

CLEANLINESS DRIVE

(Report on event conducted in Delhi, on 2nd
December 2019)

Abstract: Students of Symbiosis Law School, Noida teamed up with some members of their Legal Aid Centre, to clean 'School-block park' located in Laxminagar, Delhi. The event aimed at helping the residents in their battle against land pollution and restoration of their community park.

The event was organised by PLV Aprajita Tyagi and LAC Volunteers Gurkaranbir Singh, Harshvardhan Jha, Karan Teotia, Mridula Trivedi, Raghav Sachdev, Rishabh Munjal, and Vanshika Rana along with SLS-N students, Aaryan Mohan, Anannya Chitranshi, Pranav Tiwari and Sajal Awasthi participated in the event.

Organized
by: Aprajita
Tyagi
(Paralegal
Volunteer,
Legal Aid
Centre,
Symbiosis
Law School,
NOIDA)
Under the
Guidance of:
Mr. Ankur
Sharma
(Head, Legal
Aid Centre,
Symbiosis
Law School,
NOIDA)

Concept Note

'*Land pollution*' refers to degradation in quality of land and soil due to improper disposal of waste (usually non-biodegradable) which is harmful for the environment.

Many animals, who are on a hunt for food, tumble across sites full of garbage; they mistake pollutants like plastic waste for food and consequently, meet their premature deaths. Millions of animals worldwide die like this each year.

Even grass refuses to grow and plants refuse to thrive wherever land pollution sets foot. The only beings which prosper in such areas are disease causing germs and pests.

Unfortunately, land pollution in India is very common in India and so, this event was conducted on the occasion of **National Pollution Control day** because we the members of the **Legal Aid Centre of Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA**, have full knowledge of our responsibility as citizens of this nation (and planet), to keep it clean and green and are aware of the grave consequences of environmental degradation.

The target group for seeking volunteers was limited to students of Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA for ease in communication and pre-established teamwork among familiar faces.

The site of the event was kept in Laxminagar because not only is it well connected through metro networks but, it is also highly affected from Land pollution due to a combination of ignorance and overpopulation.

Objective

The objectives of this event were-

- Reducing land pollution.
- Restoration of the community park, making it suitable for residents to go to.
- Making the park safe for animals.

Preliminary preparations

Before conducting the event, several preparations were made like-

- Searching for a suitable site where we could host the event to make a difference.
- Arranging bags and gloves to be used for cleaning.
- Collecting adequate volunteers to participate in the event and then coordinating the event details to them and answering their doubts.
- Seeking permission to clean the park from the concerned RWA.
- The MLA of Laxminagar, Mr. Nitin Tyagi even helped in arranging a garbage truck from the East Delhi Municipal Corporation and anti-pollution masks for the volunteers.

Conducting the Program

The event was organised in School-block park, Laxminagar, Delhi. Everyone worked in pairs; each pair was given a big jute/plastic bag to collect the waste in. Although effort was made to only make use of the waste jute bags collected from various shops but sadly enough jute bags for everyone to collect waste in could not be acquired and so plastic bags had to be used. However, one silver lining about using them was that each of those bags, both jute and plastic, if not used in this event, would have become garbage itself. Instead, they were rescued and reused for a good cause. The E.D.M.C. garbage truck came around halfway through the cleanliness drive; we all emptied our bags into the truck and then reused them to collect more waste.

Anti-pollution masks and gloves (to those who could not arrange the gloves) were distributed to the volunteers for the event.

As a lesson learnt from past mistakes (reference: Awareness campaign on deforestation and marine pollution, June 2019), this event was made as close to zero-waste as possible, in fact, no posters or banners were made for this event at all.

Response of the Resident population

While we were cleaning the park, many residents after seeing our activities voluntarily started to join our initiative. Certain elderly citizens also gathered around and since they couldn't physically help us out, they showed their moral support, gave us suggestions and appreciated our efforts with a smile. Everyone was very happy at the site of their park being cleaned and one of the families even offered to let us wash our hands in their house after the cleaning was done.

The park was too vast and too dirty for us to completely clean just by manually picking up the waste, even so, we cleaned it to a great extent. Our work there inspired a number of residents and they called labour for professional restoration of the park.

Future Plan of action

In the coming days, we can visit the park again to find out how it's holding up and organise another cleanliness drive there if required. We can arrange for multi-language boards and dustbins to be placed in and around the park bearing instructions for proper waste disposal.

Something to ponder upon while conducting cleanliness drives in future is that what can be used instead of plastic gloves as protection gear while cleaning? This is something to brainstorm upon because no matter how great the deed, the gloves would still end up contributing to non-biodegradable and non-reusable waste.

Feedback

- The anti-pollution masks arrived after the volunteers had already started cleaning the area and so, some resident people helped the volunteers to open their packets and get the masks on. By the time this exercise got over, we saw that those people had thrown the masks' packets on the ground even though we had spent a good amount of time cleaning it for them.

- While we were collecting the waste in the bags, a lady who was standing just outside the park, watching us, called out to us. First, she appreciated our work and then she told us to burn all the garbage that we will be collecting as a way of disposing it all off.
- When the event began and people started noticing what we were doing, some of them thought that we were wasting our time because the park was too dirty to ever get completely cleaned. They were partially right; we did not have enough volunteers to completely clean the park but that doesn't mean that our efforts did not count. We made the park way cleaner than it was before. Moreover, just because cleaning the park a 100% seemed to be an impossible feat doesn't mean that we should not try to do it. Our Earth is suffering from Global Warming because of all the pollution; when small efforts like this cleanliness drive are viewed jointly together, their impact can be said to be significant in reducing overall pollution levels.

The aforementioned points illustrate the dire need to educate people about global warming, its impact on Earth and ways to stop it otherwise, all the efforts that people put in to clean the Earth would get nullified.

Conclusion

Due to active participation of the volunteers and support shown by the locals, the event went very well and the park was definitely in a better state when we left than when we found it.

It was heart-warming to see people being so passionate about reducing pollution that they kept cleaning even when their gloves tore or they got dirt on their clothes and hair.

At this point, the pollution levels are so high that the quality and quantity of efforts put in by the human race to stop global warming in the coming decade would be crucial in determining the survival of our planet.

Annexure 1





Annexure 2



Instagram story



2 December 10:01 PM

*That's why we spent the
day cleaning It!*



#LACSLs
#SLSNOIDA



Seen by 312



Share



Highlight



More

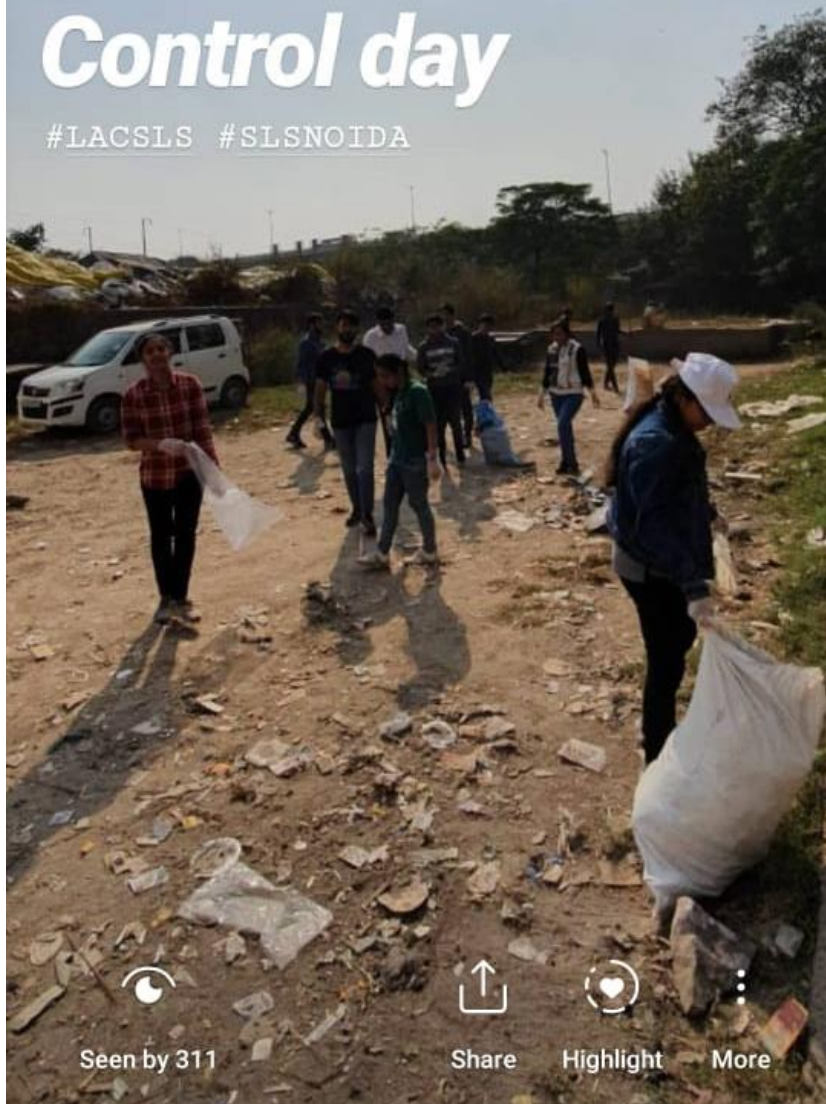
Instagram story



2 December 10:04 PM

National Pollution Control day

#LACSLs #SLSNOIDA



Seen by 311



Share



Highlight



More

Instagram story