

GYANODAYA – IV EDUCATIONAL TRIP- REPORT

General

1. The University of Delhi through its flagship project – GYANODAYA embarked on another milestone journey through its fourth such endeavour across the Indian landscape, as **GYANODAYA IV**, with the theme of “**Urbanization – Now and Then**”, on its very own ‘**College on Wheels – GYANODAYA Express**’.
2. GYANODAYA IV was special and unique in more ways than one, in that it was conducted through teaching and learning “on-wheels”, where students were divided into 56 groups and assigned mentors (from University faculty) and formed clusters for undertaking minor research projects through the journey. This kept them constantly involved, thinking, analyzing and correlating their academic curriculum with the real life issues. The projects assigned to these study groups exposed them to the world that they will enter in the near future and enabled them to develop unique and individual perspectives in line with the world view. The project topics were carefully and diligently chosen through an extensive iterative process so as to ensure their relevance and significance to applied knowledge and ranged from diverse fields and subjects relating to study of environment, ecology, urbanization, migratory patterns, cultures & history and governance issues for a better tomorrow through waste management, civic facilities & infrastructure and disaster management

Aim

3. The aim of GYANODAYA IV was ***to develop skills in students to undertake research through project studies and expose them to the urbanization of rural and urban India through the prism of developing cities and industrial centres across the cities of Kanpur, Varanasi, Bhopal, Ahmedabad and Surat.*** The students were also confronted with various aspects of governance related to the development and growth of these cities and the dynamics of managing population centres to include migratory labour and their problems.
4. The endeavour was a unique experience since apart from offering the students a deeper insight into the rapidly developing Indian rural countryside, it also facilitated the students to grasp the essential problems associated with the management and development of these cities and the aspirations of their inhabitants from the city administration/ municipal corporations towards good governance. GYANODAYA, as always also provided a platform for the social intermingling, interaction between approximately a thousand students of various colleges of the University of Delhi thus imbibing amongst them a sense of respect for each other’s culture,

heritage, customs and traditions. The project study based approach also promoted team building and mutual understanding of work styles.

Duration

5. The trip was organised over a nine day period wef **11 March – 19 March 2014**.

Route

6. GAYANODAYA –IV was flagged off from Safdurjung Railway Station, New Delhi by Shri Ashok Thakur, Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt of India. The train followed the route through the picturesque landscape of Kanpur- Varanasi- Bhopal- Ahmedabad – Surat before returning to Delhi.

Locations Visited and Detailed Report on the Conduct of the Visit.

- **Kanpur**

- The train arrived at Kanpur station in the wee hours of 12 March 2014. The students groups headed for the sites of fertilizer and leather industry for getting a firsthand experience of their sample population for the respective research studies. Students undertook surveys and collection of data to study the same and draw out useful inferences for their respective studies alongwith their assigned mentors. Projects made some progress through the day with students conducting interviews of stakeholders at Sarsaiya Ghat, leather tanneries, Fertilizer industry.
- The interaction at IIT, Kanpur was the primary takeaway from the tour as students got an opportunity to freely interact with the representatives of the industries, Director IIT and Dean Academics – IIT. They discussed about the projects undertaken by the students of IIT for the development of Kanpur as a model city and special emphasis on the “Clean Ganga” project.

- **Varanasi**

- The day two and three (13 and 14 March 2014) of the educational trip was dedicated to the visit to the holy city of Varanasi and the seat of higher learning, the Benares Hindu University (BHU). The students took a great deal of interest in interacting with the staff and understanding the history of BHU through Art and Archaeological Museum – Bharat Kala Bhavan. The collection includes archaeological materials, paintings, textiles and costumes, decorative art, Indian philately and literary and

archival materials. Most of its collections are historically important, aesthetically beautiful and enjoy certain amount of uniqueness.

- From BHU the students were divided into three groups. One moved to the silk weavers, the second to DLW and the third to Sarnath museum. The student groups with projects related to the study of the silk industry interacted with the silk weavers and developed an understanding of the processes and problems relating to this industry. The students envisaged great deal of interest in learning about the issues plaguing the once thriving Banarasi silk industry such as the introduction of mechanical looms, flooding of market with cheaper Chinese imitation silk, lack of government incentives, non-availability of dedicated power supply and other issues related to market dynamics. These interactions were documented through response to questionnaires and interviews.

- The students undertaking project study related to Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) of the Indian Railways proceeded to the DLW plant to understand the fundamentals of coach design. The groups interacted with the management and workforce at DLW and understood the problems of the workers and floor management issues.

- Another group went to visit the museum at Sarnath maintained by ASI to understand the historical significance of the place and the maintenance of this monument by ASI.

- **During their visit to Sarnath, a lunch break was organised at the nearby Jain temple, which had adequate shade since the ASI had not permitted lunch at their premises. During this break, while the students had their lunch the beehive in the trees above was probably deliberately disturbed by local miscreants. Children were immediately evacuated to the buses by the Coordinator and her team . It was also ensured that children who suffered minor multiple bites were administered immediate first aid by the Gyanodaya doctors and with the help of locals in the area. Further since the personal belongings of the children to include mobiles, bags and laptops, wallets and personal belongings were also recovered from the site by the coordinator without any loss being reported for the same.**

- The students visited the Bhainsa Sur Ghats on the bank of Ganges, where they got a personal experience of the rituals and religious formalities performed at the ghats and their significance. Varanasi famous for the great and pious river, Ganga was also

studied by certain groups for ecological pollution by affluent discharge by industries, waste material management and the success of the 'Clean Ganga' program of the government and the involvement of NGOs. They also got an opportunity to interact with the locals for their data collection.

- **Bhopal**

- Visit to the historical Sanchi was organized on 15 March 2014 under the aegis of Archaeological Society of India (ASI). The train got delayed by about ten hours approximately. But still we managed to visit the Stupa. The students undertaking historical and cultural research as part of the tour got an opportunity to study the 'Great Stupa' at Sanchi which is one of the oldest existing stone structures in India and was originally commissioned by the emperor Ashok the Great in the 3rd century BC and learn about the other stupas too. Besides study of the historical and religious aspects, the students also learned of the conservation efforts of ASI towards preserving and showcasing this historical wealth of our nation.
- The students later proceeded to spend the night at various hotels under the arrangements of IRCTC.
- Visits to several places of historical importance was organized on 16 March 2014 to include the ancient Bhimbetka caves where student groups undertook study of the historical importance of the place and drew a comparative analysis of the ancient times and their methods of management of civic amenities, viz water supply, sewage etc and the system prevalent today. The pre-historic paintings were awe inspiring as they depicted many a lessons for us to draw out from the ancient civilizations.
- Certain student groups also conducted study of the Lower lake for ecological issues and development of tourism while others visited and studied the Bharat Bhawan. The Doordarshan team interviewed the students and faculty asking them of their projects and gyanodaya concept. Then we boarded the train for Ahmedabad.

- **Ahmedabad**

- On 17th March 2014 GYANODAYA Express checked into Ahmedabad. At the station we were welcomed by the Principal. Govt College Ahmedabad and who with his team accompanied us to all the places we were to visit. From the station we moved

to visit the historical sites of Lothal , one of the most important cities of the ancient Harappan civilization was organised for the students of the University, where they studied the excavations and remains of dockyard, town and cemetery of earlier times and also visited the museum. The historical research drew out useful and pertinent lessons for the students from these civilizations.

- The contribution of ASI towards the success of the visit was praise worthy since they took great pains in explaining the various facets of the ancient civilization to the students.
- The students then got an opportunity to taste the local food organized by IRCTC at Lohana Mahajan Wadi- one of the local venues. The students did waste a lot of food. Visit to the Sabarmati Ashram was also organised where students learnt of the Mahatma and his philosophy through the photographs and artifacts maintained at the museum. They experienced a deep sense of pride and peace through the atmosphere of the pious place of the Mahatma, Hriday Kunj.
- For dinner IRCTC had organized a grand dinner as it was HOLI that day and students were instructed strictly not to play with colours throughout the day as we were to visit places and even at dinner time only tika was allowed as we were to travel after dinner.

- **Surat**

- The visit to Surat, on 18 March 2014 was the last destination of Gyanodaya IV. We were welcomed by the DCP and the Principal. Govt College Surat at the station. They organized the places we were to visit. It included a visit to the local Police Headquarters where students were informed of the police modernization plans and weaponry alongwith the Command and Control unit one of its kind in the Country.
- A detailed presentation on the Diamond Industry was organised at the Diamond Industry Centre followed by an interactive session where students interacted and asked questions on the industry from the speakers. The presentation was followed by a visit to a Diamond crafting workshop where students were shown the process of cutting and polishing of precious gems. In most of the industries refreshment to the students was also given.
- This was followed by a visit to the Sanjiv Kumar Auditorium where the presentation by Surat Municipal Corporation was organized. The students were briefed by Shri

Devang Patel who demonstrated the use of ICT in tax collection and advancements in field work such as solid waste disposal by the use of technology.

- Shri M.M. Anarwala, DCP also addressed the students and praised the concept of Gyanodaya.
- Students of Ramjas college volunteered to ensure that the places visited were not littered.

Recommendations

- The Principals need to be more involved and committed in the selection of students, projects and faculty and also in the final submission of project report on termination of Gyanodaya trip. The faculty accompanying the students as mentors also should take more interest and responsibility.
- The places decided in the itinerary should be less and the time duration/days should be more at one city as few hours is very inadequate for the students to interact or collect substantial data.
- The medical of all students as well as faculty before the journey should be carried out by the doctors of the University Health Centre, who are to be a part of the journey to ensure all are fit to travel .
- The best five project reports should be showcased at Antardhvani for students of all colleges to gain knowledge and also to understand the working of Gyanodaya.
- Better Internet connectivity and configuration of the laptops to assist in virtual learning through video conferencing during the journey.

Conclusion

The GYANODAYA –IV was amongst the most successful of the GYANODAYA project series so far. It brought forth a new dimension of teaching by way of research and project study orientation to learning, with the support of experienced and responsible mentors. The student feedback during the visit to various institutions and industries was extremely overwhelming and encouraging. Out of the 56 projects undertaken only 52 mentors submitted their final reports. 4 mentors of Ramanujan College, SGTB Khalsa, Daulat Ram and Ram Lal Anand Evening did not submit their project reports. The evaluation committee shortlisted 13 projects (Atma Ram Snatam Dharam College, B R Ambedkar College, Cluster Innovation Centre, Dyal Singh College(Evening), Hindu College, Indraprastha College for women, Lady Irwin College, Lady Shri

Ram College, Satyawati College(Evening), School of Open Learning, Shaheed Bhagat Singh College(Morning), Shri Ram College of Commerce, Zakir Husain Day College) who gave their project report presentations. The project reports are available on the DU website at the Gyanodaya IV link.