



Botany Fest 2020

Botany fest is a unique plant centric festival organized at the Waghai Botanical Garden. The festival which is being organised for the fourth consecutive year from 23rd -25th January 2020 is jointly organised by the South Dang Forest Division and the Department of Botany, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The theme based festival has the theme as 'Explorist' this year. The festival has participation from all parts of the state and the participants belonging to about 20 Universities and colleges. Botany fest has several events which aim to which test student's skills as well as to provide training in various aspects of plant in our day to day life. The festival celebrates knowledge in plant sciences and helps in gaining skills that allow participants of botany for the unique entrepreneurial career opportunities. The events that are being organised this year include 'Botanical Innovation and Nature', 'Plants in Self Defence', 'Plants in dyeing and cosmetics', 'Phytohunt', 'Chef of Dang', 'Painting with natural colours,' 'Jungle Parliament and Plants in Arts and Crafts. The event also includes skills enhancement events life 'River Rafting' and 'Mountain climbing'.

Botany Fest 2020 was inaugurated by Shri. M. J. Parmar, (Chief Conservator of Forest, Wildlife circle Valsad) in the presence of Shri. Agneshwar Vyas (Deputy Conservator of Forests, North Dang Division), Prof. K. S. Srivastava (Navsari Agriculture University) and The M. S. University was represented by Dr. P. S. Nagar, Dr. K. S. Rajput and Dr. D. G. Shah. Botany experts from several colleges across the state was present. Shri. M. J, Parmar in his inaugural address stressed the role played by the festivals like Botany Fest in training the new generations on different aspects of plants and their conservation. Shri D. N. Rabari, Deputy Conservator of Forest, South Dang Forest Division was lauded for his efforts in organising Botany Fest 2020.



For the first time it was done that participants projected the use of plants in self-defence mechanics. Plants like mucuna (Kavach), Urticaceae members, spiny grasses, calamus plants and many such plants which can be very well used by women. This is an attempt when innovative ideas are welcomed to strengthen women power via plant. Participants have made, Bracelates, Hairpins, and Gloves. It was first of its kind of such programme ever taken place in Gujarat and probably in India.



Another programme, which was conducted this year, was botanical innovation and nature. Wherein the botany was correlated with the new inventions and how it has assisted in technological advancement. One of the presentations depicted the mechanism of seeds of *Hiptage benghalensis* could be an example for safe landing of helicopters under unfavourable circumstances. The mechanism of it was out of 3 wings of the helicopters if one of the wing is larger than other two it can help in safe landing of helicopters under unfavourable

conditions. Similarly, there were programmes like cinematic documentaries which shoot there relevance of plant anatomy in making buildings and big structures, Phyllotaxy and its relevance for making better solar panels, leaves, flowers and seeds for new textile designing, and so on so forth.



Another programme was use of plants in dyeing was also well taken by the participants and they came up with new colour combinations designs, prints and new resources that can be used for dyeing purposes.



One of the most popular programs of botany fest was Phytohunt which reflected how the plant diversity in WBG tempts the student to search for the unique trees of India. This gives an opportunity to the participants to know about the plants with they have not seen earlier in a sportive form. Programme deals with a puzzle wherein you have to first resolve the puzzle and then hunt for the clues based on the map on the puzzle.



Pragwad, scientifically known as *Ficus microcarpa*, the plant which is similar to banyan tree however its known for its beautiful leaves and the thin prop roots from the stem. This is the most unique plant of WBG which is almost 50-year-old plant. Students get opportunity to relax under the trees and enjoy the beautiful canopy of the Pragwad, the shower of water by beautiful leaves makes. It is a great occasion for the participants to enjoy and celebrate the moment under the tree itself, under utter peace. The sound which participants gets an opportunities to



even paint with natural flowers leaves soil and ash with no pencil and pen given to them it's beautiful to see how the participants are able to depict the nature in a very elegant way.

We even have programmes like fashion designing arts and craft and making of musical instruments to enjoy the nature. This is here wherein the participants are able to beautify the clothes they have died in fashionable way depicting the number of aspects of nature. After the completing the designing of clothes jewellery and musical instruments participants have to advertise their items by ramp walking with their cosmetic items jewellery and musical instruments. here in we get an idea of the power of young participants to come up with beautiful designs jewels like garlands, earrings, hat, bangles, kamarband etc. participants also come up with the new musical instrument from twigs, leaves flowers snails and many such things which are dried and fallen in the forest. This results into the will for making new instruments, which is being not yet discovered.



As per the theme, the programmes like 'River Rafting' and 'Mountain Climbing' were introduced for the first time. Participants were provided with 20 bamboos and jute and they have to prepare raft for crossing river. Then they have to climb the mountain for search of food.



Chef of Dang, in other terms is Jungle Ka Khazana where the participants are able to explore the diverse plants of Dang which are edible and from some of this diverse plant which available in that particular season are collected by the participants and that cooked by them on fire wood. This remains them that there was a time when we used to cooked on firewood and not on gas. Not only this, it gives opportunities to the participants to come up with a new recipe which is being not at explored by anyone till date. This is first of kind of programme where the participants cooked food without knowing what recipe they are going to make and they even do not know what taste it would be.



The Expectation Vs Reality was the event of testing the ability explain and mutual understandings. In this game four of the participants were explaining the images or drawing and one facing the opposite side was drawing the pictures explained by their companions.



In an Audio-Visual event, the participants had to guess the name of plant in the song.

The Discussion regarding the tribal welfare, and forest conservation was held at the parliament of jungle. The discussion came up with those important matters of tribals which can uplift their cultural and ethical values as

per the present day requirements. It is a debate on how best we can use the budget provided by the government for the upliftment of the Dangs - The Floral Heritage of Gujarat.



For infotainment the cultural evening was organised in Botany Fest 2020, where the participant among various parts of Gujarat performed a Dance, Skit, Poem, and Essay explaining Botanical, Environments, and Natural aspects of life.



The winner of Botany Fest 2020 was Team Malva from The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda and runner up was Team Adoxa from ASPEE.



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