

## **NSS Special Camp at Patiya Village, Almora, Uttarakhand (7-06-22 to 15-06-22)**

Special camping forms an integral part of the National Service Scheme. It has a special appeal to the youth as it provides unique opportunities to the students for group living, collective experience sharing, and constant integration with the community. It provides an experience in mutual adjustment and adaptation to new changing and challenging situations.

**NSS Unit of Ram Lal Anand College** successfully organized a week-long special camp from 7th-15th June 2022 at Patiya village, Almora, Uttarakhand in which 30 volunteers of Ram Lal Anand College participated. This special camp was filled with the core activities of the National Service Scheme such as cleanliness drive, tree plantation, interaction with the Gram Sabha Pradhan and many social awareness programs.

The highlight of the camp was the cleanliness drive and tree plantation. **The tree plantation** drive took place in the premises of Tara Devi temple where all the 30 volunteers and teachers planted 30 saplings of orange and lemon plants. Volunteers participated in this activity with great enthusiasm. They used farming tools hoe and trowel to dig potholes. After planting the saplings, they ensured their safety by covering each plant with sacks. **The cleanliness drive** was executed at the Shiv temple where they were provided with gloves, garbage bags, and brooms to clean the temple premises and the area around it, and within a span of two hours, the place was cleaned, making the drive a success. **Naula** is a naturally occurring water aquifer that looks like a temple from the outside and is equally regarded as such and has been considered sacred in Uttarakhand's tradition and culture. Volunteers visited two such Naula and put lot of hard work to clean it thoroughly and made surrounding area clean and shining.

Volunteers interacted with **Patiya's Pradhan and Sarpanch** to understand their local problems such as unemployment, migration, lack of know-how of modern farming techniques, lack of hospitals facility or drug store and non-availability of any public transport. They look forward for skill training for their farmers so as to increase the volume of their agricultural produce. Sarpanch ji told that all the girls in the village go to school and there are no cases of child marriage. The villagers were also made aware of **various government schemes** like Kanya Yojna, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna, Sukanya, and Dhanalaxmi that would be beneficial for them. Our volunteers Utkarsh Amrit and Suraj Kumar explained in detail about the benefits of these schemes. Another awareness drive was conducted on **“Digital literacy & Women's health and hygiene”**

A cultural evening which forms a unique part of the special camp was also organized where Prof. Rakesh Kumar Gupta, the principal of Ram Lal Anand college made a special guest appearance. Both volunteers and villagers showcased their talent with different self-composed poems, mesmerizing classical and traditional dances, skits and songs. In the end, Programme coordinator Dr. Rita Jain ma'am delivered the vote of thanks and the day was winded up by the recitation of the NSS song. The camp also included a visit to different tourist places like Jageshwar Dham which is a group of 125 ancient Hindu temples dated between the 7th and 14th century near Almora, Chitai Golu which was adorned with lakhs of bells and letters written to the God of 'Nyay' (Justice) by people praying for their wishes to come true, Kasar Devi Temple which is at a height of almost 2000m and a tour of Guldaar Valley. Volunteers made some beautiful memories while visiting these places.

The camp turned into a great experience for all the volunteers, exploring new places and participating in various drives and programs and thus leaving back so many pleasant memories that would last forever. It was an emotional moment as the villagers were so caring and humble and treated each member as their family. In the special camp, all the volunteers gave their 100 percent and made the camp a successful one.

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