



Miranda House UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

Society Annual Report

Society Activities

Society: MH *Vatavaran*

Year: 2019-20

Student Office Bearers:

	Name	Course	Year
President	Chetna	BSc(H) Chemistry	3
Vice President	Tanya	BSc(H) Chemistry	3
General Secretary	Sanjwala Mukund	BA(H) Philosophy	2
Joint Secretary	Divya	BA(H) Economics	2

Staff Advisors:

Name	Department
Dr Bani Roy, Convener	Chemistry
Dr Amrita T Sheikh	Chemistry
Dr Saloni Bahri	Botany
Dr Jyoti Arora	Zoology
Dr Mallika Pathak	Chemistry
Dr Monika Arora	Mathematics
Dr Deepali	Botany
Dr Simran Jit	Zoology
Dr Poonam	Chemistry
Dr Sujata Sengupta	Chemistry

Part A.1

Events/Seminars/conferences/workshops/Extension Activities organized

This academic year has been a very fruitful one for MH *Vatavaran*. Even before the session began, a number of activities were taking place. In June 2019, a plastic bottle garden was made by the Society using recycled bottles, under the guidance of Dr Divya Agarwal. Plants like *Sadabahar*, Arrow-headed Plant, Money Plant, Spider Plant and Cactus were planted in a collection of identical yellow used plastic jars on a soil-less medium made of nutrient pellets. These were then nailed to the wall of the College compound near the MH Recycling Plants in the shape of M and H to spell



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out the College initials.

On 26 July 2019 a session was organized by *Envirar*, in which Ms Puneet Dhillon, Associate Director Marketing, *Envirar* spoke about the significance of environmental awareness and sustainable practices in an interactive session with the students. Ms Dhillon also briefed the students about the Campus Ambassador programme, wherein students can represent the *Envirar Application* in the College. She also introduced an *app* that allows individuals to adopt plants and monitor their wellbeing. At the end of the programme, a quiz was organised, the winners of which received *#Ecowarrior badges*. At the end, the participants pledged to become *Eco-Warriors*. On the same day, a workshop was conducted by the *Youth Alliance of India* on *Earth-Shastra*. The *Earth-Shastra* session was an immersive journey for students to explore the relationship between Ecology, Economics and the Human Self. Around fifty five students participated in both the events.

The annual Orientation Programme of MH *Vatavaran* was organised on 31 July 2019. The event began with the newly elected Union members introducing themselves, followed by screening of a presentation about the Society: its Vision, Goals, Organisation and Responsibilities. Future plans of the Society were also outlined. Later, the Convener of MH *Vatavaran*, Dr Bani Roy and the Senior Adviser, Dr Amrita T Sheikh discussed with the enthusiastic volunteers about how they could contribute to MH *Vatavaran* as well as to society as a whole by inculcating sustainable habits. Afterwards, the students visited the Paper Recycling Plant and the Compost Plant of the College, and the nuances of paper recycling and composting were explained to them. Students were full of zeal to contribute their bit towards environmental conservation. A total of 102 students attended the Orientation Programme.

During the month of August, WWF-India collaborated with MH *Vatavaran* for taking the *UN Tide Turner Challenge*. For this programme, WWF-India organized a workshop on '*The Young Leaders Plastic Challenge*'. Fourteen students from Miranda House attended this event, held at WWF-India, Lodhi Road. Several short films depicting the grave consequences of our unsustainable lifestyle were shown, one of them being about the choking of seabirds on discarded plastic. Volunteers came to know about Afroz Shah, a lawyer-turned-environmentalist, who has been instrumental in organising intensive cleaning of beaches. Students were given a toolkit to lead a cadre of 40 students from their respective institutions to carry out activities for awareness generation and reduction of the plastic burden. All the MH participants cleared the first level of the 3-level challenge and two students successfully completed the challenge.

Swachhta Pakhwara (Cleanliness Fortnight) was celebrated by MH *Vatavaran* in collaboration with NSS, Miranda House in August. During this drive, students took an oath to keep their surroundings, including the College campus, clean. Several cleanliness drives were organized for three consecutive days. Around 35 students participated during the entire drive.

The month of September began with the initiative '*Single-Use Plastic Free Miranda*'. This drive was conducted in association with the Department of Geography and the E-cell of Miranda House. During the drive, MH *Vatavaran* volunteers encouraged students to minimize the use of single-use plastic wherever possible. An awareness drive was carried out to enlighten the students about the adverse environmental effects of single-use plastic and the alternatives that are available. A signature campaign was also conducted. A google form was circulated for the same and around one thousand students filled up the form. An anti-plastic campaign, *#IAmAgainstPlastic*, was organised, under which, '*Carry Your Own Cup*' was a drive in which all members of the MH community – students, faculty and non-teaching staff – were requested to carry their own cups so that they do



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not need to use plastic cups. More than one thousand students participated in the campaign.

On 3-4 September 2019, MH *Vatavaran*, in collaboration with the NGO *CMS Vatavaran*, organized a two-day conclave *Celebrating the Himalayas*. On the first day, a short film titled *Global Warning, Kashmir Chapter* was screened followed by a quiz. In the quiz, the first position was bagged by Aishwarya and Sneh. The second position went jointly to two teams, Simran and Geetika, Anjali and Badal. After the quiz, Dr Govind Singh from the NGO *Delhi Greens* delivered a talk *Our Himalayan Responsibilities*. The highlight of the second day was a Panel Discussion on the conclave theme with panellists Ms Tilotama Varma (IPS, Addl. Director, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau), Dr Sushma Moitra (ex-Associate Professor, Department of Botany, Miranda House) and Ms Anu Jogesh (Policy and Governance Head at *Acclimatise*). A total of 103 students attended the conclave.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in partnership with Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) Government of India, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UN Women organized an Innovation Summit and exhibition at Janpath on 10 and 11 September 2019 with 7 central themes: Clean Energy, Water, Smart Agriculture, Electrical Mobility, Air Pollution, Cooling and Waste Management. Miranda House was represented by four students, Jyoti, Khushi, Anushka and Shinytha.

Like every year, MH *Vatavaran* organized a post-election Anti-Litter Drive in association with NSS on 13 September 2019 to collect the pamphlets and posters strewn around the campus during campaigning for the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections. Around twenty five MH *Vatavaran* volunteers participated in the drive. The waste collected was taken to the paper recycling plant so that it could be converted into pulp and later be made into beautiful folders and notebooks by the Paper Plant staff and Society members.

On 25 September 2019, at the event *Circular Economy of Plastic Waste and Excellence Awards for Academia and Community 2019* organized by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Smriti Sansthan, Miranda House received Excellence Award "*For delivering Excellence in the area of Environment and Society*". A few MH *Vatavaran* volunteers accompanied the Principal and some faculty members to the award ceremony held at NDMC Convention Centre, Sansad Marg.

MH *Vatavaran* has an ongoing collaboration with WWF-India for the project *ECHO 2020 on Sustainable Development*. On 27 September 2019 a workshop was organised in WWF-India, Lodhi Estate for the prospective participants of *ECHO 2020*. Teams from different educational institutions were required to identify a specific environmental issue, find solutions/alternatives, generate awareness about the problem and its solution, reduce impact of the identified problem and encourage community/youth action. After the workshop, the Miranda House team of four students submitted their project idea, the major thrust of which was reducing the consumption of single-use plastic in the campus. The project was selected by WWF-India for implementation. Under the project, the MH team with volunteers of MH *Vatavaran* conducted a survey on the amount of plastic used in the College eateries. It was a matter of satisfaction for them to find that due to the sustained effort by MH *Vatavaran* and the MH Students' Union, spearheaded by Geography students and faculty over the last year, the consumption of single-use plastic in the College had already been reduced considerably. PAM, Nescafé and the MH Cafeteria i.e., the eateries of the college, use steel/ wooden cutlery and paper or porcelain cups.



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On 27 September 2019 an Anti-Litter Drive was organized to collect discarded paper from all around the college campus. Forty five students volunteered for the drive. In October 2019, enthusiastic volunteers visited the *Delhi Green Show*, where they saw a great variety of plants and observed innovative ways of reusing waste material. In the annual Diwali Mela *Onella* of the College, students volunteered to monitor different parts of the College as per a roster in order to ensure that there was no litter during and after the event. Products from the paper recycling plant (registers, notebooks, folders, etc.) as well as manure made in the college were sold at the MH *Vatavaran* stall. Students also made posters and organized plastic bottle collection drives. The green wave has spread in the College. In addition to eateries stopping plastic cutlery and cups, students, too, have learnt to say 'no' to plastic and are doing their bit to ensure sustainability. Packaging material also involves newspapers or recycled paper sheets instead of plastic bags now.

On 28 January 2020, MH *Vatavaran* collaborated for an event on *Food Challenge* with *NET IMPACT Delhi University* which is an international organization of students and works on environmental and social issues worldwide. Total 50 participants attended the event. The event aimed at 'sustainable solutions to pivotal issues in food and agriculture'. The organization launched a global competition where students have to give solutions for various problems like how to increase the available food to meet the current demand keeping in mind that the solution should also reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

From 11 February to 14 February 2020, MH *Vatavaran* celebrated '*Sustainability Week*' as a part of *ECHO 2020* project under WWF-India. On 11 February 2020, a *Nature Walk* was held in the College with 36 students walking around the College grounds observing the vegetation along with experts from WWF-India and some Botany faculty members. On 13 February 2020, MH *Vatavaran* volunteers participated in two activities held in parallel – a visit to Yamuna Biodiversity Park and a Save Petroleum *Walkathon* in collaboration with HPCL from Miranda House to the HP petrol pump on Khyber Pass and back. On 14 February 2020, a *Bird Watch* was organized in the College under the '*Great Backyard Bird Count*' for the students to experience and appreciate the diversity of birds in the campus led by Zoology faculty and students. A total of eighteen species of birds were observed. Students got to see species like *shikra*, Eurasian collared dove, green pigeon, black-headed barbet, rose-ringed parakeet and many more.

MH *Vatavaran* is collaborating with a group of MH students who call themselves *Change in Range* to reorganize the solid waste management system in the College so that in addition to biodegradable waste and paper waste, which are already being taken care of at the MH Recycling Plant, plastics and other recyclables can also be segregated and disposed of suitably. The campaign includes holding awareness generation workshops for segregation at source and placing multiple bins at strategic locations in the College.



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Part A.2

Awards and recognition received:

On 25 September 2019, at the event *Circular Economy of Plastic Waste and Excellence Awards for Academia and Community 2019* organized by *Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Smriti Sansthan*, Miranda House received an *Excellence Award* “*For delivering Excellence in the area of Environment and Society*”