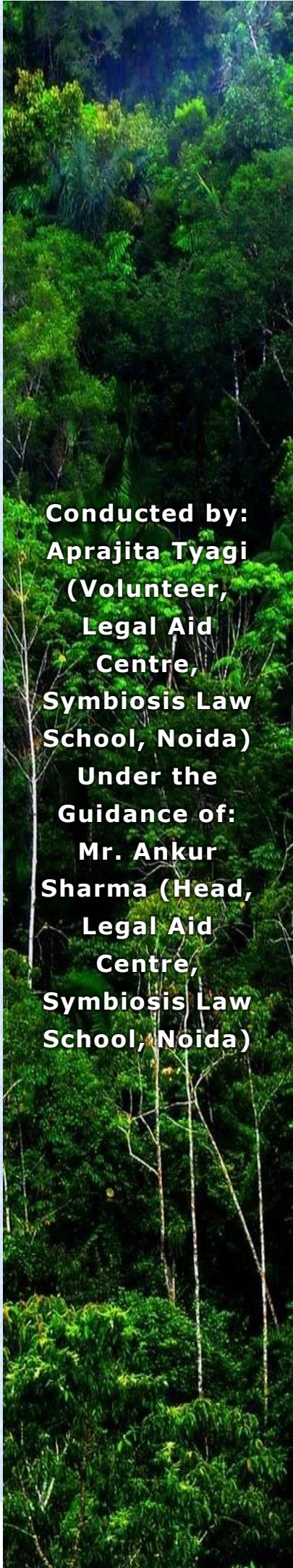


AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON DEFORESTATION & MARINE POLLUTION

(Report on the event conducted in Bangalore, on the 5th of June 2019)

Abstract: This event involved making the people of Kannamangala neighbourhood, Bangalore aware about the effects and the existing magnitude of deforestation and marine pollution due to plastic. They were also apprised about the steps that they can take to improve the situation. The event was conducted by an LAC Volunteer of Symbiosis law school, Noida.



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Concept Note

'Deforestation' refers to the cutting/ removal of a significant number of forest trees. The land which is so cleared is usually put to agricultural, industrial or urban (e.g. building housing complexes) use.

'Marine pollution' refers to the adverse effects on the living conditions of aquatic animals and the depreciation of the water quality due to human intervention (e.g. dumping waste in water bodies).

This event was conducted on the occasion of **World Environment 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 planet, to keep it clean and green and are aware of the grave consequences of environmental degradation.

No target group was chosen for the event because each and every human being carries a responsibility towards this planet and they all should be made aware about the same. However, more focus was indeed laid on interacting with small kids and adolescents because it is important to mould their minds in favour of eco-friendly behaviour, as they are part of the forthcoming generation that will be taking charge of this planet and the responsibility to undo the damage that this planet has gone through because of the previous generations will eventually land on their heads.

Objective

The objectives of this event were-

- Making people aware about the concept of 'Deforestation' and 'Marine pollution'.
- Making people realise the depth and magnitude of the aforementioned problems and the disastrous consequences that they bear.
- Apprising them of the steps that they can take to improve the situation.
- Making them aware of related concepts like global warming, greenhouse gases etc...
- Making them aware of the benefits of afforestation and switching from plastic to better biodegradable options.

Preliminary preparations

Before conducting the event, several preparations were made like-

- Doing research on deforestation and marine pollution.
- Preparing a compendium on their dangers and possible counter steps.
- Making reasonably short (to save paper) and informative pamphlets using the collected data and getting them printed.
- Preparing drafts of what information and examples are to be used during the one-on-one interactions.

Conducting the Program

The event was organised in the Kannamangala neighbourhood of Bangalore. It involved:

- Distribution of pamphlets containing information about deforestation and marine pollution due to plastic disposal in water bodies.
- Personal interaction with the locals including kids, adolescents, adults and the elderly to increase awareness on the same.

Each interaction was started with a greeting and was followed by the question "*Do you know that today is the 'World Environment Day'?*" while handing them a pamphlet. The interaction had the goal of making them understand why exactly is deforestation and marine pollution a problem and how is it going to affect all life on this planet.

They were encouraged to use Jute bags instead of plastic bags or to just re-use the plastic bags that they already have at home instead of buying new ones every time they go for shopping. They were encouraged to use public transport like the Metro to reduce the air pollution level and were informed how trees help to clean the air and their role in the water cycle. They were encouraged to nurture plants in their balconies and to plant trees or donate to websites who will plant and nurture trees on their behalf.

Statistics related to the death of aquatic animals and birds annually due to plastic indigestion and how plastic indigestion by fish affects the health of humans who consume fish were also shared with the participants.

Response of the target population

Almost everyone who was given a pamphlet actively participated in the subsequent discussion about environmental degradation. The adults shared their views and experiences related to climate change. The kids were very excited to learn about new methods of countering climate change and keeping the Earth healthy.

Surprisingly, everyone who was asked whether they knew that it was World Environment Day that day, answered with yes. While there might be other psychological reasons for receiving a 100% positive reply to that question, one thing is for sure that all of them showed great interest in the event and many appreciated the awareness campaign.

Many residents of Sandeep Vihar told me that they practice segregation of waste to help let as much waste as possible be put to some other use than just lying around polluting the environment.

Future Plan of action

In the coming semester, a possible plan of action could be to request the college authorities to install *Waste Segregation Dustbins* for better waste management and to introduce a *Compost Pit* to put all the waste from the College Mess and Canteen to good use.

Feedback

While the pamphlets were being printed, I realised the paradoxical nature of my actions. While one of the topics I aimed to create awareness about through the pamphlets was of 'Deforestation', it was also true that production of paper contributes to deforestation so one should not waste paper and using pamphlets for the event would result in the eventual wastage of paper because after reading the pamphlets, people won't have any use for them and they will toss them in the bin.

A better approach would have been to prepare a single big chart paper for all the participants to see and read.

Conclusion

Overall, the event was quite successful due to active participation and positive response by the locals. A bit of a language barrier was faced during the event and it even prevented the message from being properly imparted to quite a number of people but, a better and a bigger event can certainly be conducted for the same in the future with the help of the rest of the LAC team, as the issue of Climate change and Environmental degradation is a grave one and needs serious attention.

Annexure 1



Annexure 2



Instagram story

Annexure 3



HAPPY World Environment Day?

Legal Aid Centre
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How big exactly is the problem of plastic waste?

- Shoppers worldwide are using approximately 500 billion single-use plastic bags per year.
- 10 Million Tonnes of plastic waste ends up in our oceans every year.
- Of the 8.3 billion metric tons of plastic that has been produced, 6.3 billion metric tons has become plastic waste. Of that, only nine percent has been recycled.

Why is that a problem?

- 1 million marine birds and 100,000 marine animals die each year due to ingestion of plastic.
- Ocean acidification is a growing
- Scientists have identified 200 areas declared as 'dead zones' where no life organisms can now grow.
- The floods in Bangladesh in 1988 & 1998 were made more severe because plastic bags clogged drains.

What can we do to make the situation better?

- Don't buy plastic bags. Save and re-use the ones already at home.
- Collect and send off all your plastic waste to a recycling centre.
- Don't dump your trash anywhere except a dustbin.



“HELLO? Is anybody listening? This is the Earth speaking. I need your help because I think I am dying...”

- Forests cover 31% of the land area on our planet. They help people thrive and survive by, for example, purifying water and air and providing people with jobs.
- Deforestation present a serious threat to forests all over the globe. People, industries, governments etc. cut down forests in the name of development, to make roads, buildings, agriculture, mining, and forest fires due to Global Warming.
- When forests are cut/removed they emit carbon instead of absorb carbon and so, forest degradation has become responsible for around 15% of all greenhouse gas emissions. These gases have a tendency to trap heat in our atmosphere and thus, contribute immensely to Global Warming.
- Deforestation an also affect the Water Cycle, resulting in changes in precipitation and river flow.
- Without trees to anchor fertile soil, erosion can occur and sweep the land into rivers.

To Help:

Plant a tree each year and look after it. If you don't have the time or resources to do that, then you can donate to afforestation websites like onetreepanted.org



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The Pamphlets