

**REPORT OF THE WBPCB
ENVIRONMENTAL
CAMPAIGN PROGRAMME
IN NORTH BENGAL**

DECEMBER 2004

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**PROGRAMME SCHEDULE FOR THE WBPCB ENVIRONMENTAL
AWARENESS CAMPAIGN OF NORTH BENGAL**

December 2004

Darjeeling & Siliguri

Nature of Programme	Theme	Collaborator(s)	Date & Time	Venue
Meeting of District Administration with Member Secretary, WBPCB and ADG & IG (Pollution Control), West Bengal		District Administration, Local NGOs of North Bengal	December 2, 2004 at 10:30 a.m.	Conference Room, Darjeeling Municipality
Trainers' training workshop on preparation of biodegradable paper carry bags	Restriction on plastic carry bag use	Training imparted by the Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy (IICP)	December 2, 2004 at 11:00 a.m.	Capital Hall, Darjeeling Municipality
Trainers' training workshop on preparation of biodegradable paper carry bags	Restriction on plastic carry bag use	Training imparted by the Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy (IICP)	December 3, 2004 at 11:00 a.m.	Capital Hall, Darjeeling Municipality
Teacher's Training Workshop at Darjeeling & Kalimpong	Environmental Studies	United States-Asia Environmental Partnership (USAEP)	December 3, 2004 at 11:30 a.m.	Ramakrishna Mission B. Ed College, Darjeeling
Trainers' training workshop on preparation of biodegradable paper carry bags	Restriction on plastic carry bag use	Training to be imparted by Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy (IICP)	December 4, 2004 at 11:00 a.m.	Paribesh Bhaban, Siliguri Regional Office
Awareness programme by eco-club student members (placard demonstration on different environmental issues)	National Green Corps (NGC) Programme	Pashchim Banga Vigyan Mancha	December 4, 2004 at 11:30 a.m.	Tenzing Norgey Bus Stand, Siliguri

Report on the Workshops in North Bengal

Theme: *Manufacture of Biodegradable Paper Bags as Viable Alternatives to Plastic Carry Bags*

Finding viable alternatives to plastic bags: The beginning

In order to tackle the problem of plastic waste, which is an integral part of the WBPCB's drive for a cleaner West Bengal, the Board has been engaged in finding viable substitutes to plastic carry bags, which pose a major environmental problem in the state. In the light of environmental and health risks, it is desirable to reduce the quantum of plastic waste generated, by minimising the use of plastic carry bags, reusing them in our daily lives and most importantly, by using carry bags made of biodegradable materials. In order to promote the latter, the WBPCB organised a series of three workshops earlier, to provide hands-on training to individuals/organisations interested to produce carry bags made of eco-friendly materials like paper, grass, cloth and jute. These workshops encourage the use of biodegradable carry bags and help reduce plastic waste considerably.

The first workshop of this kind was organised at Paribesh Bhawan, Salt Lake City on August 30, 2003 and was attended by 44 participants. The second workshop, which was organised for a different set of organisations/individuals, was held at the Camac Street Regional Office of the WBPCB on November 28, 2003. About 48-odd participants took part in the training sessions of the workshop, which were conducted by trainers of various NGOs. The third workshop was organised at Paribesh Bhaban, Salt Lake City on April 16, 2004. About 22 participants attended the workshop, which was conducted by the Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy, a non-government organisation working with physically and mentally challenged children.

Workshop Objectives

- To promote the use of carry bags made of biodegradable materials;
- To impart the knowledge of manufacturing eco-friendly carry bags to the concerned organisations and individuals;
- To bring the “actors” together so that they could utilise their knowledge to undertake small projects for manufacturing eco-friendly carry bags that could be used in the shops and markets of the state;
- To help generate employment for the weaker sections of the society i.e., poor women, unemployed youth, disabled children etc.; and,
- To achieve the overall target of reducing plastic waste in the state.

Workshops in North Bengal

In December 2004, three workshops were organised, two in Darjeeling and one in Siliguri. The participants of the workshops at Darjeeling were primarily representatives of different wards of Darjeeling Municipality, predominantly women and unemployed youth who are in need of a viable employment opportunity. On the other hand, the participants of the workshop at Siliguri was attended by representatives of Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industries (FOCIN), Brihottoro Siliguri Khuchra Byabshayee Samiti (BSKBS), Bidhan Road Byabshayee Samiti (BRBS) as well as representatives of Convenor NGOs of North Bengal namely St. John's Ambulance Association, Alipurduar Nature Club, Chanchal Janakalyan Samity. During the training sessions of these workshops, all the 146-odd participants were briefed about the various aspects (such as costing of the bags, marketing strategies etc) of undertaking projects on the manufacture of paper bags. A brief account of the workshops is tabulated below.

Brief account of the workshops in North Bengal

Sl. No.	Venue	Date	Time	No. of participants
1.	Capital Hall, Darjeeling Municipality	December 2, 2004	11:00 a.m.	78
2.	Capital Hall, Darjeeling Municipality	December 3, 2004	11:00 a.m.	56
3.	Conference Room, Paribesh Bhaban, Siliguri	December 4, 2004	11:00 a.m.	12

Key Features

At the beginning of each of the three workshops, the representatives of the Indian Association of PET Manufacturers (IAPM) gave presentations on the process of PET bottle waste management in West Bengal. The participants were briefed on the method of PET bottle waste collection (and its recycling into PET flakes) as well as the cost involved in the process. This presentation was aimed for those participants who might be interested in taking up projects on PET waste management and could help improve the condition of the environment of North Bengal.

The main part of the workshops comprised of the demonstration of the method of manufacturing paper carry bags. Each participant learnt the method and prepared two/three bags on their own under the guidance of the trainers. Shri Kamaluddin, a young spastic and Shri William Borneo of the Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy imparted training to the participants.

Feedback from the participants

- The participants learnt the methods of manufacturing the eco-friendly bags with huge enthusiasm.
- The participants opined that they found the workshop to be of great help. They found the discussions on aspects such as price of the paper bags and marketing of the products to be very useful.
- The participants promised to use their knowledge and take up initiatives to make bags and sell it to the neighbouring shops for distribution.

Report of the Teacher's Training Workshop at Darjeeling & Kalimpong

Theme: Environmental Studies

Activity: Teacher's Training Workshop at Darjeeling & Kalimpong

Venue: Ramakrishna Mission B. Ed College, Darjeeling

Date: December 3, 2004

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Under the theme 'Environmental Studies' of the WBPCB Environmental Campaign, a Teacher's Training Workshop was organised in association with the United States Asia Environment Programme (USAEP) at Ramakrishna Mission B.Ed. College, Darjeeling on December 3, 2004. A total of 40 teachers from various colleges of the districts of North Bengal participated in the workshop.

The idea of the workshop was to inculcate the importance of environmental protection among the teachers to convey the same to the students by undertaking various environmental awareness related activities in their respective educational institutions. The WBPCB made a presentation on the role of the Board in generating environmental awareness in the state. The presentation emphasised on the Environmental Campaign of the Board launched on June 5, 2003. The participants were informed that the campaign, broadly divided into two categories, awareness-raising and operational, addresses target groups as diverse as school and college students, government officials, research institutions and the general public. The presentation included a brief summary of all the 150 programmes conducted by the Board on various themes such as biodiversity, environmental law, noise pollution, personal hygiene and public health, restriction of plastic carry bags in ecologically sensitive areas as well as tourist/heritage sites, recycling of PET bottles, Prime Minister's Green Corps Programme for 2850 schools of West Bengal etc.

The teachers were made aware of the various environmental issues of present concern, such as restriction of the use of plastic carry bags, noise pollution, management of solid and biomedical waste, rainwater harvesting etc. The officials of the WBPCB also demonstrated instruments such as sound level meter (used to measure the level of noise pollution) and film thickness gauge meter (used to measure the thickness of plastic carry bags) to the participants. The teacher-participants learnt about the various environmental aspects with great enthusiasm and promised to convey the same to their students for facilitating the idea of environmental awareness in the areas.