

## NSS Special Camp- January 2024

The Annual Special Camp organised by the NSS unit of Loreto College, Kolkata was held between January 8 and 15, 2024 for the academic year 2023–24. After a preliminary survey, the unit decided to conduct the camp for the slum areas in and around Ramesh Mitra Road in Bhawanipore (Ward 72), Kolkata. The camp was held in the Children's Park within the larger Ladies' Park on Ramesh Mitra Road.

Apart from imparting basic lessons on Mathematics, English Grammar, Spoken English, and Social Etiquette, the NSS volunteers also organised awareness camps focusing on Dengue-Malaria, Human Trafficking, Hygiene, and Menstrual Hygiene. Mosquito repellents, sanitary napkins, exercise books, pens, pencils, crayon boxes, and chocolates were distributed in the slum areas. As a corollary to the Human Trafficking awareness camp, basic self-defence training was given to the children, especially the older girls, many of whom are students of the Adarsh Hindi High School situated close to the Park.

The highlight of the camp was the National Youth Day celebration on January 12, 2024, when the children participated in a storytelling session and heard stories and anecdotes from the lives of inspirational figures from Bengal. A few students also enacted scenes from Swami Vivekananda's life. This was followed by a yoga session. As a continuation of the Youth Day celebration, an origami workshop was organised on January 13, followed by a sit-and-draw competition. Prizes were given out at the end of the competition.

The diverse nature of the knowledge imparted helped the children become more aware of their society and social problems. The interest of the children never waned as the sessions were punctuated with music and games that kept them engaged. Just as the children of the nearby slum areas found happiness in learning in the camp, the NSS volunteers of Loreto College too discovered the joy of sharing their time and resources with those less privileged. The week-long camp also gave them an understanding of the ground realities of our society and taught them how to offer selfless service in a mature and sensitive manner.