dance welcomed the monsoon season.

Future Plan: After the success of this virtual camp, the department will try to reach out to the rural high school students, which though challenging, would be very valuable.



Fr. Principal addressing the participants



Sr. Josephine Melkias, sharing her thoughts



Group picture during the ceremony



Welcome dance



Concluding dance



Sample of e-medal

VACCINATION DUTY

On 17th June 2021, Ms. Shrawani Jha was on duty in the vaccination camp conducted by college for the main campus students looking after the post vaccination area of the camp.

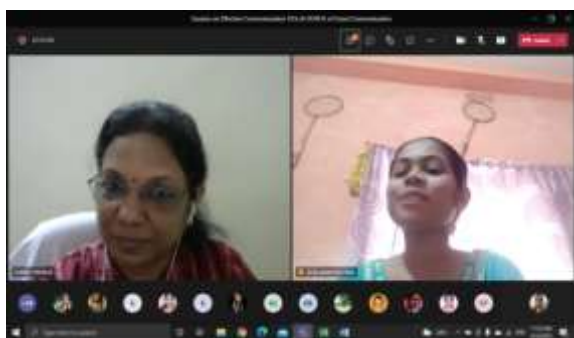
SESSIONS FOR SEMESTER-VI STUDENTS OF RAGHABPUR CAMPUS

A series of sessions were organised for the outgoing batch of students.

- i. **Effective Communication: Do's and Don'ts of good communication**—On 16th June 2021, around 41 students attended the session to learn how they can communicate better. The session began with a brief introduction on the topic which was followed by a detailed input session by Ms. Cheryl Francis. Ma'am Francis explained through examples and role plays the concept, need and components of communication. She then elaborated the key points that should be kept in mind to ensure effective communication as follows:

- It is important to know who the audience is.
- Research well before communicating on a topic/subject.
- Balance between verbal and non-verbal communication is also important to ensure effective communication.
- The probable hindrances that might affect communication must be identified and addressed.

Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee provided an input session on email etiquette, application for employment and record keeping. During the feedback session, Ritu Mondal of Commerce department shared *“Jar sathe kotha bolchi se jeno aamar kotha bhujhte pare, se bhabe kotha bolte hobe ebong kothata sompurno bolte hobe, confidence er sathe”* (we have to speak with confidence, and communication has to done in way that my message is conveyed to the person clearly).



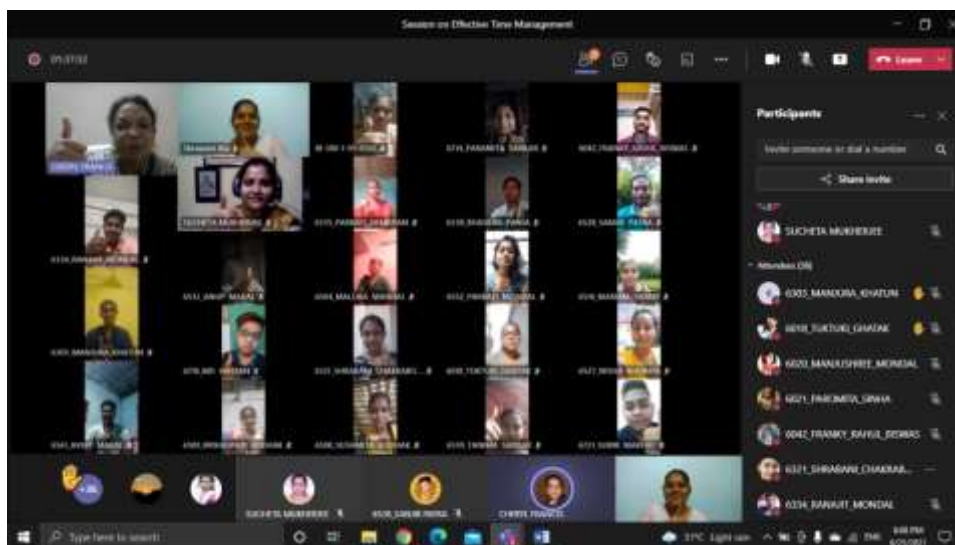
A student during the role-playing session



Group picture during the session

- ii. **Time management** –On 25th June, a session on Time Management was organised for semester VI students. This session was attended by 40 students. Ms. Cheryl Francis was the resource speaker for this session. Through various examples and interactive exercises, Ms. Cheryl Francis explained how one can effectively manage time which results not only in satisfaction but also reduces stress. Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee, cited some examples on planning and prioritising tasks on daily basis for effective time management. Towards the end of the session, students got an opportunity to clear their doubts. As follow up activity, students also participated in a quiz based on the session. Feedback about the session was also collected from them, wherein they mentioned how the session has helped them identify gaps in their routine time management, as shared by Franky Rahul Biswas of Commerce department, *“This session really helped me to identify areas where I unnecessarily spend more time*

and in the process I tend to neglect important task”. Sumona Lobo of Bengali department opined, “This session has helped me learn how to make the most of my time and use my time wisely. I have learnt how to effectively manage time to do the things of my choice every day along with other activities at hand”.



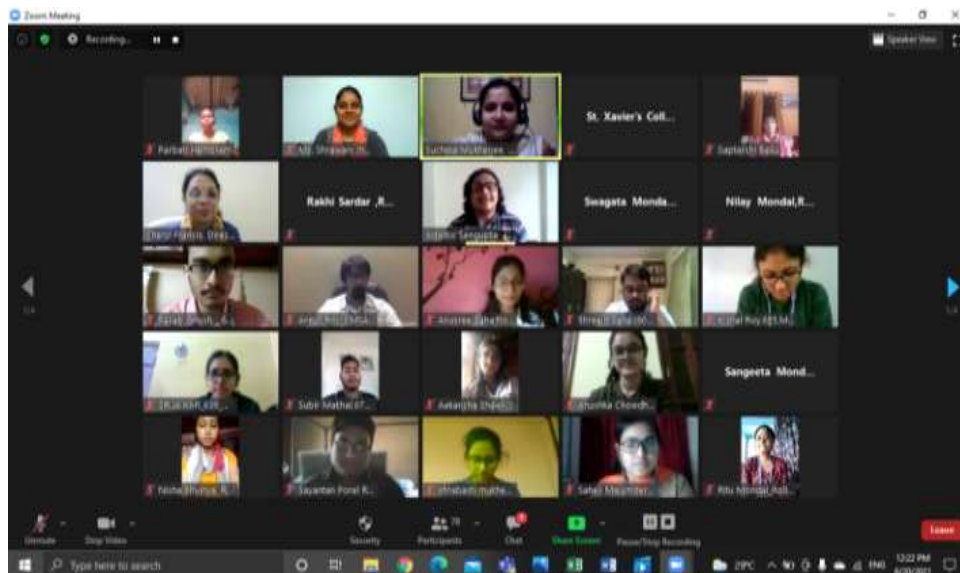
Group picture during the session

TALK ON ‘DE-STRESSING THROUGH YOGA AND MEDITATION’ - ACCOMPANYING THE YOUNG DURING THE PANDEMIC

The 21st of June, is observed as International Day of Yoga all over the world. With the current pandemic spreading its tentacles deep and fast into our daily lives and the rising stress due to studies, examinations, jobs, relationships etc. has left us helpless. Therefore it has become even more important to embrace and adopt yoga and meditation as a positive lifestyle habit. On this occasion, the NSS at St. Xavier’s College organised a session on ‘**De-stressing through Yoga and Meditation**’ – **Accompanying the young during the pandemic.**

Mr. Adwities Sengupta, a 2011 pass out and a trained yoga specialist was the resource person. He started the interactive session by asking the students about reasons for stress their lives. The response from the students ranged from exams, jobs, to relationships and pressure to be successful. He then explained that none can evade stressful situations in life, but one can train one’s mind on how to respond to such situations. That training of mind is what yoga and meditation was all about. He went on to explain the various benefits and methods of yoga that can be used to de-stress in the current pandemic situation. He made the session interesting by citing examples from his own life and how he dealt with it.

Towards the end of the session, Mr. Sengupta along with Saptarshi Basu, (NSS student Board member and a semester IV student of commerce from Raghbapur campus) demonstrated some simple techniques to fight stress. More than 70 students (from both campuses) participated in this session. All their queries were answered by Mr. Sengupta with precision and demonstration in the Q&A session. This helped the participants to understand how yoga and meditation can help in the present stressful situation.



Participants with the resource person



NSS student and Resource person demonstrating techniques to fight stress

TALK ON 'OUR ENVIRONMENT – OUR RESPONSIBILITY' - *ROLE OF YOUTH IN SAFEGUARDING AND NURTURING THE ENVIRONMENT*

World Environment Day is celebrated on 5th June every year. The theme for World Environment Day 2021 was '**Ecosystem Restoration**'. In line with the theme, the Department of Social Work: NSS and UBA of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata organised a 'Talk' on '***Our Environment – Our Responsibility: the Role of Youth in Safeguarding and Nurturing the Environment***' on 28th June 2021 for the college students. The objective of the session was to motivate and encourage the college youth to play their part in safeguarding and nurturing the environment, even during the current raging pandemic. Around 70 students from across departments participated in this session.

Mr. Yusuf Kabir, the Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH) Specialist, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate & Emergency Focal Point and Dr. Swati Mohapatra, the Communication and Advocacy Specialist in UNICEF Maharashtra office were the resource speakers for the session. Along with them, two young climate warriors – Bodhisatva G Khanderao, aged 13 years and Varad Kubal, aged 15 years, shared about their journey in taking up responsibility to safeguard the environment.

College Principal, Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., set the context of the 'Talk' in his inaugural address. He said, "***With the advent of COVID-19 and the tenacity with which it is spreading and impacting us, it is important to explore ways to safeguard and protect the environment***"

even when our mobility is largely restricted. Our Earth needs help. We humans need help. We have to act NOW to save our environment and in the process secure our lives on this beautiful planet. The rising impact of climate change on our everyday lives is alarming and detrimental. The receding green cover, air pollution, fast diminishing ground water, droughts, floods, global warming, and forest fires are only a handful of examples which indicates the dire situation we are in. We will be able to save our planet and ourselves, if only, we are determined to act NOW”.

Mr Yusuf Kabir, in his address spoke at length as to how, during the current pandemic, many stakeholders were coming together and raising their concern about the environment. He cautioned the youngsters to be aware about what was happening to our eco system and to be committed and passionate about the environment. He stressed that, **“Action for environment protection lies at the local level. One does not have to travel large distance to take up responsibility to protect and nurture the environment”.** *It is very important to decide for oneself, whether we want to be part of the problem or be part of the solution”.*

Further to this, Dr. Swati Mohapatra reiterated how each one could take up action at the individual level and contribute towards safeguarding and nurturing our environment. She touched upon how YUWAAH - a flagship programme of UNICEF, engaged children and youth by giving them guidance and platform to raise their voices for pertinent contemporary issues. She added, **“It is important to amplify the voices of young climate warriors so that others are motivated to follow their footsteps and bring about change”.**

This ‘Talk’ became meaningful when the two young climate worriers, Bodhisatva G Khanderao and Varad Kubal shared about their journey in safeguarding the environment. Bodhisatva hails from Yavatmal district in Maharashtra. He started working for social plantation awareness programs at different places at the age of six. He had been relentless in his pursuit of telling people about the importance of the environment and educating them how to make the best out of waste. Bodhisatva during the discourse shared about his innovation of ‘**Seed ball**’. He used the smart technique of reutilizing old cotton socks by putting some seeds in it, along with whatever he could find handy- leaves, soil, cow dung etc. He asked people to simply throw these Magic socks into the valleys, either side of the road, on plains or in forests areas. The socks would stick to the soil and the seeds would germinate after rain. Other than Magic socks, Multigrain- sieving machine to clean various grains is another brilliant innovation for which he was awarded Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Ignited Mind Children Creativity and Innovation Award last year. He was also awarded an International Young Eco-Hero Award for his environmental work.

Varad, who hails from Kankavli, Konkanhad already made a mark when he was just 12 years old as he had rescued sea birds called Bridled Tern during a storm. It is not just birds but Varad is keenly interested in protecting the coastal and marine biodiversity. He is full of innovative ideas for the growth and protection of flora and fauna. Varad shared about his initiative ‘**seed egg**’ wherein he paints eggshells with bright colours and puts a variety of seeds, which he then gifts to friends and relatives. Once the egg shell is discarded (thrown on soil) the seed germinates and grows into trees. He also shared how he used coconut shells as lanterns and made Rakhis from seeds, coir and discarded paper.

Both the teens, shared how during the current raging pandemic, they utilised their time to read about various types of saplings, trees and utilised this time to reach out to their peers to take action towards conserving nature. They also made videos on various methods of afforestation and nature conservations and shared on various social media platforms for wider dissemination of knowledge. Before the close of the session, when asked what message the young children wanted to give to our students, Bodhi vehemently said, **“Earn your oxygen by**

planting a tree". On the other hand Varad urged our students not to just think about their careers but *"spare a thought for nature, we have to save nature to save our future"*.

The college students were deeply impressed and motivated by these young champions. Subham Dokania, a Commerce-Morning student expressed, *"After hearing Bodhi and Varad share about their journey, I am encouraged to plant trees, write blogs on environment issues and create some awareness"*. Ruchi Marda a Commerce-Evening student who wants to be a social entrepreneur said, *"I learnt how even I can make a difference to the society through my initiatives and got many ideas from today's Talk, I will definitely build on them."*



Father Principal addressing the students his thoughts



Mr. Yusuf Kabir, sharing



Bodhisatva G Khanderao



Varad Kubal,



UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN – PROGRESS REPORT

- i. **Upload of UBA sheets:** This month 80 survey sheets of Raghampur village were uploaded on the UBA portal.
- ii. **Virtual follow-up and monitoring of the organic kitchen garden for Shalpokur SHG members:** On 18th June 2021, a virtual follow-up session was organised for the trainees with the trainers from DRCSC. The hour long follow-up session was conducted by Mr. Tapas Mondal from DRCSC. The session focussed on the vegetables and fruits that can be grown during monsoon. The trainer further explained about treatment of various kinds of infestations. Mr Tapas Mondal was very happy to see that the trainees remembered most of the lessons they had learnt during the training, *“Khub bhalo lagche je apnara ja shikechilen ta khali mone rakhen ni, sheta abar prayag o korechen”* (I am very happy to see that you all have not only remembered what you learnt during the training but have also implemented the same). The compost that was prepared by the women was ready and has been taken out from the pit. The same compost will be used to grow fruits and vegetables organically by the SHG women.



SHG members attending the virtual follow-up session

iii. Webinars attended:

- a) **‘NCI is bringing Free Telemedicine service at your home’:** On 7th June 2021, Ma’am Cheryl Francis attended a session conducted by NCI IIT Delhi titled ‘NCI is bringing Free Telemedicine service at your home’. During the session representatives from Dhanush Foundation showed live demonstration on how the telemedicine facility developed by them could be availed by the people in rural areas. It was also suggested that youth of the UBA adopted villages could be mobilized and with preliminary orientation could assist their community members to avail the telemedicine services during times of need.
- b) **‘Unnat Bharat Gram Aarogya Series - A virtual learning initiative on COVID-19’:** On 10th June 2021 the department staff attended Unnat Bharat Gram Aarogya Series - A virtual learning initiative on COVID-19 focusing on rural awareness, physical and mental well-being, habits and goals throughout the pandemic. In the session Dr. Abhraneel Guha and Dr. Partho Sarathi Sanyal of Peerless Hospital Kolkata, talked about the COVID prevention and appropriate behaviour and need for vaccination. They also clarified various myths and misconceptions related to vaccination.
