

Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA

*Report for
the month
of
September
2021*

National Service Scheme – Unit I & II

- I. Departmental meetings:** The department staff had nine 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. There were three department meetings that were held at the college campus as well.
- II. Observing International Literacy Day for students of Raghampur campus**
On 11th September 2021, the department had organized a talk on '*Literacy for a human-centered recovery: Role of youth in bridging the learning gap*' to observe International Literacy Day which is celebrated across the globe on 8th September. The session was conducted with an objective to create awareness among Raghampur campus students about the ever increasing learning gap and to motivate them to play a proactive role in bridging this gap. It has been more than a year that schools were closed due to the COVID-19 induced pandemic. Although all possible efforts were undertaken to ensure the continuity of the learning process, but as stated in a report published by Times of India (12th July 2021 edition), almost 32 crore children were denied education due to the pandemic. Therefore, it was important to motivate the students to do their part in bridging this learning gap.

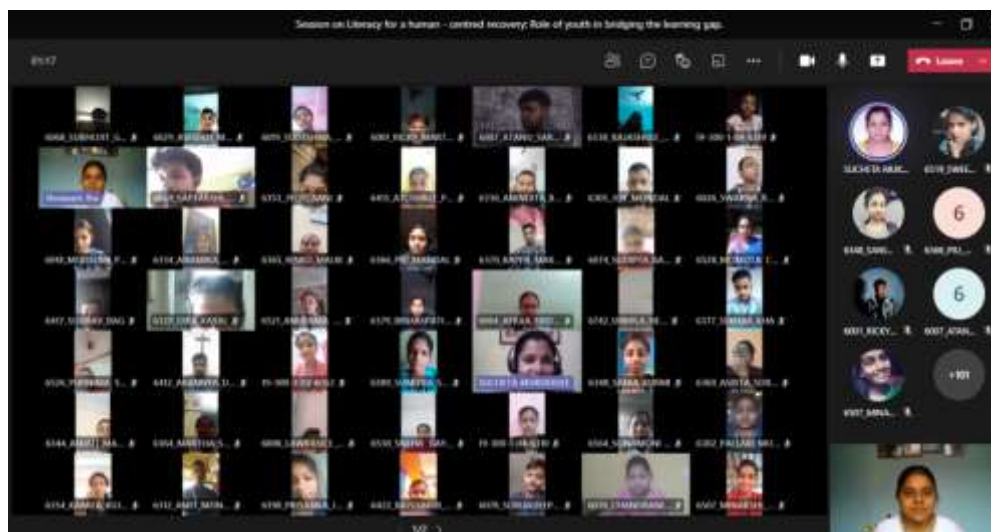
Snapshot of participants for the talk:

Sl. No.	Department	Semester - 3	Semester - 5	Total no. of participants
1	Bengali	14	27	41
2	B. A. General	3	39	42
3	History	1	--	1
4	Commerce	--	34	34
	Total	18	100	118

Ms. Shrawani Jha began the session by explaining the importance of International Literacy Day and introduced the topic of the session. This was followed by a short discussion about the meaning of literacy, difference between literacy and education, the impact of pandemic on literacy and foundational learning especially in rural areas and how the learning gap increased due to COVID-19 induced pandemic. During the session, initiatives undertaken by the government, NGOs and other such like-minded people of the society were also discussed. Throughout the session participants were encouraged to reflect on the role they could play in bridging the learning gap. **Subhojit Guha** (Sem. - 5, Commerce) shared that "*Youth members can form a group and help children of their villages or surrounding areas in continuing their learning and help them with their school curriculum*". **Afraa Firdaus** (Sem. - 5, Commerce) also said, "*We can join groups or NGOs, as volunteers and can contribute in promoting learning*". Similar suggestions were shared by some other students as well.

Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee concluded the session with reiteration of the importance of literacy as a foundation of learning process especially during pandemic and how the students could play a crucial role in promoting literacy thereby bridging the learning gap.

As a follow-up activity, a quiz related to the session was conducted along with a feedback form. Participants were also given a task to interact with at least ten children and write a report on status of learning process in pandemic era.



III. Observing NSS day:

NSS day is celebrated on **24th September** every year. However, for the convenience of students, the department observed NSS day on **26th September (Sunday)**. A talk on **'Pandemic era increased the learning gap among children: Role of youth in bridging this gap'** for the Semester III students of the main campus. Around 195 students from across departments attended this session.

Snapshot of the number of participants department wise

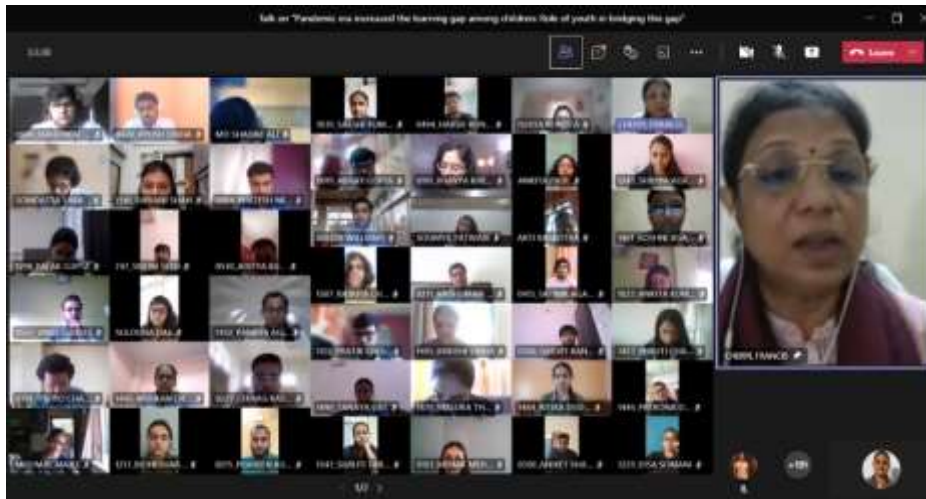
Sl. No.	Department	No. of students
1	B.A	09
2	B.Sc	20
3	BMS	16
4	CMEA	71
5	COMA	79
	Total	195

At the onset, Ms. Cheryl Francis shared with the students, the rich legacy of outreach work through NSS over the years highlighting some of the major activities undertaken by NSS volunteers like Blood Donation camps, Rural work camps, Project Prayas, ShishuMela and the like. She explained how over the years, NSS volunteers reached out to rural and urban children promoting literacy and education etc. She further shared how during the pandemic, the department reached out to students with online awareness sessions on contemporary social issues. She encouraged the students to become catalyst in bridging the learning gap that has been induced by the pandemic.

Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee shared with examples the devastating impact of the pandemic on education and how children were losing out on learning. She further explained how school closures have put children's learning, nutrition, mental health, and overall development at risk and some students, particularly girls, were at risk of

never returning to school. In fact, the current long closure of schools would leave children at risk of child labour, child marriage and human trafficking.

Towards the end of the session, examples and ideas were shared with students on how they could play an important role in bridging the learning gap among children. During the interactive session, Aditi Agarwal of Commerce Evening shared, *“From today’s session I learnt that my simple act of recharging the internet package of my domestic help would ensure that her children were able to continue online education”*. While Md. Shadab Ali of Economics department shared, *“I learnt about the rich legacy of NSS and I hope soon we too will be able to go to the villages and teach the children.”* The session ended with a pledge by everyone to do their best to bridge the learning gap.



IV. Coordination and Networking:

a) Meeting with Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara and HODs of Raghampur campus:

On 7th September, a virtual meeting was held between the department staff, the Vice Principal and HODs of Raghampur campus with the following agenda:

- To share updates and concerns about the participation of students in virtual activities conducted by the social work department for obtaining social credits.
- To discuss ways and means to increase students’ participation and response.

Father Johnson began the meeting by appreciating and acknowledging the work done by the NSS team and then requested ma’am Cheryl Francis to share about the challenges faced with the students so that possible solutions could be derived. Ma’am Cheryl then elaborated about the limited participation of the students from Raghampur campus in the virtual activities of the department and how they were missing out on opportunities not only to receive knowledge and awareness about the issues of concerns that directly or indirectly affected them but also the compulsory social credit hours which they need. All the HODs along with the department staff brainstormed together and decided on the following action plan:

- All notices from the department should be bi-lingual (both in Bengali and English) so that it’s easy for the students to comprehend and participate in the sessions. All notices will be circulated through the Vice Principal’s office and also through HODs.
- All follow-up activities (including feedback/review forms) should be bi-lingual as well.

- The department will conduct one round of orientation for all semester students about social credits and how to keep a record of the same.
- All sessions will be conducted department wise for wider participation of the students.
- The HODs would constantly remind the students about their compulsory social credit and connect with the NSS department whenever required to address students' issues.



V. Orientation about outreach work and compulsory social credits

- i. **Orientation for Semester-I students of BMS and CMEA (main campus):** On 25th September, a quick round of orientation was held for first year students of BMS and CMEA in which the students got an overview of outreach work and how they would be able to complete their requisite 45 hours of social credit. Around 800 students attended the orientation.



- ii. **Orientation for Semester III and V students of RGP campus on social credit related matters:** From 27th to 30th September, orientation sessions were held for all semester III and V students of the RGP campus. These sessions were conducted to explain to the students about the importance of social credits and how they could accumulate the said credit hours. Students were motivated to participate in online activities that were conducted by the department. Further to this, students also got an opportunity to clear their doubts pertaining to social credits. Around 300 students from all departments attended the orientation sessions.



Unnat Bharat Abhiyan – Progress Report

- I. Upload of UBA sheets:** This month 50 survey sheets of Raghampur village were uploaded on the UBA portal and with this all the survey sheets have been uploaded on the UBA portal. An auto-generated analysis report for Raghampur village has been generated based on which the Village Development Plan (VDP) will be developed.
- II. Coordination and Networking:**
- a) **Meeting with Project Director (District Rural Development Cell):** On 1st September, a meeting with Smt. Debahuti Indra, WBCS (Exe.), the Project Director of District Rural Development Cell was held at Bhabani Bhawan. Sri. Sabyasachi Bandhopadhyay, WBCS, Additional Director of Fisheries (ADF), Ms. Cheryl Francis and Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee were present for this meeting. In the meeting, it was decided that an in-depth training will be held for the women SHGs (from Shalpokur, Debipur and Magurkhali) who attended orientation on Pisciculture on 5th August 2021. It was decided that the training would be held at Raghampur campus itself by the end of September. The said training was scheduled to be held from 27th September to 1st October, but due to heavy rainfall, the villages were badly affected. Therefore the BDO postponed the said training to a later date which would be communicated to us. The department wants to place on record, the cooperation it received from the ADF to reach out to the SHG members with orientation and training on Pisciculture.
- b) **Meetings with SHG members of Shalpokur, Debipur and Magurkhali:** On 3rd and 10th September, meetings were held with the SHG members of Shalpokur, Debipur and Magurkhali villages to ensure participation of the women for the training on Pisciculture scheduled to be organised from 27th September. During these meetings, Ms. Cheryl Francis mobilised and motivated the women to undertake Pisciculture related training which would be an alternative source of income for them. After the meeting, the women were keen on acquiring new skills.



- c) **Meeting with Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara:** On 17th September a meeting was held with Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara at Raghampur campus. Logistics related to Pisciculture was discussed at length. During the meeting, Fr. Vice Principal encouraged the staff to explore government schemes which the SHG women and college students could avail. The department has already started working on this.
