

Best Practice: 2

Title : Commitment to Tea Garden Community

Objectives:

The Mariani College sets the following goals:

1. To encourage the parents of the nearby tea gardens to send their children to school, colleges etc.
2. To create awareness about health and hygiene
3. To create awareness against superstitious practices
4. To encourage the youths to be self employed
5. To promote rich culture of the tea garden community

The Context:

The Mariani College, situated amidst a number of tea gardens, has a number of duties and responsibilities towards the tea garden community .Generally, the tea garden workers are less interested to send their children to schools and colleges for education and this is mainly due their poverty stricken life. Many health problems such diarrhea, typhoid, Malaria, lack of nutrition etc. are very common. Also, use of alcohol, tobacco, child marriage, high population growth are some major problems associated with their life. In view of all these, the Mariani College has considered it as one of the best practice to render some welfare programmes in the neighbouring tea gardens i.e. Kothalguri, Kharikatiya, Katonibari, Heeleakah , Hunwal etc. At the same time, this institution is trying to promote their culture consisting of jhumur dance along with music, playing of madal etc.

The Practice:

1. The Mariani College teaching faculties and office staff along with students observed International Literacy Day on September 8, 2016 in Katonibari Tea Estate. On this occasion Dr. Horen Goowalla, Associate Professor of Mariani College addressed to the people and highlighted on various problems the tea garden families have and described how education would help to their uplift. He urged the gathering to send their children to school and colleges and talked in brief the various facilities provided by the government to students in the schools and colleges such as Mid Day Meal, School uniforms and scholarships to students.
2. This institution observed World Environment day in kathalguri Tea Estate on June 5, 2017. Both teaching and non-teaching faculties participated in it. On this occasion, Mr. Lachit Gogoi, Associate Professor, Department of History, Mariani College delivered a speech on the need of protection of environment by planting trees, by reducing the use of plastics etc. Also he appealed to the concerned authority for the use of proper amount of fertilizers, pesticides etc.
3. The Mariani College Internal Quality Assurance Cell organized a Two Days International Seminar on “Business, Marketing, Tourism and Tea Tourism in India” in collaboration with Teachers’ Unit, Mariani College in February ,2019. Dr. Kim-Shyan Fam, Professor of

Marketing at Victoria University of Welling, New Zealand participated as resource person. This Seminar brought to the forefront many prospects of Tea Tourism in this area and possibilities of self –employment in this sector.

4. The Department of Assamese , Mariani College conducted a project work entitled on” Festivals of Tea Garden Community” with the students of B.A.6th Semester in 2021.
5. Some faculties of Mariani College have done research works on Tea Garden Community, presented research papers in Seminars and published research articles.

Evidence of Success:

Extension activities in the neighbouring tea gardens have been producing some positive results. In recent years it has been found that more and more children from tea gardens come to schools and colleges with less absence and irregularities. Literacy rate in the tea gardens are also increasing. Many students completed higher education successfully and some of them qualified competitive examinations and established themselves in different sectors. Programmes including street play, Swachhata Abhijan etc. bear the expected outcome. These not only contribute to encourage them to live a healthy life but also promotes a strong relationship between the community and this higher educational institution. Now about 60% of the students admitted in the college are from nearby tea gardens and they get good results and show good performance in sports and cultural activities.

Problems encountered and resources required:

1. It is found really hard to convince the people against the superstitious practices they are adapted. They used traditional methods to cure diseases and reluctant to go to doctor.
2. It would be more fruitful if the institution will work in collaboration with some other social organizations interested in this sector.