

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY

Field Visit to Dangs:

The Semester III students visited Navsari Agricultural University- Waghai Botanical garden-Dangs- Saputara - Valsad as part of their Botanical excursion. They were accompanied by Dr. Archana Mankad and Dr. Hitesh Solanki. The visit to Navsari Agricultural University was primarily focused on visiting the Aspee College of Horticulture and Forestry and to explore its various research activities. The Dean, Dr.N.L.Patel made a very informative presentation about the kind of research activities presently being undertaken by them. The other faculty members who helped us were Dr. D. T. Desai, Dr. B.V. Padhiar, Dr. S. N. Sarvaiya, Dr. Alka Singh, and Dr. Ashok Senapati. The **vertical gardens** of musk melons, the strawberry plantation, **soil less cultivation** of orchids using coconut husk, greenhouses, post harvest pulping unit with a focus on mango, and the various **agriproducts** being made by the students like tomato sauce, mango jam, mixed fruit jam, Noni syrup, vegetable chatni, Aloe vera juice, under the **earn while you learn programme** (ELP) was really very unique. All these products are aptly branded as Nauroji. The late evening visit to Dandi the heritage site was truly nostalgic. The tides and the hot masala chai were too refreshing after a daylong work.

Early in the morning the next day we headed towards Saputara, a very famous hill station among the forest of Dangs and with a perennial Ambika river flowing and crisscrossing the road. The students visited the museum and enjoyed boating in the calm waters of the lake. Later in the afternoon we reached **Waghai Botanical Garden** which was a botanists delight. The collection of medicinal plants is highly commendable. Besides there are many unique and noteworthy plants being nurtured there. The speciality of this garden is that various lanes are named after trees and overall layout is very relaxing. New additions like the Bambusetum orchid house and cactus house were also very well laid out and appropriately labeled. Before reaching the botanical garden we saw the Gira falls and picked up memorabilia made out of bamboos by locals.

A visit to the B. K. M. Science college at Valsad is truly an experience because there one finds not only all the trees that grow in the forests at saputara but also some very interesting plants. The staff there is highly passionate about the botanical garden since the garden has been maintained very well. We saw *Psilotum* and *Equisetum* there and even collected it to be planted at our botanical garden. Shri Dilip Patel, showed the garden with a lot of enthusiasm and made learning of plants interesting with anecdotes and small beliefs about particular plants besides giving details of their medicinal importance. Dr. Takhtsinh Gohil, Head of the Biology department at the college welcomed us warmly.

The visit became memorable with all the students keeping pace with time and making the most of being together beside the main objective of learning botany through field experience.



Aspee College of Horticulture and Forestry



Vertical garden of musk melon, NAU



Gerberas in the greenhouse,NAU



Value added agriproducts,NAU



At Tithal ,Valsad



Psilotum at B.K.M.Science college, Valsad

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