



**UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), KOLKATA**

PROGRESS REPORT

APRIL - JUNE 2025

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Sl. No	ADOPTED VILLAGES	TALUKA (BLOCK)	DISTRICT
1.	Bakeswar	Bishnupur I	South 24 Parganas
2.	Magurkhali		
3.	Raghabpur		
4.	Shalpukur		
5.	Debipur		

LIST OF ACTIVITIES

TITLE OF THE ACTIVITY 1: WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Objective:

- Sensitize the students towards environmental responsibility and encourage ecological stewardship.
- To familiarize students with national platforms like the My Bharat Portal and promote civic engagement through volunteer registration and participation in government initiatives.

Brief Description

In observance of **World Environment Day** on **5th June 2025**, the **UBA Cell** in collaboration with the **NSS Units I and II** of the college organized a **tree plantation drive** followed by a **group discussion on Environmental Sustainability and Plastic Pollution**. The programme was attended by **about 70 volunteers** and five staff members.

Tree Plantation Drive

The welcome address was delivered by Aaditya Biswas, NSS President of Unit I. The programme was inaugurated by **Rev. Fr. Johnson Padiyara, SJ**, Vice Principal of the Raghabpur Campus, who highlighted the significance of plantation initiatives in fostering a greener and healthier environment. Emphasizing the alarming rise in plastic consumption, Fr. Padiyara reminded the participants of the 'Golden R's'—**Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**, and added a vital fourth principle: **Refuse**. In conclusion Fr. Padiyara stated, *"Just as we cherish our mothers, so should we*

cherish Mother Earth.” Fr. Padiyara then planting the first sapling of Krishnachura, followed by Ms. Cheryl Francis, Director of Social Work, UBA Coordinator and Programme Officer of NSS Unit I. The board members of both NSS units joined the drive, and the volunteers collectively planted **50 saplings** along the boundary of wall of the rural campus at Raghampur. **Suzan Chen**, NSS board member, thanked the Vice Principal for his support and cooperation.

Group Discussion on “Beating Plastic Pollution: Solutions to Plastic Waste”

Subsequently, a group discussion followed with a welcome address and thematic introduction by **Rupam Sen**, President of NSS Unit II, who elaborated on the concept of plastic as the “silent invader” of Mother Earth and stressed the urgent need to adopt sustainable alternatives.

Under the guidance of **Ms. Cheryl Francis**, the moderator of the session, eight groups were assigned the task of responding to the following key questions:

1. *What are the three magical RRR that can transform trash into treasure and waste into wisdom?*
2. *What are some traditional or alternative methods to reduce plastic usage?*

It was interesting to see the groups discussing seriously, knowing about the magical RRR and coming up with practical solutions – use of copper, glass or earthen bottles, ceramic containers and rejecting single use plastic. Some mentioned the use of sal or bana leaves in big gatherings instead of thermocol plates. The use of eco-friendly stationery items was also discussed at large. Students mentioned the importance of waste segregation and introduction of **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**, as outlined by the **UNEP**. Finally, all the students felt the need for government regulations, including taxing excess plastic usage and conducting awareness campaigns. The group discussion concluded by Ms. Francis who shared personal examples on ways to reduce the use of plastics. Following the group presentations, **Ms. Cheryl Francis** shared personal anecdotes on sustainable living practices, such as carrying reusable containers while shopping, thereby inspiring others to reduce plastic dependency.

The event concluded with a formal **vote of thanks** delivered by **Rupam Sen**, who extended heartfelt gratitude to all faculty members, student volunteers, and organizers for their contributions to the success of the programme. The World Environment Day celebration at St. Xavier’s College, Raghampur Campus reflected our collective commitment to environmental consciousness and sustainable development. It instilled in students a deep sense of responsibility and offered pragmatic solutions to environmental challenges, particularly those posed by plastic pollution.

Orientation Session on My Bharat Portal and Volunteering Opportunities

The NSS POs of both units (Ms. Cheryl Francis & Prof. Tuhin Chitrakar) conducted an orientation for the students on how to register in the MyBharat portal and further how to register as Civil Defense Volunteers. This hands-on training was extremely useful and students understood the importance of being registered in this portal to avail the Experiential Learning Programme opportunities.

Impact:

- The 50 saplings planted contributed directly to campus greening and ecosystem restoration.
- Students initiated eco-conscious thinking, including the use of traditional practices like sal/bana leaves, copper and earthen containers, and eco-friendly stationery.
- The orientation on the My Bharat Portal equipped students with the knowledge to access national volunteering platforms and experiential learning opportunities.
- Registration as Civil Defence Volunteers broadened their scope for future engagement in civic duties and disaster preparedness initiatives.



St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME UNITS I & II
UNNAT BHARAT ABHIYAN CELL
IS OBSERVING



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

5TH JUNE 2025

Beating Plastic Pollution: Solutions to Plastic Waste



Tree plantation drive at the St. Xavier's College rural campus in Raghampur (South 24 Parganas)





Group discussion on *Beating Plastic Pollution: Solutions to Plastic Waste*



Students engaged in planting saplings of Krishnachura tree





Students presenting solutions to plastic waste & focussing on the importance of Reduce, Reuse & Recycle



Orientation and registration session on MyBharat and Civil Defence Volunteer



TITLE OF THE ACTIVITY 2: PRAYAS (VILLAGE TO COLLEGE) CAMP

Objective:

- To empower rural high school students through exposure to higher education, life skills, and career opportunities, thereby nurturing their academic aspirations and personal growth.
- To foster confidence, awareness, and social inclusion through interactive sessions, educational tours and peer learning between rural students and college volunteers.

Brief Description

Prayas (Village to College) Camp 2025, themed '*Learning Beyond Boundaries: Rising Beyond Challenges*', was organized by NSS Unit I in collaboration with the UBA cell from 19th to 22nd June 2025 in the college campus. The camp brought together **55 rural high school students (29 boys and 26 girls) from Bholakhali Adibasi Sikshaniketan** and **33 college volunteers (13 male and 20 female students)** for a transformative four-day experience. **This camp was sponsored by HDFC bank (Dalhousie branch).**

The camp commenced with an inaugural ceremony led by College Principal, Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, SJ, along with Vice Principals of Commerce Morning, Commerce Evening & Management Studies, the Teacher-in Charge of Bholakhali school, Shri Ujjal Das, Mr. Chiradeep Biswas, Vice President & Cluster Head of HDFC Bank, Alumni members and well-wishers. After seeking God's blessings, Fr. Principal welcomed the participants to St. Xavier's College, not only as Prayas 2025 campers, but also with the hope of their becoming students of our college in the near future. Father Principal motivated the children and assured them of all help, educational or financial, that they might require. His words were clear and promising: "*Ami chai class 12 shesh kore tomra amader college e porbe. Takar chinta korbe na, tomader jonno amra achi*". (I want you to complete class 12 and study at our college. Do not worry about money; we are here for you.) After a meaningful inauguration, the participants broke into groups for an energetic ice breaking session followed by lunch and rest.

Later in the afternoon, the rural students walked through hallowed halls of the college on a guided campus tour by the NSS volunteers. The students meandered through computer labs and the classrooms, the natural sciences labs, their eyes were alight with quiet awe. The idea of a different life, one lived in the orbit of books and electronic circuits, smart boards and microscopes, began to ferment in their imaginations fuelling their ambitions.

That evening, **Ma'am Cheryl Francis** held a mirror to the campers' internal landscapes. In her session on personality development, she pried open a space too often shuttered: **Overcoming Fears**. She emphasised, "*Ei 'loke ki bhab be' bhoi diye amra nijeke bondho kore rakhi. Jokhon amra nijeke accept korbo tokhoni bakirao amader accept kore nebe*". (The fear of social judgement keeps us locked inside our own mind. Accept yourself as you are and others will also accept you.). The session encouraged the students and created immediate results as the students from Bholakhali stood up one after the other to speak in front of the audience, a feat that they'd thought was too intimidating to be executed.

On **20th June**, the city of Kolkata itself became a classroom as the campers were taken on **educational excursions to the Birla Industrial & Technological Museum (BITM) and the Indian Museum**. These visits offered students hands-on learning experiences and exposure to scientific and cultural knowledge beyond textbooks. Ankita Mandal, a 12th grader from Bholakhali, said, "*Science jeta amra pori boi te r chokher samne jeta dekhlam duto onek e alada. Ota experience kora ta sotti e ekta bishes jinish*" (The science we study in textbooks is rather different from experiencing it in front of our eyes, the experience is fascinating). Upon

return to the college the students were taken on a tour to the *Observatory*. Stars, once distant metaphors in poems, became real things with names. The students were awed when they heard that Father Lafont had predicted the killer cyclone of November 1867 from the same observatory that they stood inside.

On **21st June**, the participants **observed International Yoga Day**, aligning with the national initiative and emphasizing the importance of holistic well-being. This was followed by **sessions on gender awareness by Advocate Sonali Panda** which promoted gender sensitivity and the subtle ways in which gender-based discrimination is ingrained in us. When asked to offer the solution to tackle the issue at hand, Sudip Das, a class 10 student expressed, *“Amader mon keo paltate hobe, je eta thik hoche na.”* (We must change the way we think and have the courage to point out what is wrong and unjust.)

The **session on cyber safety** focused on equipping students with tools to safely navigate the digital world, taking aid of real-life cases. The students were taught of precautions and remedies and they listened keenly because the world no longer arrives on foot or through paper envelopes, but rather through screens and electrical signals. A few questions based on the session were asked which the students answered with enthusiasm. The campers were then led to the MCVA room for a movie screening of **‘Super 30’**, a film throwing light upon how the path to becoming educated, though filled with hardships, builds not only character and a better future for the youth, but also brings a live change in the society.

On the last day, on **22nd June** the final **session was on career guidance including information on government scholarships and higher education pathways**. These discussions were informative and empowering as the campers learnt about so many ways of establishing oneself professionally: academia, research, corporate and government jobs, small businesses, alternate careers in vocational skills, sport, and creative fields, etc. The volunteers reminded the students that there are several doors to knowledge and success and one must have the confidence to knock on one and the resilience to walk the long path.

The final evaluation provided an opportunity for the campers to discuss their new learnings and reflections. During the valedictory ceremony Father Principal declared the camp to be a success. The rural youth and volunteers alike shared their camp experience with one student from Bholakhali saying, *“We will come back in the future, not as a participant, but as a student of this prestigious college.”* Following this the campers from Bholakhali were awarded with prizes. The valedictory ceremony concluded with a group photo after which everyone enjoyed a farewell lunch. At last it was time for the students to go back home but they assured the volunteers it wouldn't be their final goodbye. The camp empowered rural students through knowledge-sharing, life skill development, and intercultural exchange. It created a space where learning extended beyond classrooms and students learned to rise beyond personal and social challenges.

Impact:

- The camp provided 55 rural students their first experience of a college environment, helping them envision themselves in higher education.
- Through the sessions students overcame their fear of public speaking and self-doubt. Many who had never spoken publicly found the courage to speak before an audience, reflecting a powerful shift in self-belief.
- Sessions on gender sensitivity, cyber safety, yoga, and career guidance equipped students with vital knowledge for navigating real-world challenges.



St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata
 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
 NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME UNIT I



WARM WELCOME TO STUDENTS FROM
Bholakhali Adibasi Shikshaniketan

FOR

PRAYAS (Village to College) CAMP 2025

LEARNING BEYOND BOUNDARIES: RISING BEYOND CHALLENGES

Date:
 19th - 22nd June, 2025

Venue:
 College Campus



Arrival of students from Bholakhali Adibasi Sikshaniketan school, followed by the inaugural ceremony on 19th June 2025





Fr. Principal motivating the students to pursue higher education followed by campus tour



Young students in awe of the campus





Session on 'Overcoming Fears' conducted by Ma'am Cheryl Francis



Ending the day with cultural performances





Students enjoyed walks in the galleries, coal mine, 3D show, & science show with special focus on space



A day of learning with fun at Birla Industrial and Technology Museum & Indian Museum on 20th June 2025





Guided tour of the Indian Museum helped the students understand the legacy and history behind each display and artefacts



Students with the Indian Museum interns who helped them understand every artefact



Bidding goodbye to BITM



Students with NSS volunteers at the Indian Museum



Participants of Prayas Camp joined *Yoga Sangam* organised by the College – From live streaming to performing yoga asanas on 21st June 2025



Yoga for One Earth One Health





Session on gender sensitization by Adv. Sonali Panda followed by a session on cyber security and digital literacy conducted by the NSS volunteers



NSS volunteers conducted a session on career planning and government schemes followed by Camp evaluation





Cultural performances by NSS volunteers and the rural students mesmerised all



Ending day three with cultural performances





Rural students and NSS volunteers share their camp experience during the Valedictory ceremony on 22nd June 2025



Fr. Principal along with other dignitaries release KADAM 2024-2025 – the Department magazine



Through the prize distribution ceremony, the Fathers motivated the rural students to pursue higher education



Fr. Vice Principal handed over sports equipments (sponsored by SXCCAA) to the Bholakhali teachers



Dignitaries hand over tokens of appreciation to the NSS team for their hard work during the Camp



A mix of emotions for the rural students and NSS volunteers





Time to bid goodbye with a promise to welcome the participants as college students!



Prayas (Village to College) Camp 2025
'Learning Beyond Boundaries: Rising Beyond Challenges'

Next Action Plan – July to September 2025

Sl. no.	Activity to be conducted
1.	Awareness session for rural youth on gender sensitization on 13 th July 2025
2.	Village Education Programme in adopted villages on 20 th and 27 th July, 10 th , 24 th and 31 st August and on 14 th September 2025
3.	Observance of Independence Day (Har Ghar Tiranga) on 17 th August 2025
