



SURYA SEN MAHAVIDYALAYA

(NAAC ACCREDITED)

Block-B, Surya Sen Colony, Siliguri- 734004, Jalpaiguri

Newsletter

Pandemic Special
Online Edition

Collegium. Volume IV No. 1

January - June 2021

From the Desk of the Chief Editor:



Dr P. K. Mishra
Principal

The on-going Pandemic is still holding its sway all over the world and there's no easy respite from its onslaught! The educational institutions in our state could not even be opened for the full-fledged resumption of physical classes. There has been a prediction of resurgence of Covid 19 again in its third wave in the coming months. In such a situation, the government could not take a decision of opening up the educational institutions risking the super-spread of this vicious Pandemic. So, the doors of our College are still closed for the beloved students.

Since March 2020, the physical classes had to be kept suspended. The faculties and the students would have to take recourse to online mode of teaching & learning. The college authorities have been trying utmost to make this exercise a fruitful one and created Google Suite platform for all. Even, new e-mail ids with a new college domain name have been created for almost 9000 students of the college. This has been really a gigantic task. But even then 10% -15% students could not join the classes either for lack of proper resources or for poor connectivity. However, these are areas where we could do nothing as of now. While the physical classes are not possible, the online mode seems to only a viable mode.

As noted, the educational institutions all over the country are trying to find out ways on how to continue teaching and evaluation in this 'new normal' situation. Even then we have not stopped publishing our Newsletter; we could continue its publication, though in a bit staggered way. Since the onset of the Pandemic, we have published two Pandemic Special Online Issues with inputs from the cross-section of intelligentsia across the country. In this January-June 2021 issue of the Newsletter, we would like to focus on this broad theme: Pandemic & the Psychological Stress: The Students' Perspective.

The earlier two Online issues of the Collegium dealt on two central themes, viz., 'Pandemic' & 'Online Teaching & Learning- Points & Counter-Points' where a cross-section of intelligentsia across the country have ventilated their opinions. In this issue, we are presenting two invited articles; the one of these two articles has been written by one of the best Psychiatrists of the country and an eminent writer & researcher on adolescent psychology, Dr. Gautam Bandyopadhyay. We are immensely grateful to them for enriching this issue of Collegium with their valuable insights on the theme.

The academic & extra-curricular activities undertaken during Jan-June, 2021 by the various academic departments & the NSS/NCC wings, mostly online, have also been presented in this issue. However, this issue has a novelty as this contains an in depth analysis of an online survey conducted by the Collegium team and analysed by Prof Manomita Sarkar.

We are hopeful that this online version too would be welcomed by all.



*Dr. Gautam Bandyopadhyay
Professor and Head
Department of Psychiatry
Medical College, Kolkata*

Each and every experience is a learning experience. It's especially true and applicable in cases of negative experiences of our life. Difficult situations make us strong. Just imagine Hercules without a single task, lying on a couch, watching movies through Netflix throughout the day! No doubt he has developed a potbelly or will develop it very soon. Therefore experiencing "stress" is a "must do" phenomenon in our life.

With the growing trend of taking our current pandemic situation as an "end of the world" panicomic is therefore wrong. These are nothing but the expressions of our age old default mode setup of mind, which relies more on our survival instincts.

Understandably over the period of more than one year, our stress is much prolonged and it's full of uncertainties. It appears to be so high at times that it seems unbearable. But if you think for a moment with your full visionaries you can clearly see your options.

Natural software of human brain is meant to deal most of the stressful situations either by fight or by flight. But there are certain conditions like this present one where attempts to cope using fight/flight mechanisms will definitely fail. Here lies the importance of "acceptance".

By using the default mode human brain is primed to avert danger. There is a "fire alarm" in our brain, known as amygdala which puts on the anxiety button whenever there is a threat perception. At the same time there is one significant area of our brain, known as pre frontal cortex, which used to control this panic button. Using this area of brain our instant reactions become reflections. This is the most critical phase when we are able to understand the significance of accepting the reality, otherwise, we have to continue counting the waves only.

We know that we are not in a position of ease. Primary pillars of success in combating this difficult situation are--Physical distancing, self-hygiene and self-protective measures like mask wearing, early detection of symptoms and urgent restitution of treatment whatever indicated and vaccination ASAP. This pandemic is also an "infodemic", therefore, I would advise all of you to not to go for measures that science does not permit.

Sometimes it may raise our pseudo confidence and possible lacunae of getting the infection.

Don't panic, don't stigmatize! Because stigma around such disease actually invokes the possibility of suppressing the symptoms at the very outset when there was scope for the treatment! Stigma is a double edged sword, it is also the means for community spread. Look, I'm ok, is a statement very common among young adults and adolescents. For the youth the primary question is what is our fate regarding further examination, career consolidation?

This is definitely a very very pertinent question. Our students and youths are really in big trouble. But so far as our understanding goes, I think our young generation is not that callous that they are unable to take the responsibilities of the time. I don't like to see them just as behavioural addicts absorbed in their rectangular mirror, also known as "mobiles"! This is the high time when there is a challenge to look after on their families, to invent their own structures!

There is a loss of "structure" in all of our lives, that's why we have to format it again. Until the Covid episode our problem was to choose from thousands of options, problem of abundance was so common in our brilliant youth generation. Now as our options are limited, we have to strengthen us with the power of minimalism!

We are very much concerned about the future job settlement, but in this digital era there are so many avenues to learn, we can add up so many new feathers in our armamentarium that after ten years we are able to say, look, I'm the product of Covid batch, don't underestimate me!

Just do continue structuring your days, it will give you more strength. There is no space for depression, addiction and boredom. You will never get a chance like this, so try to utilise the altruism hidden in your mind to extend your world.

Please wait for a while, be patient-that will increase your frustration tolerance! Just shift your mind paradigm. Covid is a teacher, with all your aggression and anxiety you can't beat it.

I can see you as a vibrant youth in near future, because you have accepted the reality and flexibly structured your time following the most important sagacity--- " you have no control over your outside torments, that's why you have to control yourself only".

Pandemic and Mental Stress Among the Students

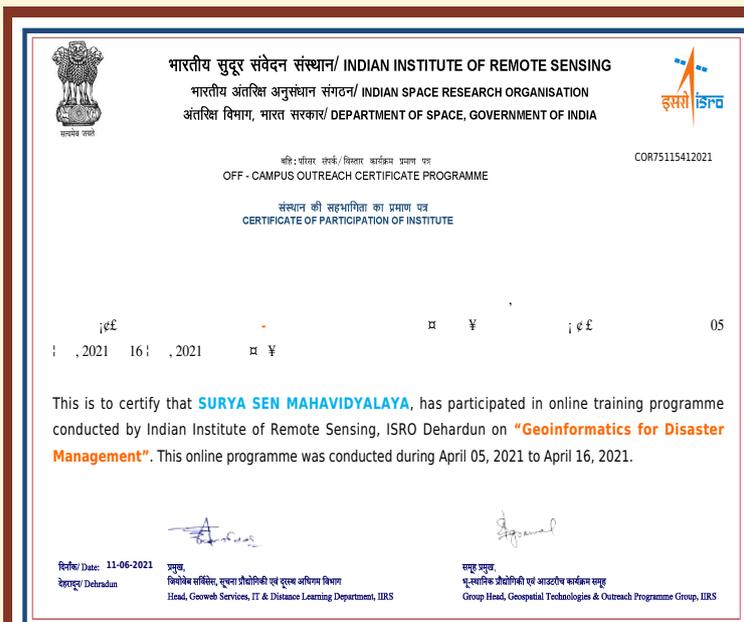


Dr Mrinal Kanti Basak
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
A B N Seal College
Cooch Behar

It is a matter of deep concern that the long lasting pandemic situation brings a negative impact among the students of every educational institution which could have long-term consequences on their health and learning process. We all know that mental health is the status of well being in which a student can realize his or her own ability, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make contributions within his own capacity. For example, when we join an institution as a student, we all know there will be examinations. At the time of examinations we feel anxiety, if we are able to understand then that it is me who is causing anxiety to my mind not the examinations. What is causing anxiety is something else is our inability to handle our own thoughts and our emotions. Actually, we don't know how to handle it. In the evolutionary process of human history our cerebral activities or the intelligence is a recent phenomenon or new one, and we have still not learned how to deal with it. We have an intelligence for which we don't have a stable enough base. That is why we are suffering either from stress or anxiety or depression or whatsoever but reality is that our own intelligence has turned against us.

Suppose, you have been given a sharp knife but you don't know how to handle it. Every day you keep cutting yourself and you think there is something wrong with the knife. But actual reason is - you don't have a steady hand to use it. So we create ghost of our own and try to fight against them. Unfortunately our education system from the early ages have not taught us this much; how to handle our thoughts? How to handle our emotions? If we do not know how to handle our hand, a knife may create a lot of problems. So it is the crying needs of the time that every educational institution should introduce some course on how to handle our thought process and emotions. If we knew how to handle our thoughts and emotions then anxiety or stress would not be a problem. But instead of learning to handle it we are giving labels to all our inabilities. We all know that the greatest weapon against stress or anxiety is our ability to choose one thought over another. So it should be practiced in each and every educational institution.

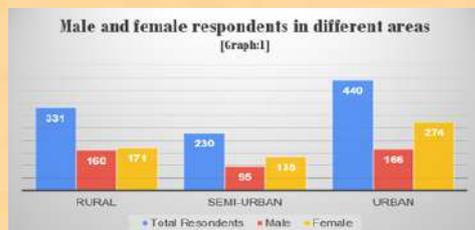
Certificates



LOCAL CONTEXT NATIONAL REALITY : An Indicative Outcome

On behalf of Surya Sen Mahavidyalaya, Siliguri, a survey had been initiated between 15th June to 19th June, 2021 to reach out and measure the psychological state of college students during the pandemic period. Out of 7556 respondents of college students in present session, a sample (1001) survey had been taken place with random basis, among them male and female respondents are 421 and 580 respectively.

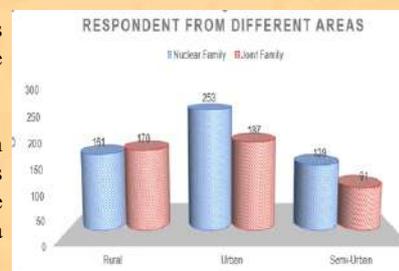
In changed circumstances, institution wanted to identify the underline scenario of the nature of the pace of study, to address the internet connectivity issues, to measure the availability of gadgets, to diagnose physical and mental health hazards, to realize the uncertainty of future of the students for open-book evaluation system with their eyes and many more by placing 20 questions before the respondents.



The fact sheet shows that almost one third respondents are from rural area and two third respondents are from semi-urban and urban area [See Graph:1]. Its' clearly shows that connectivity in rural areas are major constraint to carryout online education in India.

The same chart shows another interesting thing. The percentage of male and female respondents in rural area are almost equal. On the contrary, female respondents are gradually enhanced in semi-urban and urban areas. This indicative figure teaches us to understand that male students are either involved with livelihood process to support their family or they are frustrated to combat with present economic environment. It also tells us; economic opportunity is more in urban areas than in rural areas.

Though the objective of this survey was to analyze the pace of study and consequences but graph-2 depicts us nuclear families exist in incremental manner at semi-urban (40%) and urban areas (60%) where in rural areas, these are almost equal.

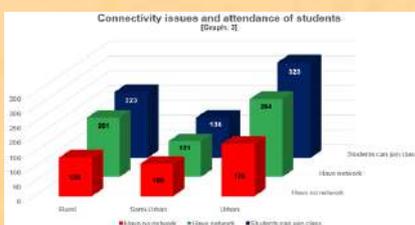


The following table shows the division of families in different areas where students are busy with social media on and average 1 to 3 hours a day in regular basis apart from their scheduled classes. Table 1 shows two things: students coming from joint family have less involvement (average 44%) in social media rather than nuclear family (average 49%). On the other hand, students coming from nuclear family of urban area are keen to involve in social media (53%).

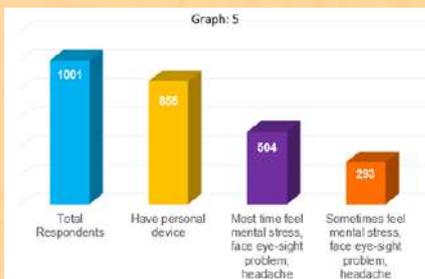
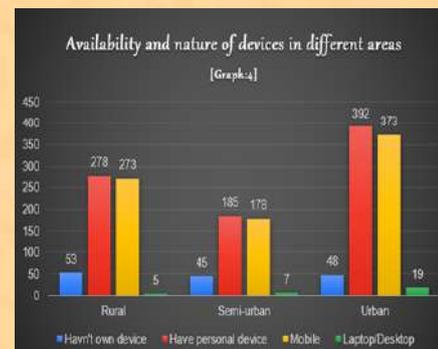
Out of 331 rural students, 130 students face severe internet connectivity which is almost 39% of total respondents, whereas in semi urban areas, the percentage of no / shadow connectivity is approx. 47% and in urban areas are 40%. So, it can be derived from the collected data that internet connectivity is still a major issue in India regardless of the village and town for rolling out of online based education system. It is necessary to remember that usually in rural areas, there are only one service provider use to provide their service, but in semi-urban and urban areas, there are more than one service provider exists. So, it can be assumed that the depicted percentage of no/shadow connectivity due to wrong selection of service provider or respondents are not enough loyal.

Table1	Joint family	Involved in social media	% of involvement	Nuclear family	Involved in social media	% of involvement
Rural	170	76	44%	161	78	48%
Semi-Urban	91	42	46%	189	66	47.5%
Urban	187	83	44%	253	136	53%

This is very significant that where 130, 109 and 176 students have no internet access, though 223, 136 and 323 students can join class. It clearly shows that 7% students from rural area, 6% students from semi-urban area and 13% students from urban area have to migrate temporarily from their home into the network zone to continue their class or online based study.



Among the respondents from rural area, semi-urban area and urban area; 84% students, 80% students and 89% students respectively have their own devices most of which are mobile (Graph-4). The graph clearly shows that only a few can hold their attention during online classes over the hours and memorize the given lecture. It can be apprehended that there is chance by the students to login the desired class and engage themselves with different activities. 592 students i.e., half of the respondents have clear opinion that they feel bore to some extent to continue one-way oriented online class rather than live interactive session. 666 students out of 1001 respondents are hungry to get back their traditional classes if situation permits. 956 students opined that they harshly miss their college environment.



The graph-5 clearly shows that increasing eyesight problem with frequent headaches are attributed to prolonged screen time by half of the respondents. In addition, increasing anxiety of connectivity drop and depression due to home confinement are the painful reality. Whether it's the mental health, physical health or a combination of both – students are experiencing it in regular basis. Taking online classes on bed, sofas are one of the commonest reasons for back pains and obesity by 91% students.

In the recent past, accumulation of more marks of respective academic discipline appeared as a decisive role to enter white color job in Indian economy. Common students use to apply the scope of open book evaluation system in their life during this pandemic situation [Piechart-6]. 531 students out of 1001 respondents expressed their willing to do so. On the contrary, 397 students i.e.; almost 40% students didn't hide their concerns. They strongly believe that it would create bad impression while appearing in an interview.

Couple of students also believe that they have been passed out without adequate knowledge and realization of their respective discipline.

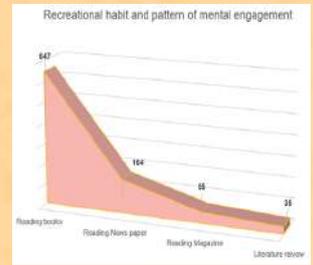
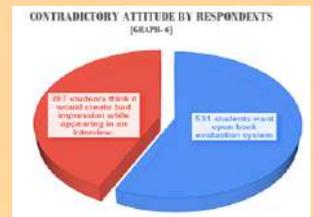
375 students i.e.; one-third of the respondents are not totally satisfied with open book evaluation and assignment systems.

Online classes have been affected severely the mental health of students along with parents, even for teachers. For individuals having less control over themselves, it appears as worsen. To spend hours every day in front of online platform without social interaction and without any passionate environment forces the students under trauma. As per chart-7, 492 students disclosed that they become repulsive sometimes whereas 320 students used to react most of the time on any small matter. Therefore 81% students have little control over self. This is very alarming for the society in future. Collected data shows that problem is acute within nuclear families.

Last but not the least, an encouraging fact has been come out that more than 50% respondent declares that they use to read books preferably their study books. It denotes that they are hungry to fulfil the lack of online education system. On the other side, 10.3% NCC, NSS students associated with institutional social groups and 29.6% use to enjoy different cultural competitions, workshops, webinars and others virtual programmes organized by the institution.

To an extent, reading newspaper, magazine and other creative activities by the students help us to draw silver line within the disrupted environment.

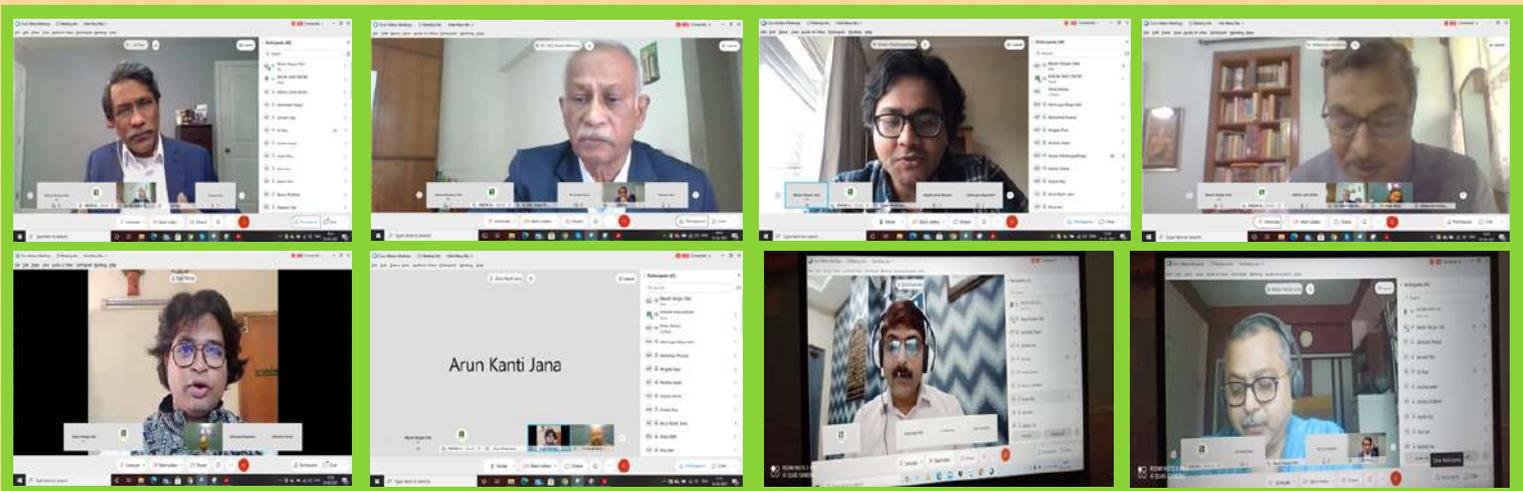
Any survey is such a systematic tool that mirrors the framework of information. As a result, just as what we do not want to see comes up, similarly the possibility that is dormant also comes up. Any survey serves as a guide to our future. So, it is hoped that this report will help researchers, teachers, parents and general public to think and take appropriate action in future.



*Analyzed and written by—
Manomita Sarkar, Assistant Professor
Department of Economics, Surya Sen Mahavidyalaya*

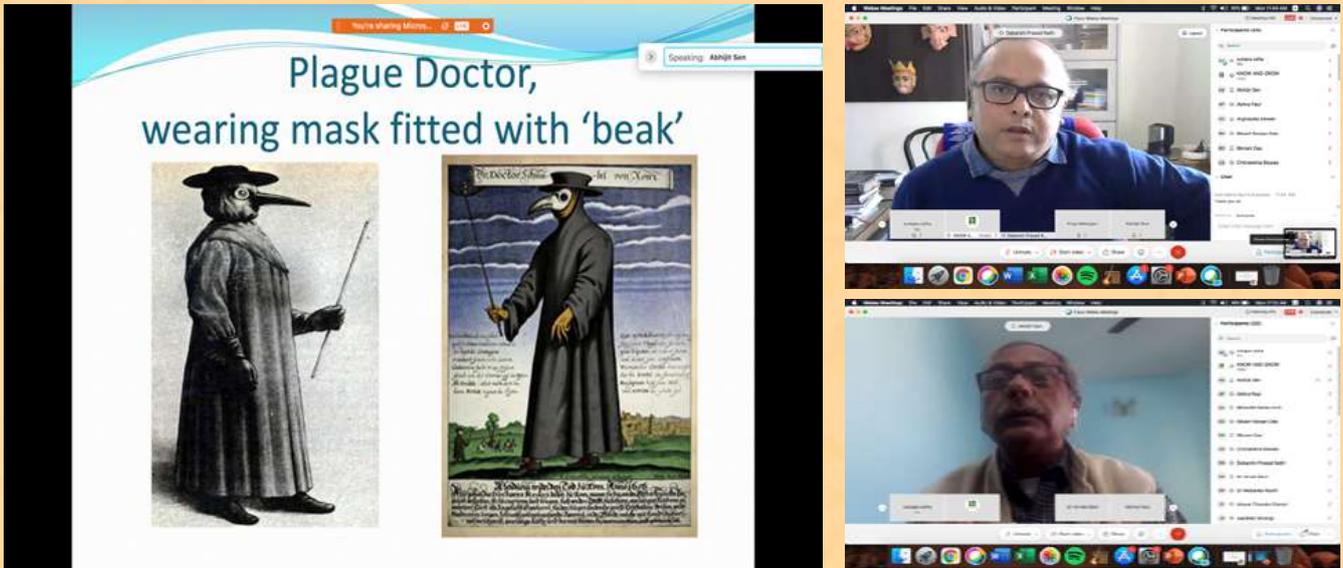
GLIMPSES OF THE ICSSR-ERC SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR ON 'CULTURE OF FEAR IN WORLD POLITICS: ORIGIN AND RAMIFICATIONS' ORGANISED BY THE DEPT. OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, SSM ON FEBRUARY 23-24, 2021

Speakers: 1. Professor Ali Riaz, Illinois State University, USA, 2. Professor Md Golam Rahaman, Former Chief Information Commissioner, Bangladesh, 3. Professor D K Mohanta, Former VC, 4. Dr Arpam Mukhopadhyay, University of Warwick, UK 5. Prof Rajib Nandy, University of Chittagong, Bangladesh, 6. Professor A K Jana, University of North Bengal, 7. Dr P K Mishra, Principal, SSM, 8. Dr B R Deb, Convener, Webinar



ICSSR Sponsored National Webinar Organised by Dept. of English

The Department of English organized one ICSSR Sponsored National webinar titled, SOCIETY, DISASTER AND RESILIENCE: LESSONS FROM LITERATURE, On 8th February 2021. Dr Jaydeep Sarangi, Principal, New Alipore College, Kolkata, inaugurated the webinar followed by the Key Note Speech by Dr Abhijit Sen, Professor, Department of English & OMEL, Visva Bharati. Dr Debarshi Prasad Nath, Professor, Department of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University and Dr Binayak Roy, Assistant Professor, Department of English, North Bengal University, were the two invited speakers. The web seminar explored literary topos across genres, which highlight human trust with cataclysmic events, stories that chronicle the surge in community spirit, and help us reiterate our faith in civilizational ethos. More than 30 scholars read out well-researched papers at the webinar.



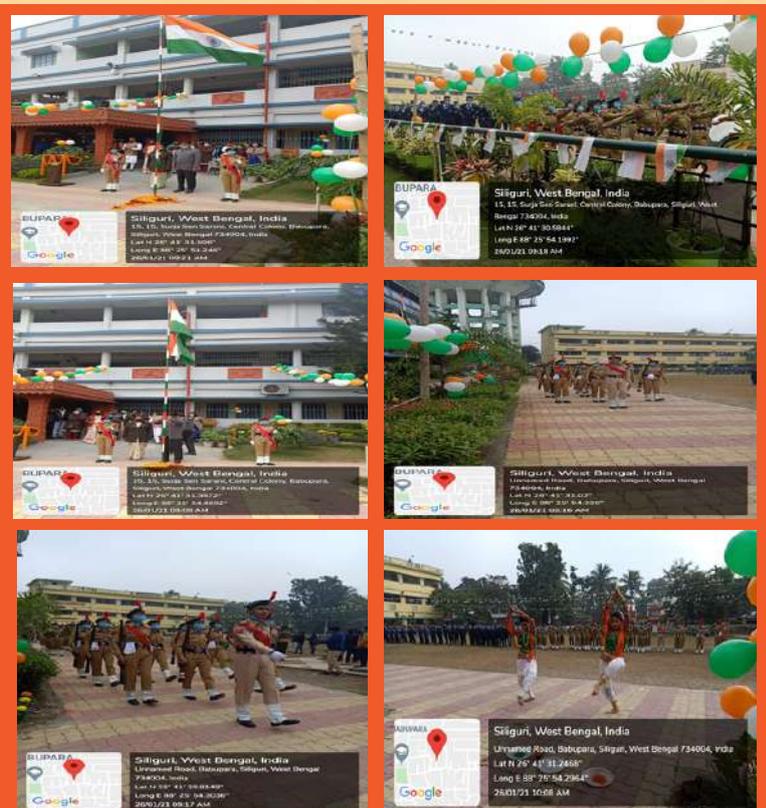
REPORT ON THE PROGRAMMES



Masterda Surya Sen Martyr's Day & Swami Vivekananda Birth Day Celebration on January 12, 2021



Netaji Birth Day: January 23, 2021



72nd Republic Day 2021



Masterda Birth Day: March 22, 2021



International Mother Language Day: February 21, 2021



Blood Donation Camp: Feb 12, 2021



Thalassemia Awareness Camp: March 24, 2021



Food and Mask Distribution by NCC cadets in Red light area and surroundings in collaboration with Lions Club of Siliguri Givers: May 29, 2021



Awareness and Pledge by NCC cadets on 'NO TOBACCO DAY': May 31, 2021



Observation world Environment Day: Tree Plantation: June 05, 2021



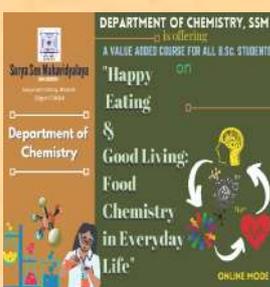
Inauguration of Drinking Water Facility: June 22, 2021



Sanitizer Machine & PPE Kits donated to College NSS by DR B R Deb & Smt. S Mandal respectively: June 17, 2021

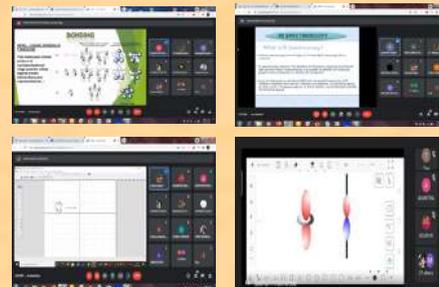
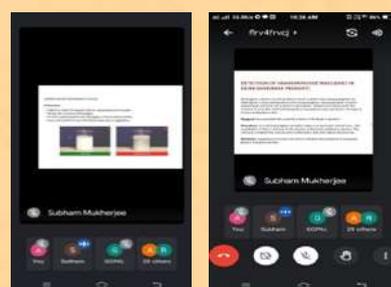


DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY: REPORTS ON ONLINE PROGRAMMES



1. VALUE ADDED COURSE ON FOOD CHEMISTRY IN EVERYDAY LIFE: 21 April- 17 May 2021

An online Value Added Course on food chemistry entitled as Happy Eating and Good living: Food chemistry in everyday life was conducted by the Department of Chemistry in collaboration with IQAC, SSM. Course duration- 30 hours, Total number of Participants: 67

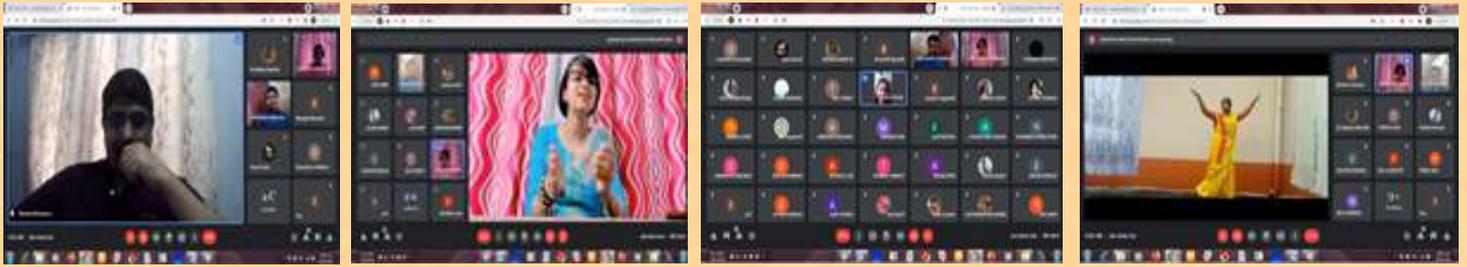


2. Students' Seminar on Various aspects in Chemistry: 9- 14 June 2021

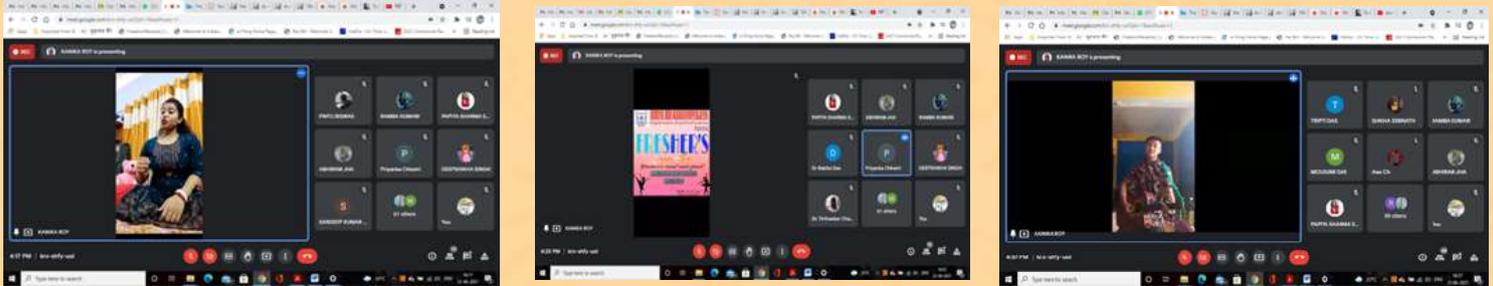
Best Presenters: Sayani Paul (4th Sem) and Avantika Bhattacharjee & Soubhik Kr. Biswas (jointly/6th Sem)



ONLINE FRESHERS' WELCOME: DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY: JANUARY 14, 2021



ONLINE FRESHERS' WELCOME: DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE: JANUARY 22, 2021



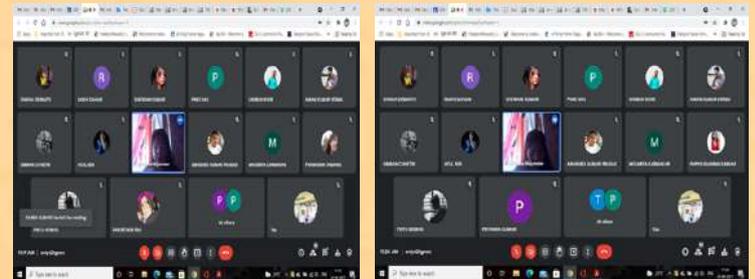
INVITED LECTURES: DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE: JUNE 10 & 26, 2021



1. 10/06/2021-

'Israel Palestine Conflict' :

Speaker-
Mr. Chepal Sherpa,
Research Scholar at
the Centre for Political
Studies, JNU.



2. 26/06/2021-

'Formal Equality: Equality of Opportunity':

Speaker- Ms. Abhirupa Majumder, Assistant Professor of
Political Science, A.P.C. Roy Govt. College

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