



Digantar Shiksha Evam Khelkud Samiti, in short Digantar, is a non-governmental, not for profit organization, working in the field of education. Digantar School (Vidyalaya) is at the Centre of the programmes and activities carried out by Digantar since 1978. At present, Digantar provide education to children through its two schools. The Academic Resource Unit (TARU) is a significant unit of Digantar, distinguished by its commitment to enriching the quality of education for all children by developing a strong knowledge base and imparting training.

Celebrating Ambedkar Jayanti

Ambedkar Jayanti 2024, celebrating the birth anniversary of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, was observed in India on Sunday, April 14, 2024. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (April 14, 1891 – December 6, 1956) was an Indian jurist, economist, social reformer and political leader who headed the committee drafting the Constitution of India from the Constituent Assembly debates, served as Law and Justice minister in the first cabinet of first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, and inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement after renouncing Hinduism. As a leading jurist and social reformer, Ambedkar's legacy inspires the fight against caste discrimination and inequality in India. Since April 14 was falling on a Sunday, the Ambedkar Jayanti was celebrated in Digantar School on April 13. On this day, children and teachers gave a presentation about the life of Ambedkar through glimpses. Children also expressed their views about Ambedkar's contribution to the Constitution. The teachers presented the play Sadgati based on the story of Munshi Premchand. There was a dialogue between teachers and children on this play and Mushi Premchand's description of the social situation was understood and an attempt was made to relate it to today's context.



John Singh Sports Academy: Demonstrating Skills



The Sports Academy was activated in the month of October, 2023. The idea behind activating the sports academy in the name of Founder President of Digantar, John Singh was to give students an opportunity for getting good coaching in various sports and games activities, like football and in self defense (Karate). In addition to getting a good physical fitness, it also aims to teach the student's basic skills of Games, foster a healthy interaction with teammates, engender fair play and sportsman spirit.

The self defence (Karate) classes started on October 16, 2023 for one hour each for 3 days a week. The Football coaching started on November 1, 2023, for one hour each five days a week. What students have learned through these classes was presented by the students along with the coaches of both the games in the last week of March, in front of the school community, teachers and students. During the event, the participants of the self-defence classes demonstrated the skills/steps learned through the coaching. The coach also presented the objectives of self-defence, and the experiences in working with the children.

Two teams were formed for the football game. Captains were appointed for each team. A friendly match was played in front of the teachers and children of the school. The children played this game very seriously and with a spirit of mutual cooperation, and in a disciplined manner throughout. The focus was not much on the results of the game, who won or lost. The important thing was that this game helped the children a lot in learning seriousness, physical fitness and discipline. Now these coachings will be started from the next session in the month of July.



Visits

Interns from PUCL



On March 7, a group of 14 students doing internship at People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) visited Digantar School, to observe and understand Digantar way of education. First of all, viewed the information about Digantar displayed at the entrance, along with photos of activities, and were discussed in detail with the Coordinators. Thereafter the group observed the classroom teaching work.

During the meeting at the Conference Hall, the team interacted with the Executive Director and the Coordinators, questions were answered. They also shared their thoughts and work.

Teach for India

On March 9, a group of 25 people from Teach for India visited Digantar School. The Teach for India was at Digantar main campus, for their Annual Retreat from March 8-18, 2024. This group included representatives from about 10 to 15 organizations. On arrival at the school, after watching the cleaning activity, the team witnessed the children's assembly. Thereafter observed the teaching work going on in the



groups. After visiting the library, carpentry room, computer lab etc., interacted on the pedagogy and philosophy of Digantar along with all the teachers and the Coordinators. After observing the functioning of the school, the group consisting representatives from different organizations also expressed interest to bring their colleagues to Digantar School.

Aditi Mahavidyalaya



From March 11-14, a group of 52 girl students of B.El.Ed Aditi Mahavidyalaya (College) visited Digantar School, s part of their study visit. Situated on the outskirts of Delhi, Aditi Mahavidyalaya- the only institution of higher learning for a cluster of 52 villages was conceptualized in 1994 with the vision and mission to empower women with the indispensable tool of education. During the day one of the visit, the group observed the

teaching work being done with the children in the school and after discussing it with the teachers; they understood the education philosophy of Digantar. On the second day, the parents of the children were interviewed in the community. Alumni were interviewed about their experiences and what they are doing currently. On the same day, they learned in detail about Digantar's history, philosophy and future plans with the coordinating group and shared our observation experiences.

Mera Gaon Meri Dunia

Mera Gaon Meri Dunia is a group of passionate individuals who are enabling change across communities by empowering the youth to transform the ecosystem. Working in the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh, work of the organisation is centred around govt schools and on how local youth can transform the govt school space in the areas of pedagogy, culture, infrastructural quality and learning outcome. The group was at Digantar main campus for a



training for the rural your from April 2-5, 2024. On April 3, the group of 25 people visited Digantar School. First of all the group observed the teaching work and then discussed and understood the history and education philosophy of Digantar.

Academics



On April 17, students from Digantar School appeared in the 8th board and students 5th appeared in 5th board examination conducted by the Rajasthan Government. These children took their examination in Government Higher Secondary School, Luniyawas. The examination of 9th level children was conducted under the common question paper scheme organized by the Education Department and 19 children participated in it.

Representation

Together with the Rajasthan Council of School Education (RCScE), the RSCERT and the Tata Trusts, Centre for Micro-Finance (CmF) has been implementing the Rajasthan School Library Promotion Project (RSLPP) since November 2019. As part of the project a One day Conference on 'Nurturing Vibrant Libraries for Children in Schools and Community' was organized by CmF on March 16, 2024 in Jaipur. In the Confernce, the progress of the entire library programme was presented and discussed in detail. Representing Digantar, Noratmal Pareek (Coordinator, Vidyalaya) and Pragya Shrivastava (Coordinator, TARU) attended the conference.

The Academic Resource Unit (TARU)

An Introduction to Philosophy of Education – Online Course

The course "An Introduction to Philosophy of Education" commenced on February 23rd with the opening of the course portal and the upload of required reading materials for Unit 1, focusing on Philosophy, Language, and Logic. A total of 40 participants are enrolled, with 25 from the organizations affiliated with Wipro Foundation and 15 individuals who have paid the full course fee. Before the course commencement, thorough dissemination of course information was conducted. An orientation session for registered participants was held online on the Feb. 19 to familiarize them with the course structure and address any queries they may have had. Subsequently, all participants were enrolled on the course page and began engaging with the material by reading different chapters.

In March, 4 units have been completed with online sessions held on the 1st, 8th, 15th, and 29th of March. The unit-wise topics covered were Philosophy, Language and Logic, the Concept of Education, Human Nature, and Desirable Social Order for Humans respectively.

In April, two units were completed with online sessions held on April 5th and April 12th. The topics covered in each unit were "Aims of Education" and "Knowledge – Nyaya Darshan View." Following the session on April 12th, a two-week break was taken, and a revised course schedule was prepared and shared with participants.

Between the online sessions, participants submitted unit-wise response notes. TARU members reviewed these notes and compiled questions and concerns to be addressed in upcoming online sessions. In the meantime, the recording of the introductory videos for units 9 to 12 has been completed. Aniket from the Wipro team visited Digantar to record the videos.

The course is facilitated by Prof. Rohit Dhankar.

Digantar Vidyalaya Vision 2030 - Feasibility Study (FS)

The Feasibility study under the project 'Digantar Vidyalaya Vision 2023' supported by Monsoon Accessorize Trust, UK, which started in the month of November, 2023 is nearing completion.

During the month of March, the team focussed on data collection in both modes – Online Survey and Offline interviews, alongside the analysis of the data. By the last week of the month, the targeted data from offline interviews had been completed, which involved conducting interviews with 25 parents. Online survey response collection was closed after receiving 174 responses. Additionally, a visit was made to Uday School in Jaipur, based on the Waldorf philosophy, by 4 members of the study team.

Throughout the month of April, the focus was on coding and analyzing the data collected from online surveys and offline interviews. A focus group discussion (FGD) took place on April 7, with 15 parents participating. Transcriptions from the FGD were prepared, and based on this, the analysis began. The initial analysis of the findings was completed and shared with the team. Additionally, part of the literature review was conducted.



John Singh Sports Academy