



NATURE CAMP CUM AWARD CEREMONY

A Report

27-29 September 2024

Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh



PARTNERS



Centre for Environment Education (CEE) was established in 1984 as a Centre of Excellence under the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. CEE's mandate is to promote environmental awareness nationwide. CEE develops innovative programmes, educational material and builds capacity in the field of Environmental Education (EE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Climate change education and action is one of the core areas of the centre to engage and empower different stakeholders through interactive educational methodologies. Paryavaran Mitra is CEE's flagship initiative for schools on sustainability and climate change education.

HCLFoundation delivers the corporate social responsibility agenda of HCLTech in India through its flagship programmes and special initiatives. With a vision to be the source code for sustainable socio-economic and environmental development, it strives to contribute towards national and international development goals, bringing about positive impact in the lives of people, through long-term sustainable programmes. HCLFoundation aims to alleviate poverty and achieve inclusive growth and development through life cycle based, integrated community development approach that focuses on Education, Health, Skill Development and Livelihood, Environment, and Disaster Risk Reduction and Response. Child protective strategies, inclusion, and gender transformative approaches remain central in all initiatives, thus ensuring comprehensive development. HCLFoundation is present in 21 States, 3 Union Territories, 122 districts and has impacted over 6.5 million lives with 54% being women. HCLFoundation has greened 72,000 acres, harvested over 81 billion litres of water, managed 500,000 tonnes of waste, protected endangered species, and treated over 91,000 animals. The GenCAN project is being implemented by 'Harit' which is the climate action flagship programme of HCLFoundation.

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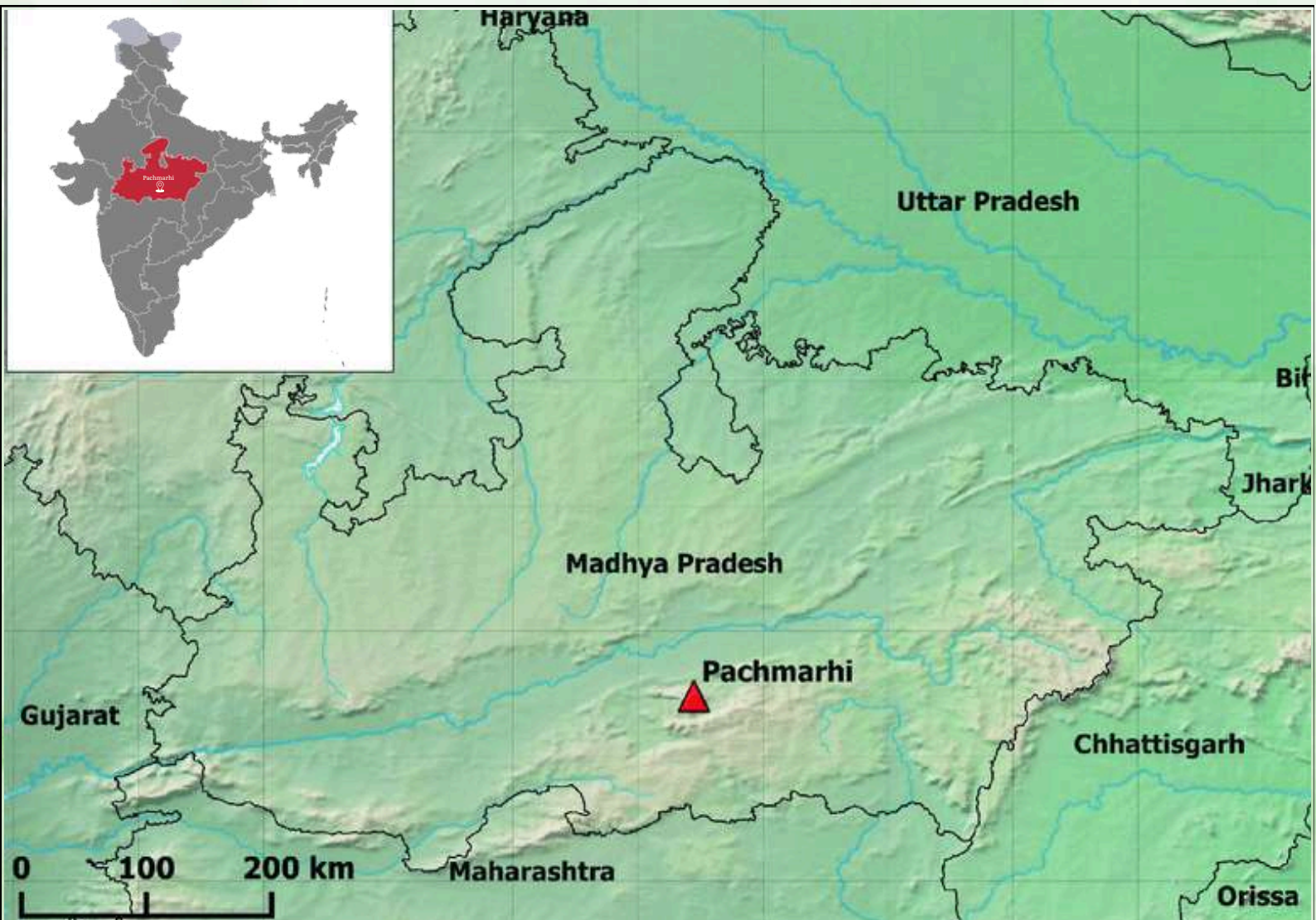
INTRODUCTION

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Climate change requires urgent attention and education plays a critical role in helping learners to make shifts in their lifestyle and a transformation of the way they think and act. Keeping this in mind, HCL Foundation and Centre for Environment Education (CEE) have collaborated on a national level initiative - GenCAN (Generation for Climate Action), a Climate Action Leadership Challenge tailored for schools, targeting grades 6-12. This initiative empowers educators and students alike with tools and techniques to foster climate literacy and action.

A total of 75 schools, 81 mentor teachers and 350 student leaders participated in the GenCAN Challenge 2023-24. To celebrate exemplary work of GenCAN achievers schools, they were invited to a three day nature camp at lush green landscape of Pachmarhi. The aim was to reap the recreational and educational benefits of living and learning with nature. Camp was planned to also felicitate school teams for their outstanding contributions, teamwork, and the climate action.



CAMP AT PACHMARHI

Queen of Satpura

Nestled in the Satpura Biosphere Reserve, Pachmarhi is dominated by trees of Sal, teak, and bamboo. One can also spot wild mango, silver fern, jamun and arjun trees. Pachmarhi boasts of a rich history of prehistoric life, tribal art, stunning views and an ecologically important tiger reserve. It is a geologists' favourite as well, with the impressive multi-layered sedimentary rock structures of the gondwanaland peppered across Pachmarhi. One is greeted by the tall Sal trees as they enter Pachmarhi.





The ancient caves contain rock paintings that are over 10,000 years old, telling us how early humans lived and hunted, through art. Immersing amidst the biodiversity and culture of Pachmarhi widens the perspectives of the campers and brings the feelings of empathy and care towards the environment and society.





AGENDA OF CAMP




 **Arrival at camp**

 **Meet and Greet**


 **Nature Trail**

 **Presentations**

 **Musical Night**



 **Birdwatching**

 **Knowing about Pachmarhi**

 **Green Games**

 **Nature-based Solutions Sessions**

 **Thematic Video Screening**

 **Award Ceremony**


 **Cultural Exchange**



 **Cave trail**

 **Bio-cultural Immersion**

 **Forest Trek**

 **Learnings from Camp**

 **Bidding Adieu**



“ THE FUN BEGINS! ”

Day 1

4



8
SCHOOLS



12
TEACHERS



34
STUDENTS

Government High School, Dasgrain,
Anandpur Sahib, Punjab



Abalone Public School,
Lakhimpur Kheri, UP



Upper Primary School (Composite),
Jamayetapur, Sitapur



Upper Primary School (Composite),
Matariya, Unnao, UP



Vidyagyan Leadership Academy,
Sitapur, UP



MES Boys High School,
Vadodara, Gujarat



Pachmarhi

Swami Atmananda Hindi Medium School,
Durg, Chattisgarh



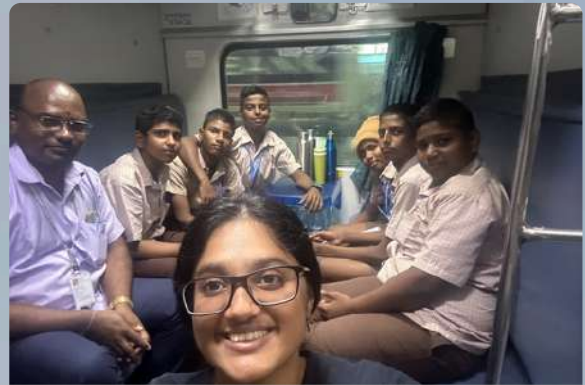
Ramakrishna Mission Residential High School,
Chennai, Tamil Nadu



Travel diaries



Government High School, Dasgrain, Anandpur Sahib, Punjab



Ramakrishna Mission Residential High School, Chennai, Tamil Nadu



MES Boys High School, Vadodara, Gujarat



Upper Primary School (Composite), Jamayetapur, Sitapur, UP



Upper Primary School (Composite), Matariya, Unnao, UP



Swami Atmananda Hindi Medium School, Durg, Chattisgarh



Vidyagyan Leadership Academy, Sitapur, UP



Abalone Public School, Lakhimpur Kheri, UP

Arrival at Camp Location



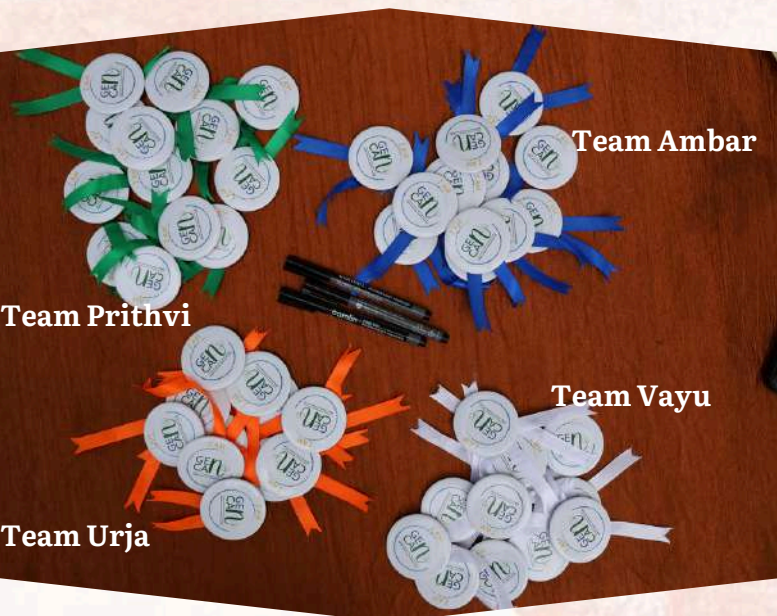
Campers were welcomed at lush green and beautiful camp location venue of MP tourism. The students cherished spending time outdoors and playing games in the play area, making it a home-away-home.





Meet and Greet

A fun ice-breaking session was organized, bringing together students from different schools into four teams. This activity allowed everyone to mingle with teachers, students, as well as members of the CEE and HCLF teams, creating an opportunity to connect across diverse cultures and languages.



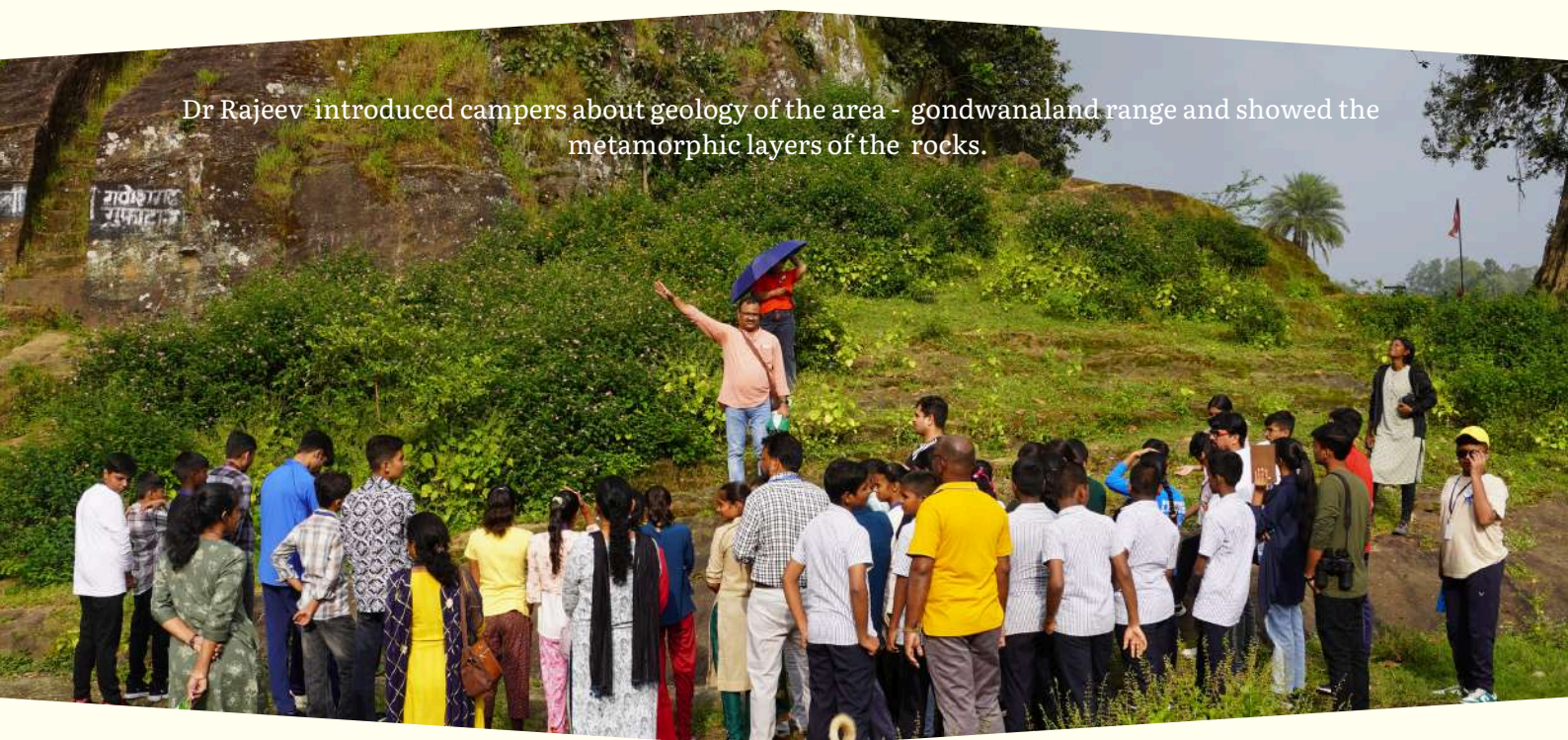
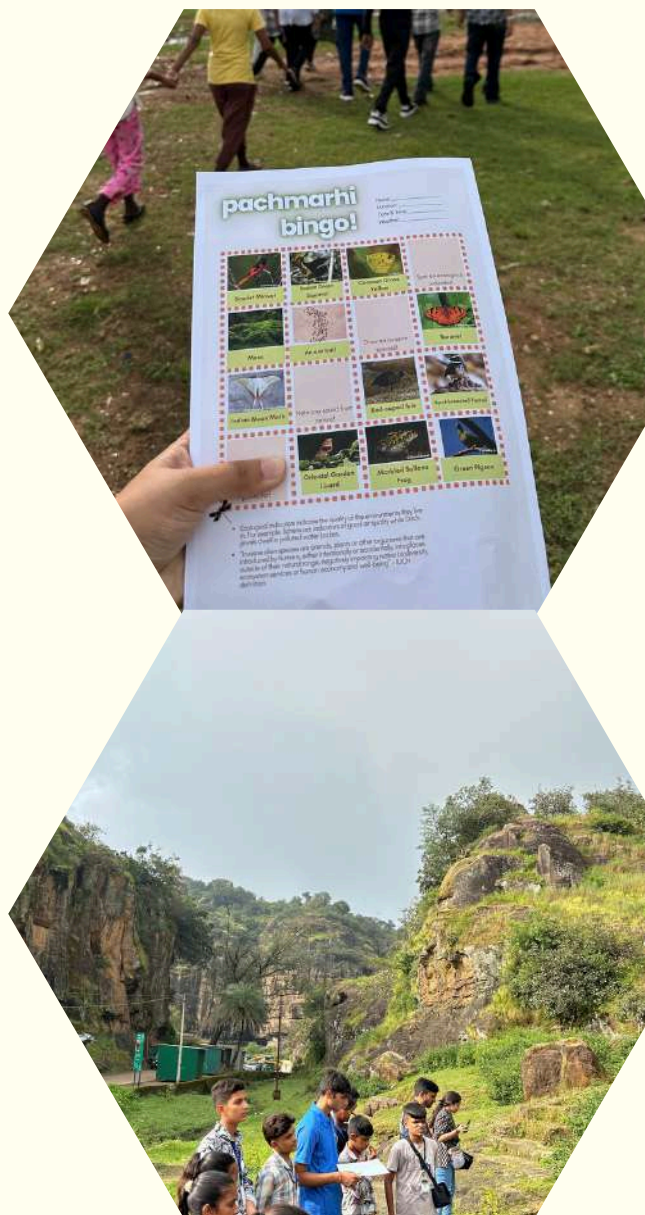
Each team was given a task of knowing each other and nominating a captain and a vice captain to lead discussion and sharing.



Nature Trail



Campers were taken on trail to observe flora, fauna and geology of the area. They were briefed to fill **Pachmarhi Biodiversity Bingo** to sharpen their observational and documentation skills.



Dr Rajeev introduced campers about geology of the area - gondwanaland range and showed the metamorphic layers of the rocks.





Presentation

Trail had to stop due to rains. Campers came back and collated information about their observations and filling out Bingo sheet. The students listed some mind-boggling observations of trees growing in the cracks of rocks, and how the invasive *Lantana camara* species was widespread in the area. Day concluded with musical evening.



LEARN AND CELEBRATE

Day 2

5



Morning Birdwatching Trail

Knowing about Pachmarhi

Students colourfully presented Pachmarhi's heritage through posters and poems. An exciting games session followed, offering an interactive learning about greenhouse gases and how ecosystem functions.

Ecosystem

Geography

History

Culture

Indigenous communities

Biodiversity





Green Games

An exciting games session offering campers interactive learning about greenhouse gases and how ecosystems function.



Nature-based Solutions Workshops



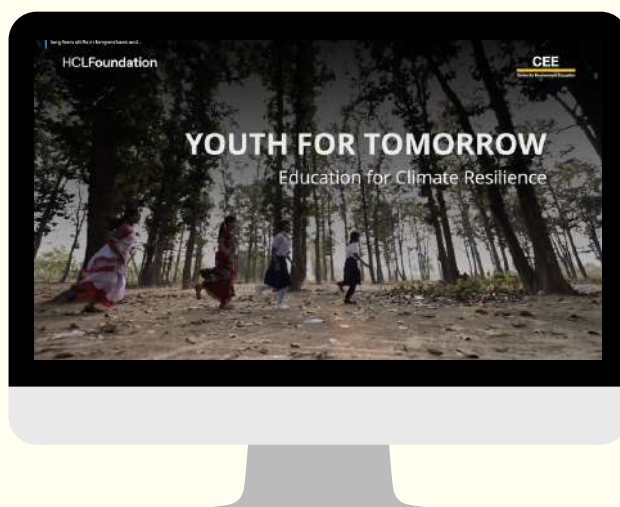
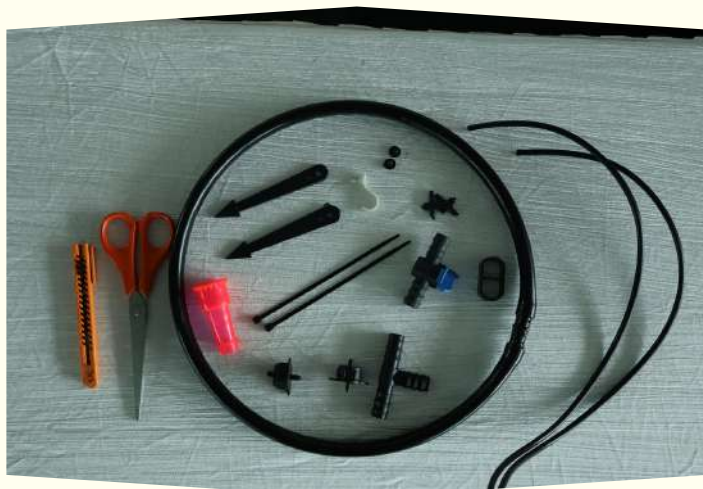
The session focused on building knowledge about climate change terms such as resilience, mitigation, adaptation, handprint actions etc. Taking example of core thematic areas of GenCAN, skill-building sessions were facilitated on **nature-based solutions for handprint climate action**.



Dr Rajeev K Kanaujia organised a hands-on demonstration on fun and easy-to-replicate **bird feeder** and **drip irrigation** tools and technique.



Dr Manvi Singh explained the know-hows of **composting** and **vermicomposting**.



Short videos on the themes of Energy, Water and Waste were screened to discuss about climate action.

Award Ceremony

A mixed group of students gathered to warmly welcome everyone with a prayer song, marking the beginning of the award ceremony. It was a trilingual award ceremony, in English, Hindi and Tamil, hosted by Mansi Jani and Anooja A, to address the culturally diverse campers. The GenCAN video was screened, highlighting the journey of the student leaders across India.



A panel of eight students gathered to discuss GenCAN journey and their learnings. They discussed how they want to align their career with sustainability, like opening a restaurant that uses local produce and becoming climate scientists. It was enlightening to hear how deeply they care for the earth.



All of them are switching off unused lights, segregating their waste, communicating the harmful impacts of burning fossil fuels and integrating the skills they learnt in GenCAN into their daily lives. GenCAN has truly shaped their values and habits for a sustainable future.



Some schools came from remote villages, some came from non-English medium backgrounds but they all proved how coming together as a community can help meet global challenges.

Teachers shared inspiring stories of mentoring students into climate leaders, tackling challenges, continuing the ethos of GenCAN forward into their and the school's culture, and their successful completion of GenCAN 2023-24.



Celebrating Excellence



The award ceremony was honoured by two guests- Mr. Rahul Gajbhiye, Chief Executive Officer of Pachmarhi Cantonment, Ministry of Defence and Dr Savita Chib, the Director of National Centre for Biological Science, Pachmarhi.



Guests awarded the students and teachers, delivering an address in which they expressed how impressed they were by the volume and quality of the school's work.



The students and teachers received not just certificates but a gift set with a hemp backpack, sweets, stationery and GenCAN shirt.



Cultural Exchange

The second day of camp culminated with a joyous cultural programme. The students from Swami Atmananda Hindi Medium School presented a Chattisgarhi tribal dance in full attire and caught the campers amazed at their stunning performance. RKM school presented a power-packed mime highlighting the importance of climate action. It was truly a cultural culmination- with garba, bhangra, and hindi poem recitation.



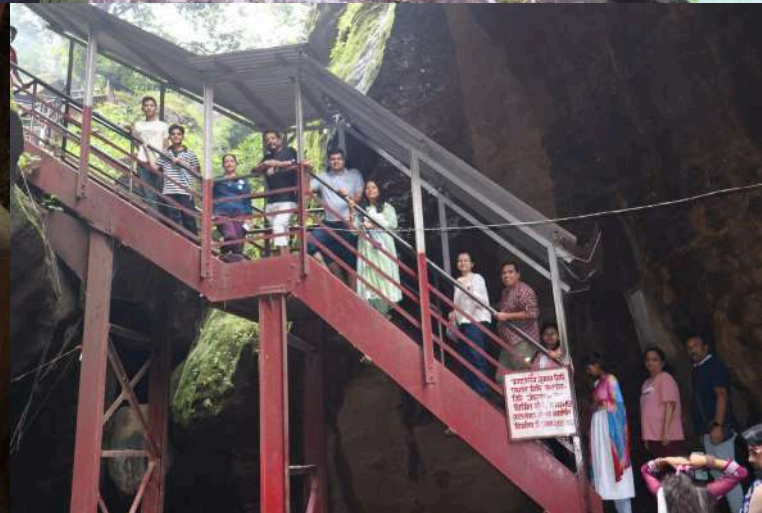
BIO-CULTURAL IMMERSION

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Day 3

Nature Trail to old Temple

Day 3 of the camp was all about deeply exploring the natural and cultural heritage of Pachmarhi. At the break of dawn, campers trekked to the Jatashankar caves, welcomed by melodious Malabar Whistling Thrush. After steep decline into the deep ravine, the campers found stunning heights of metamorphic layers of rocks along with the cool cave stream on the floor.



Interpretation Centre



Captain Forsyth, during his central Indian expedition, had arrived upon a trail in Pachmarhi in 1862 where he found a herd of Indian Gaurs and decided to name the new residence as “Bison Lodge”. It is now converted into a museum. With life-like models depicting the ecosystems of the biosphere reserve, Bison lodge is a window to the wildlife and tribal culture of the Satpura range.



Forest Trek



Students were taken to Priyadarshini Point is also known as Forsyth Point. The place offers interesting trek which ends with a panoramic view of the Satpura range, including the Handi Khoh ravine and the Shiva Temple of Chauragarh. The place was named after Lady Priyadarshini, the wife of Captain James Forsyth, who discovered the point in 1857. Students were briefed about few key trees species and butterflies.



Local Market Trail





Priyadarshini viewpoint gives a breath taking scenic view of Pachmarhi.

CAMP DIARIES

“

Aman Mohammedsiddik, 10th, MES Boys High School

After playing yesterday's 'Oh, Deer!' game, I understood how stressful it was for a deer to run and get its food! I am going back with lots of goof memories and learnings.

”



“

Harikaran V, 9th, RKM High School

In Chennai I assumed that all the different colours of the butterfly belonged to the same species. After coming here, I saw and observed many species of butterfly.

”

“

Jaanhavi Sahu, 11th, Swami Atmananda Hindi Medium School

I came here and mingled with different cultures. I also started loving nature. Nature gives us bountiful but we continue hurting our nature.

”

“

Dharanivel M, 9th, RKM High School

GenCAN award ceremony was an event of many new experiences for me. We formed new friends from all over the country and had fun playing with them. We explored Pachmarhi and its ecosystems and learnt to identify wildlife and got to know their habitats.

”



Mr Yogendra Pandey, mentor teacher, UPS Jamayetpur

The children have changed after the camp- they have become good, confident leaders, and would continue spreading the good message in their communities. I would like to present a song that goes-

अलग-अलग हो कूड़ा कचरा,
सिंगल यूज प्लास्टिक हो बैन।
हरियाली हो, स्वच्छ हवा हो,
यही चाहता है जेन-कैन ॥

सोतर-चैनल हो हर घर को शोभा,
बिना यूज हर घर ऑफिस में बंद हो,
बिजली बन्द हो कैन।
बड़े हैंड प्रिंट छोटे कार्बन फुट-प्रिंट,
स्वच्छ में यही चाहता है जेन-कैन ॥

हरी भरी धरती का सपना
साकार कर रहा है जेन-कैन।
पृथ्वी माँ को अब भविष्य में
खुब मिलेगा जम कर चैन ॥
क्योंकि उनके साथ खड़ा है
अपना, सबका प्यारा जेन-कैन ॥

बदला मौसम, बदली जमीन
जलवायु बदला, गर्मी बढ़ी
बर्फ पीगली, जिंदगी थमी
धरती को ना आए चैन...

GenCan, GenCan, GenCan

कट रहे हैं पेड़, धुल रहा है जहर
कच्चा जो हरा था, अब सुखा है
गलती हमारी, मौसम बिगाड़े
धरती है बेचैन...

GenCan, GenCan, GenCan.

Mr M.H. Shaikh, mentor teacher, MES Boys High School

Under GenCAN, students learnt about carbon footprint of their school. All students came together for school audit. After GenCAN, there is increased environmental awareness. I would like to dedicate a song for GenCAN-

BIDDING ADIEU

8



When it was time to bid adieu, many campers were emotional, saying that are sad to leave the strong bonds they formed over the three days.





Reflections

The camp profoundly impacted all participants, igniting a passion for environmental stewardship and fostering personal growth. Students left with a deeper appreciation for nature and a sense of responsibility to protect it.

They showed increased knowledge of biodiversity which brings compassion and appreciation for it and feel connected to nature, inculcating conservation values. The friendships formed and lessons learned will resonate long after the camp has concluded.



“In every walk with nature one
receives far more than he seeks.”

-John Muir

