

Report on School's participation in 'Ganga Utsav', An event organised by TERI and NMCG (National Mission for Clean Ganga), under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India

On the 4th and 5th of November 2024, students from Delhi Public School, Gurgaon, participated in the 'Ganga Utsav' event held in Haridwar, organised by TERI and the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India. A group of 12 students from Classes 9, 10, and 11, accompanied by two teachers, attended the event, which aimed to deepen their understanding of environmental conservation efforts focused on the Ganga River.

On the first day, students explored various stalls set up by organisations engaged in wastewater treatment and environmental innovation. Students also got the opportunity to meet the local innovators, presenting unique approaches to address pollution in the Ganga. A standout stall was presented by AlphaMERS, showcasing their "Floating Trash Barrier," a device that utilises the river's natural flow to capture both biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste, which was then manually collected by land-based excavators during daylight hours. This unique solution exemplified how sustainable technology can work harmoniously with natural processes to address river pollution.

In the evening, students attended a cultural programme on Chandi Ghat, highlighted by a conversation with Dr. Ashutosh Rana, who shared the mythology surrounding the river Ganga. Dr. Rana conveyed the powerful message of reciprocity: 'We receive what we give', emphasizing the need to stop polluting our rivers. The day concluded with the students attending the Ganga Aarti, followed by an inspiring sound and light show illuminating the riverbanks.

On the second day, students visited the 68 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), a project under the Namami Gange Mission. Here, the plant's staff provided a comprehensive overview of the facility's operation, beginning with a prototype demonstration, followed by a presentation, and ending with a tour of the actual plant. Students observed the entire sewage treatment process, gaining insights into the process of cleaning of the sewage water. The project team encouraged the students to share ideas and queries, sparking discussions on ways to reduce water pollution at a personal level. This interaction empowered students to consider practical methods for environmental protection in their daily lives.

One of the most striking takeaways was how resourceful and efficient each aspect of the facility was. Watching the waste sludge being transformed into biogas that powers the plant was both, humbling and inspiring. It reminded us that sustainable practices aren't just possible—they're essential. And it's not just about compliance or technology; it's about doing our bit to live in harmony with nature and the responsible use of resources. Leaving the project site, the participants not only felt better informed but also deeply motivated as young scientists to take on the mantle of this national service into their hands in the future. It's rare to witness such a seamless blend of science, technology, and environmental ethics in action. This experience renewed the sense of commitment to contribute towards sustainable living.

The Ganga Utsav not only broadened the students' knowledge of India's conservation efforts but also left a lasting impact, deepening their sense of duty toward preserving the Ganga as both a spiritual and ecological lifeline.