



Deepastambha Charitable Trust, Pune

प्रतिरव

DEC 2024





Watershed management project carried out at Pimpari Village, Satara.

By the team

We are taking a step forward with Pratirav, our very own Newsletter, we are reminded of our Founding policy and belief; to quietly serve, glow, and transform lives without seeking the spotlight. For years, we chose to be a media-shy organization, believing that the real impact doesn't need applause. We are driven by the simple joy of making a difference with a firm belief that my 2 hrs weekly will someday somehow affect someone's life for the better. One action at a time, in and for the lives of those around us.

Pratirav is a unique extension of this ethos, a space that is not about us but all of us. We want this newsletter to echo the thoughts, work, and experiences of DCTians. It's an opportunity to listen and share moments that inspire us and record the small, beautiful moments we have experienced together.

With each edition, Pratirav will deepen our shared understanding, spark new ideas, and inspire us to connect over the values that bring us together. Through stories, reflections, and recommendations, we hope readers will find new sources of motivation and practical insights that resonate with the Deepastambha spirit.

Sacred Waste, Sacred Soil

Did you know that the flowers and other offerings we use in religious rituals can be turned into something beneficial for the environment? Instead of polluting our rivers and lakes, these offerings can be transformed into nutrient-rich compost that nourishes the soil. This process is called Nirmalya Composting, and it's simpler than you think!



In session on waste management held at the Siddhivinayak Manas Society, Pune.

9 STEPS TO COMPOST NIRMALYA



I took on the role of project manager with a goal that went beyond just checking off a task. Sure, I had responsibilities to fulfill, but what really drove me was my curiosity about waste management, especially something called Nirmalya Composting.

You might be wondering, What's the big deal? It's just a waste, right?

Well, not quite. Nirmalya Composting addresses a growing problem—religious offerings like flowers and leaves that often end up polluting our rivers, lakes, and oceans. These offerings, which are meant to be sacred, sometimes harm the very environment we cherish. This project wasn't just an assignment for me—it was an opportunity to dig deeper into sustainable solutions that can actually make a difference.

At Deepastambha, we run a weekly activity centered around Nirmalya Composting—and it's more than just about managing waste. Our workshops aim to engage communities, spread awareness, and promote sustainable practices. The focus? Tackling the growing issue of religious offerings polluting water bodies.



An expert passionately addressing a focused audience

By composting these offerings, we turn potential pollutants into nutrient-rich compost for plants. Our goal is simple: to empower individuals and communities with the knowledge and tools to reduce waste, protect the environment, and make a positive impact.

By joining our workshops, individuals and communities not only learn key waste management techniques but also take direct action in reducing waste and protecting the environment. Together, we're building a culture of sustainability, inspiring others to follow and create a greener future.

-Ranbir Thorat,
Member at DCT, Fellow at MisFits
Advisory Council.



Illuminating Rural Paths

Over the past year, Deepastambha and our friends at the Earthsight Foundation have been working together to raise awareness among farmers and village leaders about key government initiatives. One of the most important tools we've highlighted is Gram Manchitra, a GIS system developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and provided by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

Our goal? To empower local communities by educating them on how to use this powerful system to improve village planning and development.

After our first session in December 2023, we had two more fascinating workshops about space and satellites in August 2024.

Next, Dr. Shirish Ravan broke down how satellites stay in orbit thanks to gravity and highlighted how space images benefit us. From helping farmers monitor crops to aiding Nepal during a drought, he demonstrated real-world applications. We even learned how to explore the world using Google Earth!



Dr. Shirish Ravan in session with village representatives, Block Development officers and others who graced the session in the second session of the day

First, Mr. Advait Kulkarni introduced us to the vastness of space and shared exciting videos of rockets launching into the sky. He even talked about Voyager 1, a spacecraft that traveled beyond our solar system, and explained how different satellites assist with various tasks here on Earth.



“Everything that happens around us has three main questions attached to it. What happened, when did it happen, and where did it happen? Answering these three questions further answers questions like why did it happen and who was involved. This means understanding location is critical in understanding the motivation of a certain event. With this in mind, it becomes evidently clear that history and geography lessons cannot be taken in separate silos.”

- Mr. Advait Kulkarni, co-founder of Earthsight foundation

After both lessons, we had a blast asking tons of questions, making the sessions even more engaging. Huge thanks to Advait Sir and Dr. Ravan Sir for making space and satellites so fun to learn!

Later in the day, we hosted an induction for village heads and key members of society who play a big role in developing their communities. It was an inspiring way to connect with leaders shaping the future. Stay tuned for more exciting updates!

-Mahek Sayed,
Deepastambha Member and Project
Manager for Pratirav.



The first session of the day was attended by school children

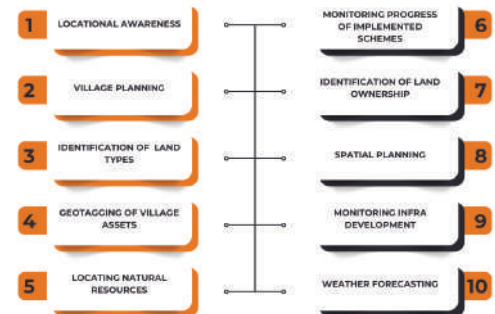
What Can Village Leaders and Officers Do on Gram Manchitra?

Imagine a very large, colorful map displaying everything in your village!

Gram Manchitra is like magic for the village leaders (Sarpanch) and other officers who help take care of the village. Let's find out what they can do with this special website!



USING GRAM MANACHITRA



Quenching Curiosities



Team DCT before the event

A collaborative project is underway in Pune district in a significant effort to ensure sustainable water resources for future generations. This initiative involves diverse participants, including schools, colleges, and villages, working together to promote water conservation and management.

As one of the project coordinators, I was more than just doing my job. I was interested in learning about water management, especially using technology. With climate change and technology getting bigger and bigger since COVID, this project felt like the perfect fit. I saw it as a chance to learn about sustainable solutions and make a collaborative effort to make a difference, even if it's just a little bit.

The purpose of this project is to foster behavioral changes related to water usage in a sustainable way. By providing comprehensive guidance on water availability, management, quality, and quantity, the initiative aims to ensure that both current and future generations have access to clean and sustainable water resources.



Demonstration of the kit used for water management

To manifest the project of water management sustainably, the participants will be provided with comprehensive guidance and direction on water availability, management, quality, and quantity. This evaluation will play a crucial role in enhancing water sustainability, and soil health and promoting human well-being.

Utilizing digital tools such as mobile apps and GIS data with satellite imagery, the project will focus on seven critical areas: Surface water, groundwater, drinking water, wastewater irrigation water, microbe count testing & amp; mini weather stations.

Over 380 participants from 4 schools, 5 colleges, and 1 village will be actively involved in implementing the project across 10 villages in Pune district. They will work in small groups & each participant will focus on a specific water-related parameter.

This project will help everyone learn more about water management, get involved directly, and create a culture of sustainability.

DATA WILL BE COLLECTED ON FOLLOWING PARAMETERS

01

Water conservation

Keeping surface water levels high

02

Water availability

Making sure there is enough groundwater

03

Water quality

Testing drinking, irrigation and waste water

04

Soil health

Checking for microbes in the soil

05

Environment

Using rain gauges and weather stations

Through this collaborative effort, the project aims to make a significant impact on water sustainability in Pune district. By combining community involvement, digital technology, and a focus on water conservation, the initiative is poised to create a more sustainable future for all.

-Ranbir Thorat,
Member at DCT, Works at MisFits
Advisory Council



Glimpses from the session

From Playgrounds to Parliament

Skool Sansad Monsoon Session

Back in the summer of 2013, there was a discussion about creating something that would help school students understand and embrace democratic values and hence the idea of Skool sansad came into being. Though the concept was exciting, I initially thought it would be too difficult to put into action and decided not to get involved. Politics wasn't really my interest.

However, by February 2014, the first-ever Skool Sansad was organized by DCT, and it turned out to be a huge success. Now, after 11 successful editions, I often reflect on how this idea, which seemed so challenging, became a reality through the dedication and hard work of DCT members.

And throughout these years our main purpose has always been to educate and encourage students to form opinions based on research and critical thinking, rather than just going along with what they hear around them. I'm proud to say that we've achieved that goal, as parents often tell us how participating students have shown real

improvement in developing their own well-informed opinions.



Parliamentarians in session at the 11th Skool Sansad

While the Skool Sansad Winter session was working well, we wanted a way to stay connected with schools throughout the year. That's when the idea of the Skool Sansad Monsoon Session was born.



Last year, in the Monsoon Session, 9 schools participated. The students formed clubs, chose topics related to their schools, and created a small "government" to address those issues from June to December. They elected a Prime Minister, three Chief Ministers, and other members to lead the work on their chosen topics. The students had to document everything, create action plans, and execute them. It wasn't easy for them, especially with their busy 9th-grade schedules, but they managed to complete three activities and submitted their reports. Even though it was a success, we didn't reach as many schools as we had hoped.

This year around, in June 2024, we took the Monsoon Session online. We offered 20 topics across 10 ministries and asked students to pick one and act as a Cabinet Minister for that topic. To our surprise, we received 500 entries from about 60 schools across Maharashtra—exactly what we were aiming for! The students were asked to make a 5-7 minute policy speech on their chosen topic.

We also organized sessions to help them understand how to approach their topic, identify problems, find solutions, and even get expert advice. We provided tips on the technical side as well, like how to make a video. In the end, 290 students submitted their videos, which were judged by a panel of 22 experts. Each video was reviewed by two judges. Despite some differences in strictness among judges, we managed to select 8 standout videos —

2 winners, 2 runner-ups, and 4 consolation prizes.

While we don't view Skool Sansad as a competition, we do give out awards for the slight motivation. Many of the participants came from humble backgrounds, yet they worked hard and gave their best. According to the judges, 70% of the students understood our concept and objective. The Monsoon Session is only in its second year, so it's still evolving and will take some time to fully mature into the ideal format. We hope that schools participating in the Monsoon Session will also join the Winter Session in February 2025.

The online format has been a huge time and cost saver for DCT and our volunteers. With feedback from the judges, we aim to make next year's Monsoon session even better, introducing new challenges and concepts. It's often said that the more time you invest in something, the more it grows. We're confident that with more brainstorming and effort, future Monsoon Sessions will continue to innovate and inspire.

-Chinmay Joshi,
*Deepastambha Member and
practicing CA.*



इको-Paavitrya

दीपस्तंभने यंदा चौदाव्या वर्षी आयोजित केलेल्या 'इको-पावित्र्य' स्पर्धेला शाळांकडून भरघोस प्रतिसाद लाभला. मागील अनेक वर्षांप्रमाणेच या उपक्रमाचा उद्देश सण उत्सव पर्यावरणपूरक मार्गाने साजरे करण्याची जनजागृती करणे हा आहे. इको-पावित्र्यच्या माध्यमातून दीपस्तंभ मुलांना सणांच्या परंपरा जपत, त्यांना पर्यावरणसुद्धेही पद्धतीने साजरे करण्यासाठी प्रोत्साहन देते. मुलांच्या मनावर पर्यावरण संवर्धनाची बीजे रोवण्याचा आणि ते याचे महत्त्व समजून आपल्या सणांमध्ये पर्यावरणपूरकता अंगीकारतील, हा या उपक्रमाचा दीर्घकालीन उद्देश आहे.

यावर्षीच्या स्पर्धेत 'पर्यावरणपूरक सण उत्सव' या संकल्पनेवर आधारित फॅन्सी ड्रेस स्पर्धा ठेवण्यात आली होती, ज्यामध्ये विद्यार्थ्यांना विविध कल्पक पोशाखांद्वारे पर्यावरण पूरक संदेश देण्याची संधी मिळाली. एकूण २३ शाळांनी उत्स्फूर्त सहभाग नोंदवला, आणि प्रत्येक शाळेतून निवडलेले ५ विद्यार्थ्यांसह एकूण ८४ विद्यार्थ्यांनी या स्पर्धेत भाग घेतला. २९ सप्टेंबर रोजी रविवारी कोथरूड येथील एमआयटी व्हीजीएसच्या प्रांगणात ही स्पर्धा पार पडली. मुलांच्या रॅम्प वॉकचा अनुभव आणि त्यांच्या पोशाखांमधून दिलेले पर्यावरण संदेश या दिवसाचे मुख्य आकर्षण ठरले.

स्पर्धेत मुलांनी सादर केलेली पात्रे आणि पोशाख अत्यंत नाविन्यपूर्ण आणि अर्थपूर्ण होती. एका विद्यार्थिनीने वटवृक्षाचा पोशाख परिधान केला, ज्याद्वारे तिने भारतीय संस्कृतीत वटवृक्षाचे स्थान आणि त्याच्या संवर्धनाची आवश्यकता अधोरेखित केली. तिने "वृक्ष हे केवळ वातावरणाचे नव्हे तर आपल्या संस्कृतीचे रक्षणकर्ते आहेत," हा संदेश दिला. याचबरोबर, एका विद्यार्थ्याने सायकलचा पोशाख करून सायकल वापराचे महत्त्व सांगितले आणि त्याचा संदेश होता की, "वाहनांच्या वाढत्या वापरामुळे होणारे प्रदूषण कमी करण्यासाठी सायकलचा अवलंब करा."

या स्पर्धेत सादर झालेल्या विविध पात्रांमधून मुलांची सर्जनशीलता आणि पर्यावरणाबद्दल असलेली आस्था दिसून आली. अनेक विद्यार्थ्यांनी विविध पात्रे साकारून लोकांना पर्यावरण संरक्षणाची जागरूकता दिली. काही विद्यार्थ्यांनी पाण्याचे संरक्षण, कचरा व्यवस्थापन, आणि प्रदूषण कमी करण्याचे संदेश दिले. स्पर्धेत सादर झालेली पात्रे अत्यंत प्रेरणादायी आणि चिंतनशील होती, ज्यांनी सर्वप्रेक्षकांना पर्यावरणविषयक विचार करायला भाग पाडले.



Participants at the Eco-paavitrya Fancy Dress Competition 2024



इनरव्हील आणि दीपस्तंभ यांनी मिळून हा कार्यक्रम पार पडला. इनरव्हील ही एक आंतरराष्ट्रीय संस्था आहे, जी समाजसेवेमध्ये सक्रिय असते. या संस्थेचे उद्दिष्ट म्हणजे समाजातील विविध गरजांनुसार मदत करणे, महिलांच्या सक्षमीकरणासाठी काम करणे, आणि मुलांसाठी शैक्षणिक तसेच सांस्कृतिक उपक्रमांचे आयोजन करणे. या संस्थेने फॅन्सी ड्रेस स्पर्धेला सहकार्य केले आणि ९ स्पर्धकांना बक्षिसे वितरित केली, ज्यामुळे मुलांना प्रोत्साहन मिळाले. यंदाच्या इको-पावित्र्य स्पर्धेतून विद्यार्थ्यांना आपल्या सणांचे मूल्य लक्षात घेऊन ते पर्यावरणसंस्पर्धी मार्गाने साजरे करण्याची प्रेरणा मिळाली.

*-Afrin Sayed,
Deepastambha Member and
Teacher by profession*

*A participant in the
costume of
Shaniwarwada*



Ramp walk carried out by the participants

Reels and Reads



The Big Short (2015)

The Big Short is a biographical drama. The movie is an adaptation of Michael Lewis's book *The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine*. It brilliantly unpacks the complexities of the 2008 financial crisis, blending dark humor and sharp storytelling. With compelling performances, it exposes greed, systemic failures, and the devastating human cost of Wall Street's recklessness.

Director : Adam McKay

Starring : Christian Bale, Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling, and Brad Pitt

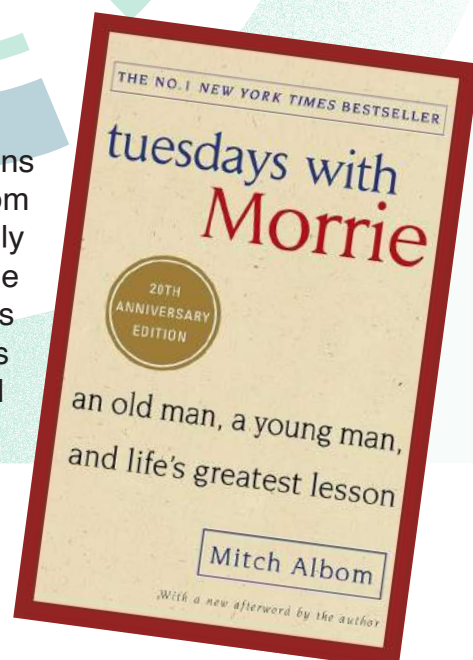
Tuesdays with Morrie

(first published in 1997)

It is a heartfelt memoir exploring life's deepest lessons through weekly conversations between Mitch Albom and his terminally ill mentor, Morrie. Profoundly moving, it celebrates love, forgiveness, and the enduring power of human connection. The book is deeply moving, simple yet profound, and encourages readers to reflect on their own lives. It has sold millions of copies worldwide and continues to inspire readers to prioritize relationships and live authentically.

Author : Mitch Albom

Genres : Memoir, Inspirational, Philosophical



You know what's coming next?

Applications for **MENTORS** is *now open* !

What is a mentor?

A mentor is a guide provided to every political party in skool sansad that guides the parliamentarians through the sansad and its activities including preparing for the big day, steering through the sessions and much more.

Who can be a mentor?

Any person of considerable to expert knowledge on the Indian Parliamentary system.

Where do I apply?

Stay tuned to our socials for updates or contact on +91 9970704444.





Upayn[®]
....donation in the form of gift



Deepastambha Charitable Trust, Pune

Address : Plot No. 28, Ishaanika, Natraj Society, Lane No. 9,
Karve nagar, Pune 411052, Maharashtra, India.
Number : +91 9970704444
E-mail : info@deepastambha.com

 @deepastambha
 Deepastambha Charitable Trust
 Deepastambha SocialGroup