

Department of Social Work: NSS & UBA

*Report for
the month
of August
2022*

I. World Day against Trafficking

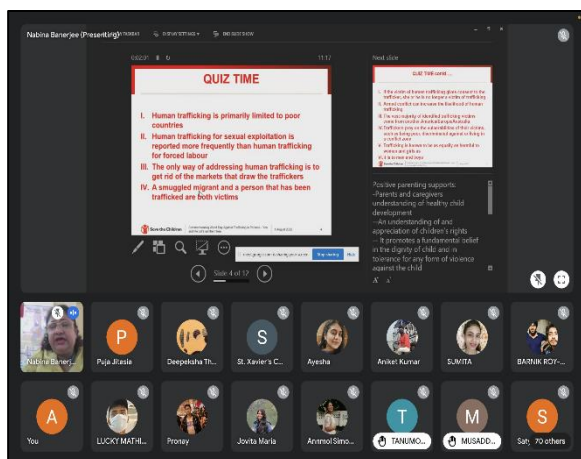
- *You and Me, Let's Help Set Them Free*

To commemorate World Day against Trafficking in Persons which was observed worldwide on 30th July, an online awareness session titled '*You and Me, Let's Help Set Them Free*' was organised on **1st August 2022** that saw around 80 students from across departments. The resource team for this session was from Save the Children. They were accompanied by two youth champions – Ms Mamata Sardar from North 24 Parganas and Mr. Aamir Hassan from Kolkata.

The session kick started with a quiz and it was encouraging to see that most of the students had a clear understanding about human trafficking. This was followed by an in-depth input session, wherein students were made aware about various types of trafficking, how to identify various levels of vulnerability and the steps that could be undertaken by the youth to prevent trafficking. During the session, a lot of alarming data on trafficking from West Bengal were shared with the students.

Mamata Sardar, the youth champion from North 24 Paraganas, shared her journey of being a victim of trafficking as a child to becoming a champion of child rights and a catalyst in preventing trafficking and child marriages in her village. Aamir Hassan further shared how he being a youth was able to take baby steps in preventing human trafficking in his locality. The sharing of the youth champions moved the students greatly, Mridula Chetri, a Political Science student rightly pointed out, ***"After hearing both Mamata and Aamir's sharing, I feel it is my responsibility to stand up and raise my voice against human trafficking. Also through this session, I am more aware and will be able to help prevent human trafficking in my locality."***

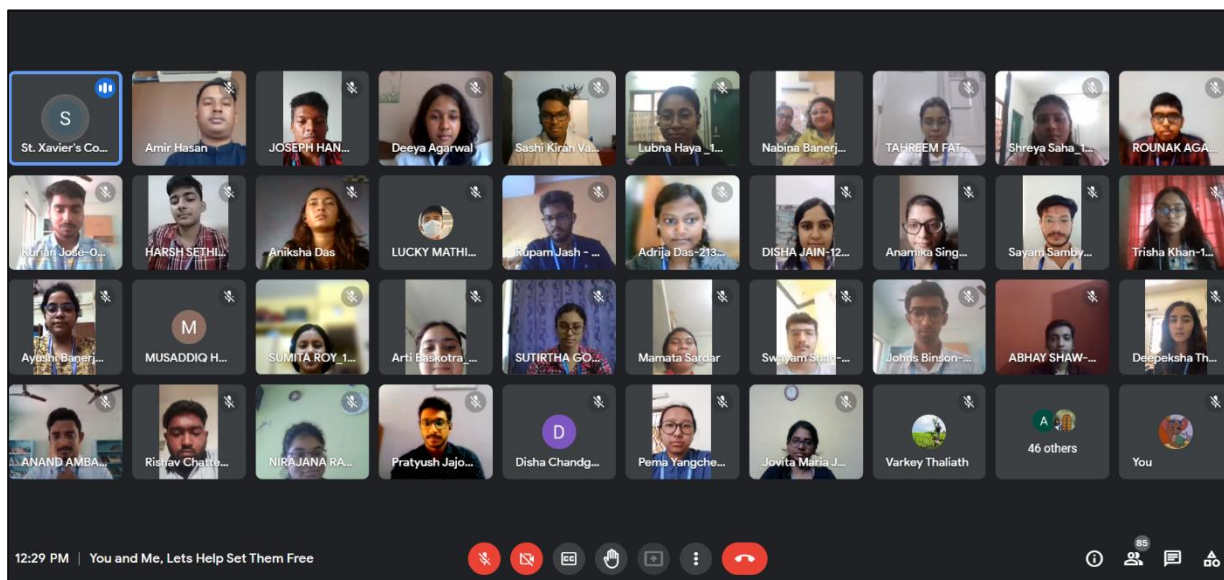
At the end of the session, through a feedback form, students shared how they would like to be agents of change and do their part in preventing human trafficking in their state.



Creating awareness through quiz



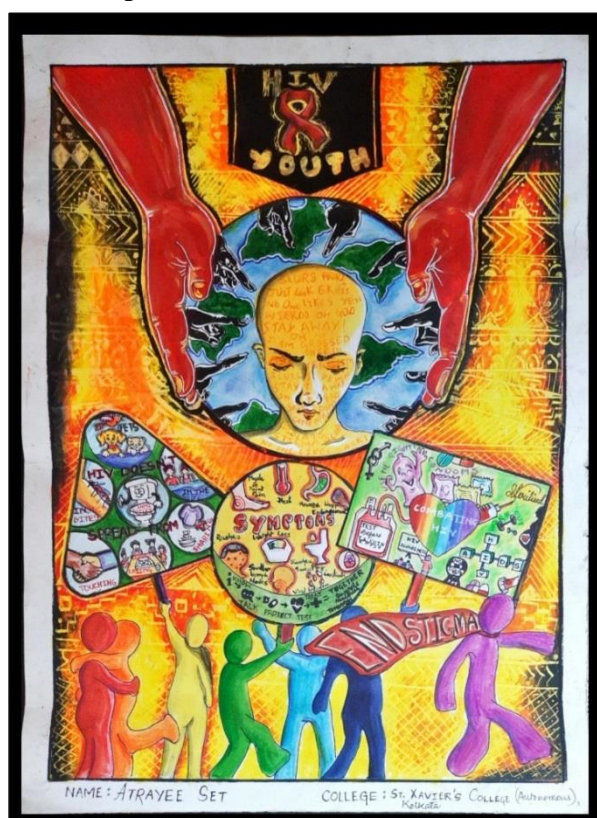
Youth champions interacting with the students



Group picture at the end of the session

II. NSS student president bags prize for poster competition

On 12th August, the West Bengal State AIDS Prevention & Control Society, Department of Health & Family Welfare (Government of West Bengal) conducted a poster competition on **HIV and Youth** to commemorate International Youth Day. Atrayee Set (of Sociology department), NSS student president bagged the second position for this poster competition. She received a certificate and cash prize of Rs. 2000/- from WBSAP&CS.



Poster created by Atrayee Set



Atrayee receiving the certificate and cash prize



Group picture at the end of the prize distribution ceremony

III. Har Ghar Tiranga Mahotsav campaign - Commemorating 75 years of India's Independence

Date: 7th August 2022

Venue: Bakeswar village

Theme: Raksha Bandhan and Independence Day Celebration

On 7th August 2022, around 19 NSS volunteers went to Bakeswar village (adopted under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan) to celebrate Raksha Bandhan and Independence Day with 30 children of classes 6 to 12. The first part of the programme began with some songs like '*Amader Chuti Chuti*' sung by the volunteers which were the icebreakers as the children also joined in. This was followed by a brief talk on the significance of Raksha Bandhan and Independence Day by the NSS Director who gave a deeper understanding of the Raksha Bandhan festival. She stressed on the fact that every relationship came with a responsibility and that the volunteers have begun a relationship with the village children and hence it was their responsibility to ensure that these children were protected from all forms of exploitation and received quality education. The volunteers then tied the Rakhies to the children and it was a very special moment for both – the volunteers and the children.

The volunteers conducted some games for the children, which they participated in, enjoyed, and bonded with the volunteers. The second part of the programme focussed on Independence Day. The volunteers began by singing some patriotic songs and gave a brief on some of the freedom fighters. In conclusion, the National flags were distributed to the children and both – the volunteers and the children sang the National Anthem holding the flag in their hands after which they took it home with them along with some refreshments.



Volunteers and children bond over songs, games and group interaction



Raksha Bandhan – celebration of relationship and bond



Proud to be Indians

Singing the National Anthem together

Date: 12th August 2022

Venue: Bal Shiksha Sadan at Queen's Mansion, Park Street

Theme: Raksha Bandhan, International Youth Day and Independence Day

On 12th August 2022, around 14 volunteers celebrated Raksha Bandhan, International Youth Day and Independence Day with around 40 pre-primary and primary children of Bal Shiksha Sadan, a school under the Sarva Shiksha Abhijan under ward 63 of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation. With the help of the Ward Counsellor, this school was selected where the NSS volunteers conducted the following programmes:

Raksha Bandhan & International Youth Day:

On the occasion of International Youth Day, the NSS volunteers made the day meaningful by celebrating Raksha Bandhan with these children. The NSS student president shared about the significance of this day with everyone present. Clubbing it with Raksha Bandhan where relationship coupled with responsibility was the focus, the NSS volunteers tied Rakhis to the children giving them a sense of belongingness. This was followed by some entertainment activities.

Independence Day celebration

Since Independence Day was just two days away, the volunteers shared with the children in a very simple way, the role our freedom fighters played during our Freedom struggle and how they needed to be remembered with respect. The volunteers then distributed the National Flags to the children, sang a few patriotic songs and concluded the programme with serving refreshments to all present. The Headmaster of the school and the teachers were quite impressed with the volunteers and wanted them to visit the school more often to motivate the children.



Volunteers sharing about Independence Day



Flag distribution underway



Proud of their *Tiranga*

Date: 14th August 2022

Venue: Nurshikdarchowk village

Theme: Independence Day Celebration

On 14th August 2022, around 20 volunteers celebrated Independence Day with 70 children from Nurshikdarchowk village. This was the first visit after a gap of two years. Hence the children were overjoyed to meet the volunteers and so were the volunteers. A brief talk on the importance of Independence Day was given to the children. This was followed by a series of games conducted by the volunteers that made the children aware about various freedom fighters and independence related facts. During the programme, the children sang songs, performed dance numbers, yoga, recitations which was heart-warming to watch. The National Flags were distributed to all present. The programme concluded with distribution of refreshments to all.



Cultural performances by the children



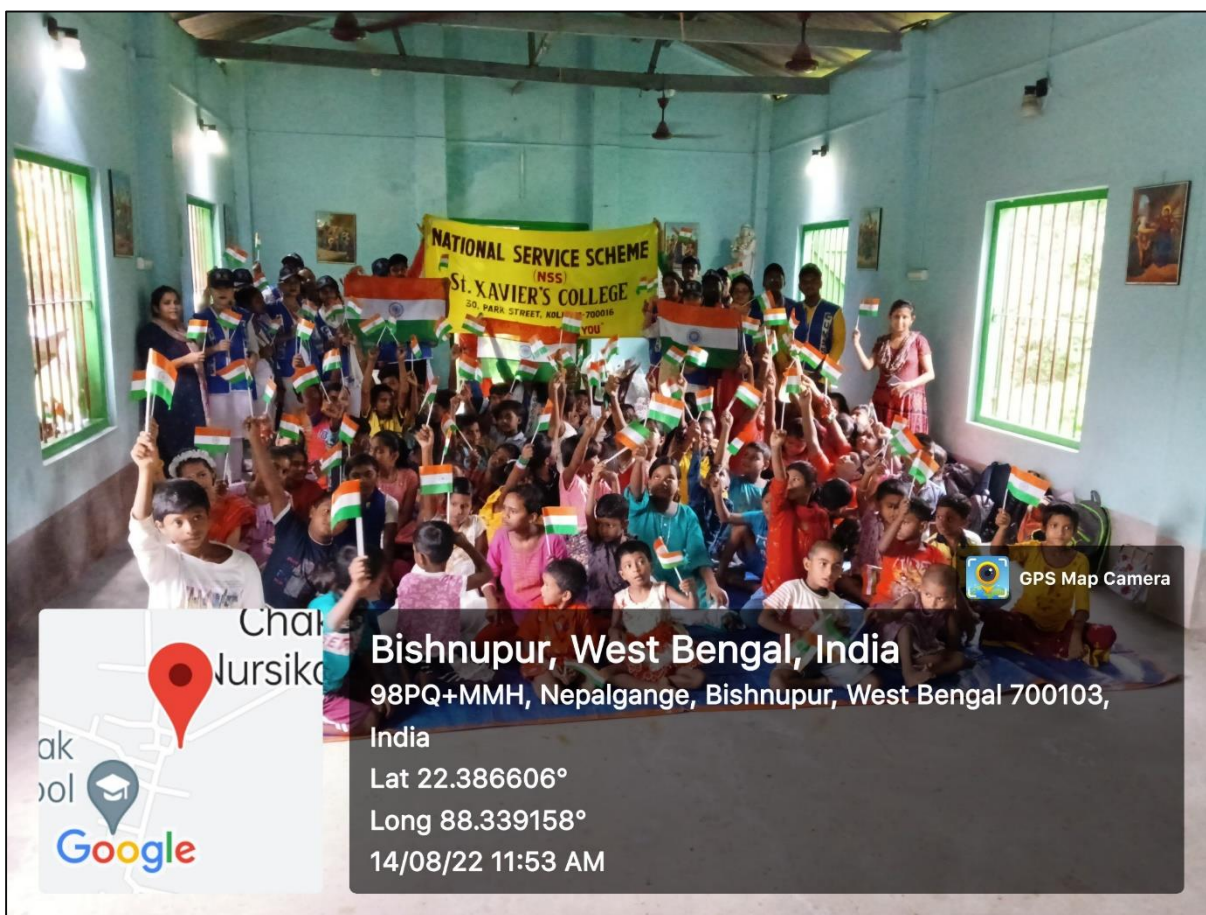
Volunteers perform for the children



Poster presentation by volunteers



Quiz underway



Group picture at the end of the session

Various online submissions by volunteers to celebrate Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign

Around 16 volunteers pinned digital flags at www.harghartiranga.in and received their certificates. Three volunteers prepared digital posters with pictures of NSS volunteers celebrating *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*. Four NSS volunteers prepared videos remembering the freedom struggle of India. One volunteer prepared five handmade posters promoting Har ghar Tiranga Campaign, which was displayed in the campus as well as in adopted villages. Six students submitted essays and poem remembering freedom fighters and significance of Har Ghar Tiranga campaign.

National Service Scheme – Unit II

I. Har Ghar Tiranga Mahotsav campaign - Commemorating 75 years of India's Independence

Dates: 13th and 14th August 2022

Venue: Magurkhali and Debipur villages

Theme: Har Ghar Tiranga

On 13th and 14th August 2022, around 60 volunteers from the rural campus at Raghabpur along with approx. 80 children participated in Har Ghar Tiranga campaign. The volunteers shared with the children about the importance of Independence Day in their lives, which was followed by cultural programme put up by the children. The volunteers with the children rallied in the village distributing flags to the villagers and explaining the significance of Independence Day to all.



Volunteers sharing about India's struggle for independence



Interaction underway



Singing a patriotic song for the children



Children gearing up for Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign



Children and volunteers participating in the Har Ghar Tiranga rally



II. Exposure visits to Asha Bari NGO

On 6th August 2022, around 20 volunteers visited Asha Bari, an NGO that works for abandoned mental health patients. The NGO, which is located in Amtala, welcomed the volunteers where they were given an overview of the NGO's work. The volunteers got an opportunity to interact with the residents, which helped them to be aware of the importance of mental health. The volunteers helped the NGO staff serve lunch to the residents and also cleaned the premises. Before leaving, the eager volunteers tied rakhis to the inmates (around 25 women and 90 men were present) signifying the establishment of a new relationship between the College and the NGO. As a follow-up to this visit, the students were back at the NGO on 11th August to spend more time with the residents. They also took this opportunity to celebrate Independence Day with them. This exposure visits helped the students be more sensitive, humane and challenge the taboo that was associated with mental health.



Volunteers interact with the residents



Celebrating Raksha Bandhan with the residents



Group picture

III. Coordination meeting with NSS Unit II Programme Officer

On 23rd August, a meeting was held with Prof. Arundhati Das, NSS Unit II Programme Officer. Ma'am Cheryl Francis briefed Prof. Das about the functioning of NSS, the responsibilities of NSS Programme Officer and various aspects of administrative work. Prof. Das shared that she was looking forward to be engaged in NSS activities.

IV. Formation of NSS Unit II Board

The process of forming NSS Unit II Board began last month when around 60 students expressed their desire to be part of it. Around 30 students were shortlisted and called for an orientation and group interview on 5th August 2022. After the group interview, the students were again called for a second round of orientation and interview on 13th August, after which nine students were selected to be part of NSS Unit II Board.

V. NSS Unit II Board Declaration and orientation

The NSS UNIT II Board Declaration ceremony was held on 25th August 2022 at the rural campus at Raghbapur. After a series of orientations and interviews, nine students were chosen to lead the NSS Team for 2022-2023.

The ceremony was presided over by Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, SJ, College Principal, in the presence of Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, SJ, the Vice Principal, and other dignitaries from the main campus. In his address Fr. Principal stated, ***“For the first time this campus now has a separate NSS UNIT and we hope that soon this campus will become a separate College. I am sure the newly formed Board will continue to reach out to the underprivileged and the marginalized.”*** The Vice Principal encouraged the students and assured all support and cooperation.

Prof. Arundhati Das, the newly appointed Programme Officer for UNIT II expressed appreciation for all the support provided by NSS UNIT I from the main campus. Ms. Cheryl Francis, the NSS Director, assured full support and guidance, as and when required and thanked the Programme Officer for accepting this challenging task.

This simple ceremony ended with a vote of thanks to all present and everyone then posed for the group photograph.



Fr. Vice Principal and NSS Unit-II Programme Office addressing the students



NSS Unit-I Programme Officer introducing the dignitaries



Principal addressing the NSS volunteers



Dignitaries with the Board and active volunteers



Board members with the staff

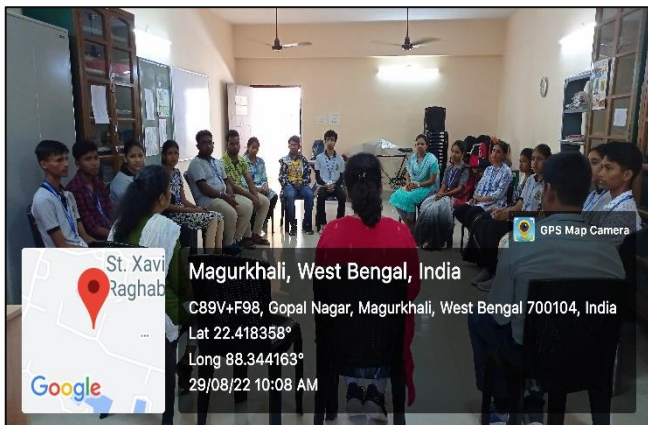
Orientation of NSS UNIT II Board Members

The Orientation for the NSS UNIT II Board members was held on 29th August 2022. The NSS UNIT I Board members joined the orientation and this meeting of both the Units added more value to programme. This Orientation was primarily conducted by the NSS Director Prof. Cheryl Francis along with the NSS coordinator Ms. Sucheta Mukherjee and the UNIT II PO, Prof. Arundhati Das. The programme began with an ice breaking session where both Boards got to know each other better.

During the orientation, the students were given a brief background about the NSS and its functioning at St. Xavier's College. This was followed by some of the rules and regulations and some DOs and DON'Ts, which they had to keep in mind. They were also given an idea about the kind of activities and programmes they could conduct. The students were given the opportunity to clarify their doubts. The orientation concluded with a fellowship meal and cutting of the ceremonial cake.



Ice-breaking session underway



Orientation session underway



Cake cutting ceremony



NSS Unit-II Board members with the staff members



The '*Not Me, But You*' brigade

I. National Regional Coordinating Institute visits St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Kolkata

Prof. Priyanka Kaushal from IIT Delhi, the National Coordinating Agency of UBA visited St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata on 1st August 2022. Prof. Cheryl Francis received her and she was taken to the Raghampur campus. The Vice Principal, Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, SJ along with Prof. Cheryl shared with her about the activities undertaken in the UBA adopted villages. Prof. Cheryl took her to one of the houses where women were involved in small income generation activities.

Prof. Priyanka was quite impressed with the works undertaken by the College under UBA. However, she also shared about various projects and schemes available which the College could take up. She gave important links like NIRDPR website from where more information could be procured. She suggested how the college could work in collaboration with the Gram Panchayat and how St. Xavier's College could become a knowledge partner at the Block and Panchayat level. Though the visit was very brief, it was meaningful and informative.



Discussion regarding UBA initiatives underway

II. Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign

Date: 13th August 2022

Venue: Rural campus at Raghampur

Theme: Independence Day celebration

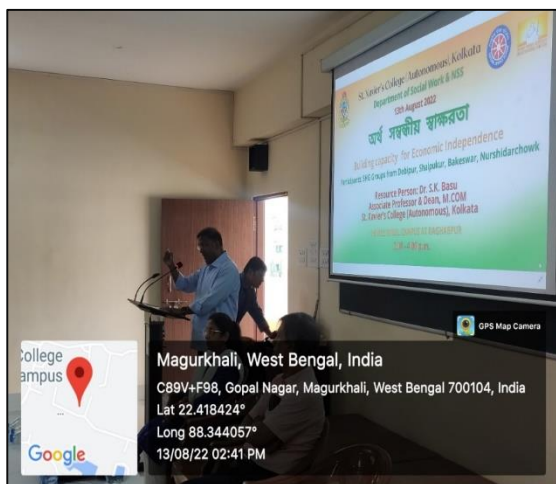
- **The importance of Financial independence for rural women**

It was felt that celebrating Independence Day by hoisting the National Flag and singing patriotic songs was not enough. Therefore, on this occasion, a capacity building session was organised for the women of the adopted villages, the theme being '**The importance of financial independence for rural women**'. The objective was to help women become economically independent and have control over their earnings. On 13th August 2022, around 50 women from 4 adopted villages (Bakeswar, Debipur, Nurshikdarchowk and Shalpokur) attended this session. 10 student volunteers were also part of the session. The resource person for this session was Dr. Sanjib Kumar Basu – Associate Professor and Dean of M.Com at St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata.

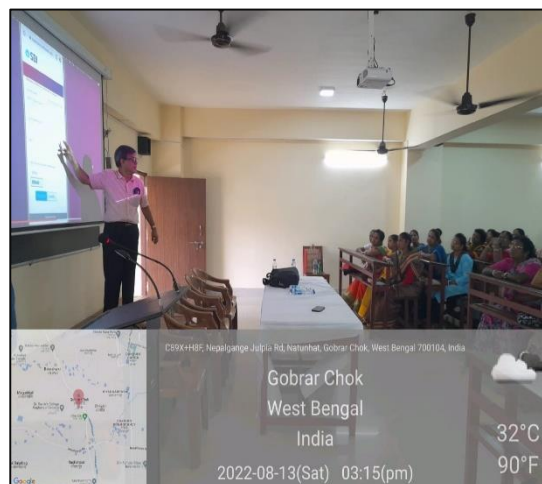
The capacity building session stressed on financial literacy. It was observed that the gender gap in usage of banking services was high in rural parts of India as rural women lacked financial literacy. Most rural women have minimal or no access to financial information, thereby restricting them from accessing financial services, especially when it is digital. Therefore the need was felt to educate these rural women on how to avail banking services, selected schemes, how to operate credit and debit cards with safety and most importantly how to have control over their bank accounts and operate it themselves rather than any other member of the family.

During the session, the women were also encouraged to begin their own income generation activity. The College was willing to give them training on specific skills like cultivation of beet leaves which was much in demand, mushroom cultivation, organic farming, and pisciculture, pen making etc. The women clarified their doubts and the capacity building exercise was an eye opener to the women. It was decided that the NSS would conduct follow up sessions in their respective villages and provide hand holding support to these women so that they become financially literate and financially independent.

Towards the end of the session, Lilupa Pailan from Shalpokur village shared, "***Amar toh smart phone nei je ami phone eh bank er katha ta dekhte parbo, kintu ami aaj ja shiklam, amar meye ke giye bolbo jate or bhyabishoteh o nijer artho r upor adhikar thaake***" (I don't have a smart phone so I will not be able to check my bank account on my phone. However, whatever I learnt today, I will share with my daughter, so that in future, she is able to have right over her money). Rinki Dolui, a 3rd year student shared, "***I always thought digital banking is risky and discouraged everyone from doing it, but today I learnt about the various security steps that are there to protect our account from being hacked***". The session ended with distributing the National Flags to everyone and taking a pledge that every woman would become financially independent and have control over their own earnings.



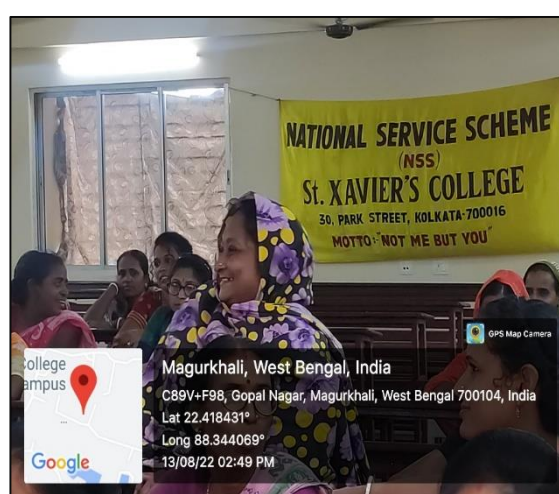
Fr. Vice Principal addressing the audience



Dr. Basu giving a demonstration



Engrossed in the session



Interaction underway



Pledging to be financially literate & independent



Group picture at the end of the session
