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THE RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Opening the doorway to sustainable travel

ON THE BRINK

*INDO-HUMPBACK
DOLPHINS*

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

*A PRINCIPAL'S TAKE ON
HOW NATURE IS A GREAT
TEACHER*

MEETING MAHULI

*FROM TRAILBLAZERS
FOUNDATION*

TRAILBLAZERS G4 CAMPS

AN OCEAN OF INQUIRY

CORPORATE CAMPS

CONQUER THE SUMMIT



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SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL IS THE WAY TO GO

As the world begins to travel and explore horizons like never before, the question of what it means to travel sustainably- with the least impact on the environment- will become a more impelling question in the days and years to come.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, Sustainable Tourism is "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"

As Managing Director of the Responsible Tourism Partnership Dr. Harold Goodwin explains, "Sustainability is the goal, a goal which can only be achieved by people taking responsibility together to achieve it."

Mankind has made progress in the fields of science and technology and with that advancement in transportation, construction, healthcare and all other industries; however, it seems we have forgotten our responsibilities to be the guardians of our natural resources. We have forgotten the importance of living a sustainable life which our great grandfathers and great-grandmothers were masters at- a life lead meaningfully taking into account their grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Being a sustainable and responsible tourist is simpler than we think. When we are traveling to a destination, we just need to be mindful and conscious.

To begin with, we could carry a refillable water bottle and use our own toiletries rather than the hotel's.

We could eat local food rather than eating exotic imported food transported from across the world, and shop local goods, handicrafts, souvenirs and support the local livelihood. Volunteering in local community projects could help create a positive impact on living standards, education, environment, livelihood and health of the communities we are visiting.

Though difficult, we could only buy what is required and absolutely necessary, in addition to buying brands that recycle packaging materials. Carrying our own steel or bamboo straws can be a significant contribution to lessening our carbon footprints in the long run, in addition to using our empty lunch boxes to parcel food. Another sustainable choice is to carry dry snacks in reusable boxes rather than buying plastic packets and contributing to non-degradable waste which will either end up in landfills or oceans.

Finding a way to balance our choices of food when we travel- making conscious decisions to eat more vegetarian food and cut down the demands on the meat industry could help reduce carbon footprints. Grandma's wisdom could go a long way in helping us travel and live sustainably- the use of natural ingredients to make homemade cosmetics like Aloe gel (from Aloe vera), fresh coconut water serum (from coconut water), Aretha soap nut, gram flour and turmeric pastes as cleansers- the wisdom of the elders in our land leaves plenty of room for healthy and sustainable choices.

Simple and timely decisions can also go a long way to ensure we evolve as sustainable travellers. Well-lubricated, serviced tyres inflated at correct pressure, car-pooling, using public transport or more bicycles and making informed decisions about the airlines we choose to travel with can also help curb carbon emissions.

Eco-resorts too are now blooming as people make conscious efforts to travel sustainably. Choose hotels that recycle water, use more LED lights, and have clear carbon footprint guidelines in check. Remember that responsible travellers will always switch off the AC and room lights before exiting, and only request sheet and towel changes when absolutely necessary!

Finding a greener way to live is a conscious decision we must make if we are to fulfil our responsibilities as guardians of this wonderful and unique planet. Perhaps the change won't be as easy as we imagine. Maybe it won't be as hard either. But the only way to really become a sustainable traveller is to adopt an intentional approach towards positive action, and to really *become the change*.

Trailblazers is committed to protecting and conserving nature every step of the way. Wherever we go, let's go with the heart that we are responsible to leave the place better, cleaner and wiser- not just for us and our generation, but for all life that will come after us.

Ranjan Biswas

Editor

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INDO-PACIFIC HUMPBACK DOLPHIN



Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin
Sousa chinensis

If you ever travel along the Western Coast of India and spot a dolphin it is most likely an Indo-Pacific Humpback dolphin! Found in the tropical waters of the Indian and Pacific oceans, this cetacean has been classified as vulnerable by the IUCN Red List.

Dolphins are very social animals, they travel in groups known as pods, one pod can contain from 5 to 10 individuals. They get their name from a prominent hump seen below the dorsal fin. These humps are more prominent in males. A slight pink colouration can be seen on most individuals; this can either darken or lighten with age.

Pods use echolocation to confuse and trap their prey before feeding on them. They emit a range of clicks and squeaks and communicate with each other to form a strategy. In India these dolphins are known to enter estuaries and mangroves to forage. Estuaries are also the places where most fishing boats choose to lay their nets. Nylon fishing nets are one of the biggest threats these creatures face. Apart from this, heavy boat traffic and a global depletion of fish stocks are making life harder for these adorable creatures.

Marine conservationists in India are trying their best to educate fishermen along the coasts of the country about dolphins and their advantages. Dolphin watching is a growing tourist attraction and fishermen are taking it up as an alternate source of income. To all the readers, if you ever want to see a dolphin, do NOT visit dolphinariums or sea worlds. These elegant creatures are best seen in the vast blue seas where they are happy and free.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Kalpana Mohan, Academic Director, PNC Cognition School, Bangalore on why one must travel whenever and wherever they can!

In his graduation speech, a student recollected the best moments of his school life and the top most moment that he found memorable was his trip to a famous place with his classmates. This is only one such instance that young people quote their school trips as one of the most memorable moments of their school lives. Even though it costs time, physical and mental effort, people do travel. Why? What is so enticing about seeing a new place, where you meet new people and step out of your comfort zone. I wanted to quote the example of a distant relative of mine who allocates almost 1/3rd of his earnings to travel which he indulges in for almost 4 months in a calendar year.

When searched, there are several factors that make travelling a unique experience. It improves social skills, communication and also helps one tackle unforeseen circumstances. You step out of your comfort zone and thereby broaden your horizons. During the course of a trip, you are exposed to numerous small problems which you tackle in the most cost effective and time saving way possible. This leads to enhancement of creativity.

When you travel to a new destination, you are exposed to that region's cultures, cuisines, modes of transport and also opens up the opportunity for inter-cultural exchanges. It is also a great opportunity for people to break the monotony of sedentary life and thereby relieves stress and brings peace of mind.

Travel is also great for boosting your self-confidence. The moment you finish a successful trip, the confidence boost that you get cannot be provided by any amount of lectures on boosting confidence. And most of all, it is a lot of fun. Travelling is one of the most effective ways to shape a person into a well-rounded personality and provide infinite memories.

Specifically, it is important that a person travels when they are young. In your growing years, a person's brain is open to new experiences and also their body can support this cause through any condition. While there may be many who may not have the luxury of travelling regularly on their own, school trips are a



Academic Director Kalpana Mohan believes that the outdoors is a great teacher

very unique opportunity to fill this gap. The joy of being with your classmates outside the classroom builds a sense of camaraderie, discipline and understanding in environments that are beyond the classroom and home and seeing a new place with classmates are memories that cannot be replicated at any point in your life.

There is also an improvement in the bond between the teacher and student as both of them have an opportunity to enjoy themselves beyond the classroom. These trips are also an opportunity for students to display talents beyond the classroom like helping the teachers in ensuring all students are together and maintaining discipline. Even the simple act of organizing your luggage in a bus or train or flight is a skill that is learnt during an experience like travel.

While it is important for students and teachers to enjoy themselves and remain safe, travel organizers hold a very important role in ensuring that the safety of the students/teachers is not compromised at any cost and that they are comfortable. A single bad memory can tarnish this experience. It is equally important that during such school trips, the trips are a healthy combination of learning and fun to make the most of these experiences.

I would like to conclude with a couple of quotes:

"Travel makes one modest, you see what a tiny place you occupy in the world" – Gustave Flaubert

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow mindedness" – Mark Twain
So be on the move and have fun!!!!

ARE YOU A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER?

ECOTRAIL brings you some easy tips towards travelling responsibly

We travel to experience beautiful places, people, animals and cultures. We travel to be touched by their beauty and come back enriched, with a broader perspective and a greater appreciation for the world we live in. Why I emphasise the word 'beauty' is because while this is the main essence of our travel, the harsh reality is that every time we travel, we leave the place a little less beautiful. As morbid as this may sound, it is a reality we must be cognizant of. When we travel we leave behind hundreds of traces, knowingly or unknowingly, directly or indirectly. The waste we produce by our meals, the energy we consume by our lodging, movements and activities, the encroachment we create on the natural surrounding, they all add up bit by bit, slowly but steadily reducing the beauty of the place. It is something I like to call the 'Shimla syndrome'.

A once beautiful hill station nestled in the Himalayas, popularly called Queen of Hills, has now become a buzzing tourist spot, with its own share of pollution, garbage and over-encroachment leading it to become an unsustainable travel destination, facing issues as serious as an acute water crisis. Unfortunately, other destinations, like Manali, Dharamshala and Leh are also moving towards a similar direction.

"With great power comes great responsibility", says Spiderman. As travellers, if we want the freedom to be able to explore and experience the best of what the planet has to offer, we also need to show responsibility in leaving it in the same state that we found it. Or else, very soon, there will be very little beauty left in the world to go and travel to. Some basic and easy habits to incorporate to become a more responsible traveller are as below:

1. Leave No Trace

This is a blanket rule that every responsible traveller should follow; carry back your trash with you. Sometimes, simply throwing in the dustbins there isn't enough, as many places do not have a garbage disposal process in place. Hence, the

ideal thing to do is to carry it back with you to the nearest town.

2. Avoid Single-Use Plastic

Single-use plastic like packaged water bottles, hotel toiletries etc may add convenience but adds immensely to the waste you create. Carrying a refillable water bottle, carrying your own toiletries from home in refillable bottles, are simple habits that can cumulatively save a lot of plastic.

3. Being conscious of where you stay/eat/shop

Choosing more authentic and eco-friendly homestays over commercial properties will not only add lesser load on the environment but will also give you a more immersive travel experience. One can also consciously give preference to properties that have processes like rainwater harvesting, waste composting, solar energy etc in place. Similarly, eating and shopping locally over choosing international chains will boost the local economy and also give you a more authentic flavour of the place.

4. Respect culture, people and animals

Travelling responsibly is not just about protecting the natural environment, but also respecting the local communities, their culture, the people and animals. Not encroaching on their private space, wearing clothes and adopting behaviour that is not disrespectful towards their culture, not disturbing the local flora and fauna for the purpose of our entertainment are other basics that we should be mindful of.

5. Spread the word

Last but not the least, spreading the word and initiating others into travelling responsibly is the biggest effort that can be done in this direction.

We are lucky to be born into such a unique planet, with beauty so immense that it is almost surreal. Let us work towards sustaining this beauty for years to come, so that we and others can continue to be blown away by it every time we travel.



1. LEAVE NO TRACE

2. AVOID SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

3. BE CONSCIOUS OF WHERE YOU EAT, STAY & SHOP

4. RESPECT CULTURE, PEOPLE, ANIMALS

5. SPREAD THE WORD

LIVING THOSE SIMPLE BARE NECESSITIES

Sahar Mansoor and **Riya Kumar** from *Bare Necessities* advocate a zero-waste lifestyle, while they walk the talk all the way!

There's no escaping the fact that we have a garbage problem; we smell it around us, we see videos on social media, we hear about various initiatives - we know its there! The thing about trash is that, we are so caught up in this web of convenience that we don't think about our personal trash and often attribute it to a larger global problem that we have no control over.

Think about your morning schedule - you use a plastic toothbrush with toothpaste from a plastic tube, shower gels and shampoos from plastic containers, wear fast fashion clothes with nylon in them. Plastic. It's ubiquitous and more dominant than one can fathom.

Why should we care?

We are in the largest global garbage crisis of our lifetime. Every toothbrush, shampoo bottle you have used in your lifetime, currently exists on the planet somewhere and will probably outlive your great great grandchild! These plastic water bottles take anywhere from 200 - 700 years to start breaking down and never fully do, they just break down into very small fragments and land up in your dinner. Though it can be recycled, it is often downcycled to a poorer quality cheap plastic, which is

more harmful than the initial product and eventually makes it way to the oceans and landfills. Plastics release greenhouse gases and dioxins which are carcinogenic and all these chemicals inevitably leach into our water and into our food.

Mindful of these catastrophic effects of plastic on the environment, many people across the world live zero-waste lifestyles. Zero waste is so radical, it's for everyone; your nani, ajje, taati were all probably zero-wasters! Ask your mother or grandmother what shampoo she used before it came in plastic containers?

Where do we begin?

The zero waste lifestyle promotes the use of sustainable and lasting products to produce minimal waste. It's a lifestyle that includes the basics - from carrying a water bottle, refusing plastic straws, carrying a tiffin box to using a bamboo toothbrush and making your own soaps and shampoo or buying it from the aunty in your building who makes some. It's a display of love not only to the environment but to yourself!

How does it feel?

Reducing your daily waste can be fun, easy and cost-friendly it is. We lead by example and often, when you

prove to yourself that change is required and change is easy, it's easy to prove to others. Over the past two and half years, I have sent zero plastic to the landfills. Just by refusing plastic, I am doing something. I find that it fosters a different appreciation for nature.

I think I am happier because I am prioritizing just being and experiencing rather than acquiring and buying material things. Also for the first time in my life, I can say I am trying to live a lifestyle that is in alignment to my values. Spend some time outside and discover the magic yourself - you'll truly believe it.

By reducing your daily waste you are investing in a greener, less wasteful and healthier world!

Sahar Mansoor, founder, Bare Necessities, currently lives a zero waste lifestyle in Bangalore, India. A University of Cambridge alumna, with a background in environmental planning, policy and law, Sahar formerly worked at the World Health Organization in Geneva and SELCO Foundation on decentralized energy policy. She is also a freelancer for Huffington Post UK and India.



Milkshake with a Food Grade Steel Straw



Zero-Waste Picnic in the Park

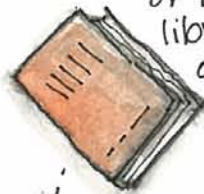
Pictures: Vanmayi Shetty

carry your own personal care products



say no to hotel freebies that come in little plastic containers

pre-download books or borrow from the library instead of buying new ones.



get your own headphones, so you avoid re-packaging & re-cleaning of airline headsets.



Get a pdf of your ticket on the phone instead of a print out.



download Beate Johnson's bulk locator app for stores within vicinity



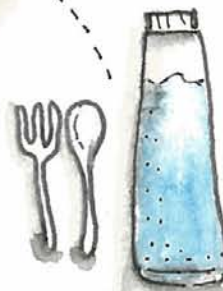
opt for re-usable luggage tags OR make your own upcycled ones.



shop local while travelling (farmers markets!)



carry your own water bottle, spoon and fork



carry your own mason jar (for water, coffee, toiletries or even waste)



carry your own cloth napkin



carry your own snacks! I love dry fruits & nuts in my little cloth bag



ZERO WASTE Travel

© Bare Necessities | illustrated by Noorain Ahmed

A WONDER IN THE WILDERNESS

Learning about a **Trailblazers** camp specialty: the pleasures of outdoor learning in a G4 Camp

Set in the Western Ghats, a biodiversity hotspot, amidst lush green forests, rice fields, spice plantations, tea and coffee estates, this campsite in Kerala offered a wide range of visits and activities of educational interest.

Conceptualized and planned by Trailblazers experts in consultation with teachers of a reputed international school, the G4 camp was an ocean of inquiry.

Students opting for various G4 subjects namely Biology, Environmental Science and Societies, Physics, Chemistry, Design Technology and Computer Science subjects participated in the camp. Objectives of the camp were manifold and as diverse as the subjects. Students visited various institutes and interacted with experts in several field viz. bamboo cultivation, processing and handicraft; agriculture, floriculture, food processing and tea manufacturing.

They learned about the potential

of green energy i.e. how energy trapped in wind, water and sunlight can be used to convert it to electricity reducing carbon footprint of mankind. They conducted hands-on experiments and collected data for their reports and presentations. They sampled local water and soil from different locations, analysed them; measured the strength of a local material used for handicraft, studied local flora including medicinal, aromatic and indigenous plants; learned various sampling methods to study plant and insect biodiversity; understood how food is processed and machinery used.

Students also had a taste of local food and culture. They had delicious and elaborate traditional meal - "Sadya" on a banana leaf with rice and variety of accompaniments. Trailblazers experts gave a brief explanation on the advantages of eating on a banana leaf with information on accompaniments. Students also got an

opportunity to try different types of tea grown in the estates. They learned about the history of tea cultivation and that these estates were very old, planted first during colonial times.

The students were in awe when they saw the Kalaripayattu performance, an art form considered the mother of all martial arts and the oldest in world. Its movements originated from observing the habits of eight "warrior" animals: the lion, the boar, the cobra, the elephant, the tiger, the horse, the rooster and the buffalo.

At the end of the excursion, students presented the data collected in small teams. Teachers and Trailblazers were delighted to see gennext presenting their learnings. With the objectives and learning outcomes achieved, the G4 camp concluded successfully.



Learning how solar energy works



Visiting a vibrant butterfly garden



Studying Biodiversity

MEET THE YOUNG EARTH SCIENTISTS

Trailblazers takes your classroom to the brightest scientific minds in the country to learn from the best!



Learning about lab cultivation of model organisms



Hands-on Experiments on light diffraction

Science is a subject that is either loved or despised, a starter of controversies as well as the explanation behind everything we see around us. The word originates from the Latin word, *scientia*, meaning knowledge. Greek philosophers were the first among many to actively question everything around them, giving rise to what we now know as natural philosophy or the natural sciences. This thirst for understanding the world continued to grow and eventually gave rise to the scientific revolution that started in the 15th century. Great advances in science were made during this period, some of the prominent names during this period were, Copernicus, Galileo, Newton and Francis Bacon

The search was to ignite young minds to explore the intricacies of this fascinating subject. With this in mind, Trailblazers designed a special

camp for the students of a reputable school to find the fun in science and expose them to latest research being done in the country. Trailblazers campers visited some of the finest institutions in Mumbai and interacted with scientists about their various projects. Hands on activities by Trailblazers experts helped them better understand certain scientific concepts.

So as to lighten the vibe of the camp, the students also got to enjoy some of the sights and sounds of Mumbai. These "Just Mumbai Things" included everything from trying famous foods, to visiting iconic places like Marine Drive and Gateway of India. A perfect blend of knowledge, fun and camaraderie ensured the campers went home with a new found zeal for science and delightful memories.

CHALLENGING CHANDRASHILA: A VIEW FROM THE TOP

Trailblazers leads a renowned corporate group to the summit of Peak Chandrashila, helping craft memories of a lifetime!

'The best view comes after the hardest climb' and everytime that I have been on a mountain top, this saying just stays with me and has rewarded me with memories that lingers on.

The mountains have always inspired me to challenge my limits and with every climb that I have done I have realized my inner strength and resilience is boundless. My colleague and I had the daunting responsibility of leading a very enthusiastic group from a leading Corporate organisation to the Himalayas.

As an organisation they have been ahead of their times in ensuring their employees achieve fitness goals and age is just a number for them when it comes to physical fitness!

The first group had General Managers, Managers and super bosses in their 50s and a mixed age group of 30 years and above in the second group. The goal was to ascend Deoriatal at 7999 feet and Chandrashila at a height of 12000 feet with their spouses. Months of meticulous planning by Trailblazers with the HR team

of the corporate ensured all the arrangements were in place and our focus was to give a safe, memorable experience in the outdoors.

Besides the various outdoor programmes that Trailblazers has organised for the employees of the Corporate, one of the main focus in every programme was to ensure physical fitness and the trek to Deoriatal and Chandrashila had all the adrenaline rushing elements of adventure and fun. The trek to Deoriatal had some of the most mesmerizing views of the Chaukhamba and various other peaks reflecting in the calm waters of the lake on top of the mountain. After successfully climbing Deoriatal on day three of the 6-day programme, the group was excited to challenge themselves for the arduous climb to Peak Chandrashila and the highest Shiva temple - Tungnath in the world at 12000 feet.

The group had a prep-brief a night prior and the energy amongst them was infectious! The camaraderie shown by each one of them while doing the trek was

humbling. All our motivation and encouragement paid off when almost the entire group was on top of the peak. Our reward was something we could never imagine as we stood admiring the lofty Himalayan peaks – we were rewarded with a sudden snowfall and in just a few minutes the mountains and valleys were covered in a soft blanket of white snow. For some of the participants it was the first time to experience snow and it was fun to see all of them playing in the snow like children.

Another reward which we got was a glimpse of the elusive, colourful Himalayan Monal Pheasant strutting around in the bushes on our way up, the colourful feathers glistening and all of us just capturing this image with our eyes of the state bird of Uttarakhand! The adventure did not end here as we had other activities planned for the group like white water rafting, zipline and a tenting experience before they took the flights back to the city from Dehradun.



Trailblazers Camp Summiteer brought out the inner child and challenged each adult to overcome all limitations while having fun and making lasting memories!



BY RAINA VINAYAK, 11

Today I'm going to tell you my adventures while trekking and before trekking. It was quite a sunny day, a day after our exams. It so happened that while I was getting up from my sleep I heard my parents talking about adventures, trekking and camps. I wondered what was going on, and asked my dad, "Daddy what are you talking about, I heard we are going trekking." He replied saying, "Yes, we decided to go trekking as your exams are over and you guys will have a good outing." I actually was so happy I jumped around everywhere, and then that the plan was fixed!

Immediately, we started packing up. And not just that, I kept on buzzing about it every minute. Dad even told me that we are going with two people from company Trailblazers. We waited till they arrived and were so excited, but the journey was for four hours. We soon left in the car, I had to say, the view was amazing. Riane, my brother and I were literally tossing and turning the whole time. The drive was filled with villages. I was looking at the lives of villagers, and then I remembered that we were also going to live and experience their lives for two whole days, the bathroom was different, the way they ate was different and mainly there were animals inside the houses like goats, cows, dogs, cats, hens and chicks. Aww! They were adorable! There were baby goats which were born just the day before we came and not just that there was a puppy named 'Chattu'.

After that we met the two people who were coming from Trailblazers. A lady and a man, their names were Nitisha and Shardul and soon after that we planned our schedule for the day. Since we reached pretty late we decided to just walk down to a nearby river while introducing ourselves. We slowly came to know about everyone. Nitisha didi was experienced in this company for a year and is an excellent scuba diver while Shardul bhaiya was an experienced trekker for 5 years and has completed 100 treks so far. They both were really nice. While we were talking, it started raining heavily so we stopped in a shady area. Once it stopped raining we continued walking until we reached the hut.

After that they told us we all are going to play really fun games. So we patiently waited for our snacks (Poha) and then we started playing. OMG! The games they taught us and which we played were lit! We played games called shutdown and mafia. We really enjoyed, after that our dinner was served. The food was really tasty and different from what we normally used to eat and not just that there were even frogs, hens, crabs, grasshoppers and insects jumping around.

Then we decided to have a ghost story session. It was dark; my dad started telling us the story while we were drinking milk. And when my dad had just started the scary part, a cat jumped out of a barrel from behind. We all literally jumped of our skins. That was hilarious and not just that I was so scared that I actually started to hallucinate saying the bucket has blood in it. We all cracked up laughing. After that, we were supposed to sleep as we had to wake up early tomorrow. So my family and I slept inside while Nitisha and Shardul slept outside in their sleeping bags. We kept on talking and giggling when we finally were fast asleep.

But I woke up in between as I was disturbed by the snores. So I got up, sat down and stared at everybody inside for at least fifteen minutes, then I decided to take a video of them and then go outside where the experts were. Then I even stared at them for fifteen minutes, I then started feeling sleepy so I woke up Nitisha and asked her for a sleeping bag. She gave me one and I went back to sleep.

Finally it was morning. We were all set to go for trekking to the Harischandragad fort. We had breakfast, we did some warm ups and then left. Shardul than told us the trek was for two and a half hours. We all were a bit scared but we went. We carried our bags and started walking. I literally needed a break every fifteen minutes and not just that I gave my bag to my dad to carry. We kept walking until we reached an amazing waterfall cum river. We stopped there for a while, we wet our legs, actually we then felt a lot better and then continued. He was so friendly, and he actually followed us to protect us so I gave it

a name. I named it 'GD' Guardian Dog. Wow! This was a long journey. We then saw a wonderful flower garden. It had tiny yellow flowers which were actually the famous flowers there. They were called 'Soniki'. We had finally reached but we still had one peak left to climb so we thought of climbing it after lunch. We reached this place where whatever we threw down actually came back to us. We were amazed. Nitisha and I became really good friends; we kept on singing and talking all the way till the end of the cliff that was indeed scary. My mom took a gazillion pictures, my brother also got annoyed at one point of time.

We waited for a while and then we were heading back home until my didi kept making stuff like plates of leaves and slowly we noticed something crawling below. OMG! It was a mini crab and in front of it was a mini frog. Both were so tiny. I had never seen such small frogs before. They were not even tadpoles, they were baby frogs. I was delighted. We reached back the temporary home. We then started building our tents. We again went inside to see how they were cooking on fire. It was called a 'chulha'.

After we ate, we made a camp fire, we all sat in a circle and again had a ghost story session. Shardul narrated real incidents which happened right where we were sitting. He even told us about a fort which was known to be haunted. We all really enjoyed but we had to sleep after that. The next day while having breakfast they even told us one more game called contact. Dad was even making jokes. My dad then told them that he wanted to see a snake. But he said, "it's okay" as his voice trailed off.

We continued packing and just before leaving I think God heard my dad, there was a snake below a tent which I spotted. Dad was so happy! As we left the place we took one last look and we thought of it as a heaven. It was spectacular! On our way down we kept talking about scuba diving etc. Riane may go this time! We finally reached while the experts gave us a surprise they gave us Trailblazers cap and a badge cum magnet. We really enjoyed a lot we kept waving at them. We left, but we will never forget this trip.

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Trailblazers Foundation organised a career guidance workshop for students of 8th, 9th and 10th grades at a local school near Mahuli

On October 22, 2018, Trailblazers Foundation conducted a career guidance workshop for students of 8th, 9th and 10th grades at Chandroti Secondary School, located near Mahuli fort. A majority of these children belong to the Katkari Tribe, a vulnerable group. Though they yearn for a brighter future, the lack of opportunity and exposure holds them back from transforming their dreams into career goals.

Through the career guidance workshop, the Trailblazers Team taught them various tools to explore their personality, to understand skills, qualities, strengths and opportunities and helped them to make informed decisions about their career choices.

There were 136 students who participated in the workshop. Most of them enjoyed it. Being short of funds, the Chandroti Madhyamik School is trying to find ways to make ends meet. At the time of the workshop, plastic sheets were being used to cover classrooms.

From the information collected from the children before the workshop,

Trailblazers found that the children were not confident enough to write and speak English. It came as a surprise when many stated that they did not speak and write accurate Hindi either. All of them expressed the need for a career planning workshop in the future once more.

Overall, the career guidance workshop was useful to students. As one girl shared in her feedback, "This was a nice workshop because we understood the importance of setting our goals and planning our careers in order to be successful. Apart from this, we also learned how to identify and hone our skills and qualities prior to making informed decisions in our desired career fields."

Trailblazers Foundation is planning to conduct many such workshops in Shahpur with a specific emphasis on Mahuli. We need corporate partners to support this project to bring change in the lives of tribal children. If you or your organisation would like to support this cause, please write to us at contact@trailblazersfoundation.org.in



Children listen attentively to the career guidance lecture



Children taking notes on career guidance



Trailblazers Foundation conducts career guidance

MEETING MAHULI: TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW

Trailblazers Foundation's need assessment of Mahuli village aims to guide the village towards a healthier, more prosperous future

Determining to bring positive change, Trailblazers Foundation has earmarked three main domains in which to intervene actively; education, health and environment. Trailblazers Foundation CSR Manager visited Mahuli to meet doctors of the Primary Health Centre (PHC), Gramsevak of Gram Panchayat, and leaders and members of the Self-Help Group (SHG). The primary objective of the visit was to assess their needs in Mahuli and to provide a backbone of support for their empowerment.

During the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Trailblazers Foundation found that the district hospital is 10 kms away from the village, with no medical van available. Pregnant women too have to travel 10 kms from the village if they require any kind of medication during pregnancy. Ideally, when labour pains begin, women need immediate hospitalization and a quick access to an ambulance is a must. However in this case, an ambulance takes two hours to reach Mahuli and it takes another two hours to reach hospital, which is quite a long period. This could cause harm to the child and mother both. It is evident that a medical van or ambulance is an urgent need for the village of Mahuli.

On enquiring about the status of the Sub-Health Centre of Primary Health Centre (PHC), it was found to be almost non-functional due to the shortage of doctors allotted to this sub-health centre. Even minor illnesses such as fever, cough and cold require women and children to travel 10 kms to the hospital.

During the FGD, women shared that they face a drastic water shortage in the summer, specifically in the months of March, April, May and June. They have to walk for miles to fetch the water. This in turn, takes a toll on their personal hygiene, as they avoid bathing, contracting skin diseases in the process. Women and adolescent girls in the village were also found to be anaemic. This is most likely because pregnant women do not eat nutritious food and their food intake is restricted due to inadequate sources of income. Further, the Trailblazers Foundation team found that there was no government secondary school in the village. Children have to attend a non-aided school managed by a Non-Government Organization (NGO).

Trailblazers Foundation has adopted Mahuli village for comprehensive village development. We welcome those



Meeting with Self-Help Group and Gramsevak

organisations and corporate establishments that want to be a part of this initiative and appeal them to contribute their efforts to make this village more liveable. If you or your organisation would like to support this cause, please write to us at contact@trailblazersfoundation.org.in

UPCOMING CAMPS

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER?

CAMP FOOTLOOSE

29th April to 1st May 2019
Age Group: 8- 12 Years

From outdoor survival to little chef, crafts station to exciting games, bonfires to dance sessions we have it all plus more!



SAHYADRI, MAHARASHTRA



SAHYADRI, MAHARASHTRA

CAMP PATHFINDER

29th April to 1st May 2019
Age Group: 13- 16 Years

Build new skills and challenge yourself to do more this vacation! From trekking and kayaking, to rifle shooting and archery, we have it all!

CAMP DISCOVERER

19th to 23rd May 2019
Age Group: 14- 18 Years

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UTTARAKHAND



BALI, INDONESIA

SCUBA DIVING CERTIFICATE CAMP

2nd to 8th April 2019
21st to 27th May 2019
11th to 17th June 2019
Age Group: 13- 18 Years

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