

A 'REAL TIME LEARNING' FOR RURAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN VILLAGES

Gandhigram Rural Institute (GRI) organized Village Placement Programme (VPP) for the second year students of all UG and PG programmes for one week. VPP is a flagship programme of GRI since the inception of the Institute in 1956.

Organised in two spells for Arts and Science students separately, Social Science students underwent the programme from Sep. 16 -21 and Science students from Sep. 23 to 28, 2019. Drawn from all the 22 Schools / Departments / Centres of GRI, a total of 979 students from Social Sciences (347), and Sciences (632), experienced the life in villages.

Every batch of students was accompanied by Faculty members and Field staff from their respective departments for guidance. Totally 114 staff were engaged in this programme.

This programme enabled the students to :

1. Study the physical, environmental, social, economic, and cultural profile of the local community.
2. Observe and experience the field realities of their curriculum, taught in their class rooms
3. Examine the problems experienced by the people, and explore possible options for solving them in a participatory manner.

Upon completion of the camp, students from every department shared their field experiences and field learnings with students and staff from the other departments on Sep. 30, and Oct. 01, 2019.

Learnings from the camps, and their experience sharing sessions, also benefited the staff in charging themselves with field realities of their theoretical framework taught to the students. Besides enabling a 'real time' learning to students, this programme has facilitated them to be 'poor-friendly' and 'environment- friendly'.

Raising people's awareness about our Honourable Prime Minister's 'Swachh Bharat' programme, Jal sakthi programme, and creating plastic/ polythene-free rural environment, capped the other programmes.

Emerged as the outcome of these camps, students have proposed the use of renewable sources of energy including solar power, low cost housing for adoption by the government in its welfare programmes, use of Mobile Apps for farmers, promotion of organic farming and cultivating healthy eating habits among children.

Such rural exposure programmes have enabled our students of GRI to be preferred by the prospective employers as 'human-resources with social responsibilities', and, they command an edge over students from conventional colleges and universities.