

SOPHIA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)
PRINCIPAL'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2020-2021

The year 2020-2021 confronted us with an absolutely unprecedented challenge. With the global pandemic caused by the COVID 19 virus, and the resultant lockdowns and consequent economic crises, as well as the toll these have taken on the physical and psychological health of both staff and students, we have had to dig deep within ourselves to tap into hitherto undiscovered reserves of creativity and resilience that we would never have imagined we possessed. The generosity and support of our colleagues, and our well-wishers, have been the mainstay of our existence – and the unfailing grace of God that we have experienced has been the source of all that has been achieved, endured and overcome in the past year.

The theme for the year, **Hope, Courage and Resilience**, seemed a particularly apposite response to the situation at the local, national and global levels. The modus operandi for both curricular and co-curricular activities had to be re-conceptualised and redesigned, so that we could continue to strive to make the educational experience vibrant and life-giving for our students, and to lead them to a deepening of the values we seek to foster. Our pedagogy had to be reshaped, and the assessment patterns adapted, to align with the exigencies of the online mode. Both staff and students rose to the challenge, however, to make the year seem as normal as possible, given the constraints. We were not able to hold the annual inter-collegiate festival, Kaleidoscope, but most of the other regular extra-curricular events of the year were conducted in a manner adapted to the circumstances.

The autonomy we were granted in the previous year continues to be galvanic in its impact in every aspect of life in the College. The year was defined in many ways by the pandemic and the consequent shift to the online mode. At the same time, we had to continue with the various tasks that had to be undertaken, the redefining of pedagogical strategies to suit the new mode, the fine-tuning of the various structures and systems that we were putting in place – syllabus formation, examinations, etc. It has been a challenging, often daunting task, but staff and students have striven to rise to the challenge. We continue to work closely with the other autonomous colleges in the city and the country, sharing insights, difficulties and experiences to our mutual benefit.

The RUSA grant has presented its own levels of possibilities and challenges. The ambiguities about the regulations and restrictions that surround any expenditure have been extremely difficult to navigate. As a result, the spending has gone much slower than envisaged, and some of the budgeted plans have had to be tweaked to accommodate the parameters laid down by the government. Nevertheless, we have been able to put the

grant to good use in improving some of our equipment and we have also invited e-tenders to identify and finalise the employment of a construction agency to undertake urgently needed structural repairs to the Science Building.

The two major areas of difficulty that we have continued to grapple with are

- a. The toll that the COVID 19 pandemic has taken on the physical and psychological health of the staff and students. The profound sense of loss we experienced as the Sophia family at the loss of one of our most dearly loved faculty members, Mrs Suhasini Kulkarni, was just one part of this. A number of staff members and students lost close members of their families. Many students went into depression and needed professional help in coping with the stresses of the forced isolation and alienation coupled with the 24x7 togetherness with the family in small homes. No real interaction with peers and friends has made the college experience very different to the vibrant life that the campus used to offer.
- b. With the hostel having been closed since March 17th 2020 and the rents and revenues from the shootings that used to form the mainstay of our income, it has been increasingly difficult to meet the expenses, especially the salary bill of the management staff.

However, we have not given up – the co-operation and generosity of many together with creativity and perseverance have enabled us to continue through this year, and we hope that we will be able to successfully navigate the shoals of the year ahead as well.

Some of the highlights of the different aspects of College life in 2020-2021 are given below.

SOPHIA SENIOR COLLEGE

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE:

Some of the activities undertaken included

- A webinar on “Cyber awareness and Security for Academicians in the New Normal” held on 19th May 2020, open to faculty members of our college and others across the country. The resource person was Mr Sachin Dedhia
- A webinar on 22nd May, 2020 on Stress management for our students. The resource person, Dr. Monali Chopade, Assistant Medical Officer, MCGM and Coordinator of all BMC COVID-19 Hospitals
- Two Instagram sessions on ‘What Lies Ahead’ were organised on 25th and 26th May 2020, in collaboration with the CUC, to help our students start planning their

career trajectories. The resource persons, Ms Payal Kapadia, a journalist, and Ms Indrani Goswami, GM at a Fortune 500 company and a certified trainer, shared their own personal journeys and also shed light on the possibilities open to students.

- An e-quiz “ENVIRO KNOWLEDGE” was organised for students, in collaboration with the Department of Chemistry, on 5th June 2020 to celebrate World Environment Day.
- An Online Orientation programme was scheduled for FY Senior College students from all faculties on 2nd September 2020. The programme was streamed live on YouTube.
- A webinar on Leadership and Team Building was organised on 12th September 2020 in collaboration with our NSS unit. The session was conducted by **Shri Julio Ribeiro**, IPS (Retd.), Former Mumbai Police Commissioner and presently Chairman of Public Concern for Governance Trust.
- An online interactive session with the film-maker Shri Aditya Kripalani was organised in collaboration with the CUC on 25th September 2020.
- A staff enrichment program “Looking Ahead: NAAC 2023” by **Dr. Usha Mukundan**, Director, Administration Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College, Ghatkopar, was organised for our staff on 29th January 2021.
- The annual national-level IQAC conference 2020-2021 - “Autonomy – The Path Ahead” – was held online on Zoom from 16th-18th February 2021.
- A Staff Enrichment Program on “Bloom’s Taxonomy for Constructing MCQs” by Dr. Vini Sebastian, Associate Professor, St. Xavier’s Institute was organised online on 10th April 2021.
- In collaboration with the CUC, the elections for Student Body President and Cultural Secretary were conducted online on 12th April, 2021.
- A Staff Enrichment Program on “Learning Outcomes for MCQs and Developing Assessment Rubrics” on 16th April 2021 by Dr. Andrea Coutinho and Dr. Ivan John. This was a follow-up to the session conducted by Dr. Vini Sebastian.
- An online assessment questionnaire via google form was administered to all the third year students on 28th May 2021, to know their about specific learning (i.e. curricular) and co-curricular experiences as a student in Sophia College (Autonomous).
- “LUCID- A Peer- Reviewed Research Journal” was launched in this academic year. The main theme of the journal was “The Globe on the move: Avenues for the Future”. There were different sub-themes/ subtopics from disciplines such as Research, Education, Teaching-learning, Philosophy and Ethics, Religion, Spirituality, Ecology, Economics, Politics, Psychology, Sociology, language, literature, Physical sciences regarding health and hygiene. Research papers were

invited from teachers across Universities, Colleges, and Research Institutes in India. Abstracts were submitted by teacher participants. The committee went through the abstracts and authors of the selected abstracts were asked to submit the entire research paper/article. The journal will be released once an ISSN number has been assigned to it.

ACADEMIC WORK:

Academically, the College has continued to do well. The Boards of Studies in each department, the Academic Council and the Governing Body as per the guidelines laid down by the UGC met twice in the year, except for the Governing Body, which met only once, on account of the lockdown. The online mode of teaching imposed its own challenges, forcing the staff to learn not just the new technology, but also to rethink the pedagogy that they were employing. The staff, from our trusted veterans to the newest additions to the departments, all rose to the occasion, putting aside their own concerns and anxieties to do their best to make the education they were imparting to the students, meaningful, engaging, and inspiring, to help them cope with the strains of this last year.

We were able to conduct a number of training programmes with the staff, to familiarise them with the optimum use of G-Suite and Google Classroom, as well as the Zoom platform. Finding that Zoom was the most effective and user-friendly platform available, the College was able to tap the goodwill of our donors and invest in 46 Zoom licenses. This was particularly useful since it allowed us to accommodate both the large classes in Junior College and in the Arts section of the Senior College, and also extend the classes beyond the 40 minute limit of the free Zoom. It also made it possible for us to make licensed Zoom membership available to staff and students for extra-curricular activities, and enable the use of all the services offered by Zoom (some of which are only accessible through the licensed stream). The College also launched its own YouTube channel, so that programmes that included more than 300 participants could be streamed live, and also be available for viewing at a later period. Other forms of social media like Instagram and Twitter were also tapped to facilitate connection between staff and students and between the students themselves.

Curriculum Revision:

All the departments continued the process of restructuring of their syllabi. In a number of departments, the changes are being introduced in a phased manner, so as to ensure a smooth transition to the new syllabus over a period of time. In all cases, we have sought to remain faithful to the rigours of each discipline, factoring in new developments, while ensuring that we respond to the needs and profile of our student body, in spite of the shift

to the online mode. This has been particularly challenging with regard to the practicals, and we are all hoping that we will soon arrive at a time when students will be able to access the laboratories and the college in person.

While we have our own Boards of Studies, a number of our teaching faculty continue to be on the Boards of Studies of other autonomous colleges and of the University of Mumbai. This also keeps us aware of new directions and changes in our subjects, while allowing us to contribute creatively and realistically to the development of each discipline.

Assessment:

Assessment presented us with one of the most baffling difficulties of the year. The Government of Maharashtra decided that all the Class XI students and the students of the FY and SY years of all the undergraduate streams of the academic year 2019-2020 should be promoted automatically to the next year. A formula was provided to incorporate the internal assessment marks, and on the basis of these, to award students with the appropriate grade/marks for the year gone by. Since, as an autonomous college, we had conducted internal assessment through the year, it was possible to assign grades/marks that reflected to some extent the capacity and effort of the students. However, this was not entirely satisfactory. It also presented us with unnaturally large classes in this academic year, since none of the students either failed or dropped out! However, the online mode meant that we did not have to find large enough classrooms to accommodate everyone!

The TY students of 2019-2020 finally had their examinations in October 2020. These were conducted online, and we were informed by the Higher Education Department that these should follow only the MCQ form of questions. A number of guidelines were issued, and we followed these to the letter. In spite of a number of hurdles (many students had returned to their hometowns where there was limited connectivity – in one case, we even wrote to the Collector of the district requesting that the student in question be permitted to sit in his office to avail of the WIFI facility there during the duration of the examination! – and there was one morning when, just as the exams began, the electricity and connectivity all over Mumbai failed), we were able to conduct the exams successfully and our students all were able to graduate.

Realising that we were likely to have to continue with the online mode and the MCQ/objective type of question papers, we decided to change the ratio of internal assessment and semester-end examinations as integral elements in our evaluation. From 25:75, we shifted to a ratio of 50:50. This was also in keeping with the recommendations of the UGC. Further, we have made sure that at least one of the internal assessment

exercises should be a subjective type exercise, where students would be expected to articulate their thoughts, apply the information they had acquired and exercise their critical and analytical skills.

The examination committee has worked extremely hard to put systems in place and implement a programme that was both rigorous and realistic.

- ❖ Meetings were held to outline and plan the evaluation procedure, and training programmes were conducted for staff to help them design appropriate exercises for

- * Internal Assessment

- * SEE

Some of these have been mentioned in the IQAC activities listed above.

- ❖ It was decided, after the first semester, that there should be a minimum of three and a maximum of four IA exercises in each subject. Students would be awarded the marks of the two best performances in each paper. The marks were released after the first two exercises, so that students would know where they needed to improve.

- ❖ Results were declared within stipulated 45 days from the end of SEE, both semesters.

- ❖ The committee met after the declaration of results at the end of each semester to review the procedures.

- ❖ ATKT exams were held once a year – within 90 days of declaring results.

In addition, the process of adding additional (non-academic) credits was put into practice this year. Students could get additional credits for extra-curricular activities, outreach activities, add-on courses. Though we had planned to make it mandatory for all students to earn 3 or 4 additional credits (over the three years), with at least one in each of the areas mentioned above, we realised that given the pandemic and the lockdowns, it would not be realistic to expect all the students to acquire credits in each of the areas. Hence it is still an optional component.

Teaching Learning Processes:

Each department in Junior and Senior College sought to make their teaching-learning processes relevant and effective. Mentoring and remedial programmes seek to address the problems of students and help them in different ways. This is of particular importance in the present scenario, shaped as it is by the pandemic. Necessarily, such mentoring takes place, at present, online. However, we are striving to develop effective ways of making the mentoring a robust part of the Sophia experience.

One accolade received by our Science faculty gave us much joy – we were accorded Star College Status by the Department of Biotechnology. This programme with its emphasis

on undergraduate education supports efforts to make science education vibrant, interdisciplinary and far-reaching in its impact.

In view of the current scenario it is envisaged that creation of resource and E-content would be of immense value both in the current situation and for use later. A major lacuna currently is lack of E-learning platforms like Virtual Labs, where learners can gain the experience of practical experimentation without any direct physical involvement or bench work. Using equipment bought from the enhanced finances of Star Status each department will mandatorily prepare videos of some experiments from their syllabus. It is also proposed that the SOPs created under the star college mandate will be compiled into an E-manual and will be uploaded as a ready resource and reference. We hope to be able to use some part of the RUSA grant to set up a studio for the preparation of such e-modules by our staff, as well as for practical work for BMM students.

Research:

The Research Development Cell, set up to promote and document research activities, continued in its efforts to promote a culture of research. Information is given to the staff about new projects. This has helped them in the application process. Five of our faculty members are registered Ph.D. guides. Our Microbiology and Zoology departments have also been recognised as PhD centres. Further, we have two members in the life Sciences Department, Dr Bhavna Daswani and Ms Divya Sharma who receive grants under the Women Scientist Scheme of the Government of India.

Research projects have also been undertaken as part of the EXSP and EXAP programmes. These challenge gifted students and encourage them to push back the limits of their own capabilities, engaging with co-curricular subjects and expanding the boundaries of their knowledge and consciousness. This programme has continued in spite of the constraints of online functioning.

Some of the topics included:

“Covid and its Treatment”, “Smart Polymers”, “Water as green solvent in reactions involving non-polar organic compounds”, “Early Media Coverage of the Hathras Gangrape”, “Parsi Caterers”, “Baccha Bazi in Afghanistan”, “Female Intelligence Agents; Allied Espionage in World War II”, “Applications of Complex Number Systems in Quantum Mechanics”,

Our students also took part in Aavishkar, the intercollegiate research festival organised by Mumbai University. Conducted online, like everything else, this annual event gave

our students the opportunity to showcase their research work at a wider level. Students also participated in other inter-collegiate research events:

- Three students including Dhvani Desai (TYBA) were selected for the final round of the inter-collegiate students' research paper seminar organised by Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College on "Remnants of the British era: The Lesser Known Narrative" as part of Rajatarangini-Mudra 2021. (25/2/2021). Mayanka Raghunathan (SYBA) got the Second Prize for 'The Continuing Impact of British Colonial Law' and Winona Lobo (SYBA) got the Third Prize for her paper 'Lighting the Way'. Dhvani Desai's paper was on 'Tea as a Remnant of the British Era'.
- Dhvani Desai participated in the inter-collegiate students' research seminar organised by RN Jhunjhunwala College (Autonomous) 'World of Civilizations: Histories and Mysteries'. The title of her paper was 'Similarities and Differences between the Aztec and Mayan culture with special reference to Mythology'.

Many staff members have participated in local, state-level, national and international webinars and conferences. Some have presented papers which have subsequently been published. Some of the publications are listed below:

Dr Sumanika Sethi:

- Chaman me rang-e-bahar utra, an article on singer Farida Khanum published in E-magazine Samalochan on 21/6/2020
- Udayan katha yatra shilpankan evam sahiyta, an article for research journal of Ismail Yusuf College submitted on 10/7/2020
- Sach hota duhswapan – analysis of a short story by Jitendra Bhatia published in Navneet Hindi of Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan in January 2021 special issue
- Analysis of two stories of Dharmvir Bharati from feminist angle on facebook page of Stree Darpan on 25/12/2020

Dr Lata Pujari

- Article on "Women Performing Artists at Vijayanagara (1336 CE-1565CE)" *Research Horizons: International Peer-Reviewed Journal*, Mumbai: Maniben Nanavati Women's College, vol. 10, Nov. 2020, ISS

Dr. Rashna Poncha

- 'Means to an End – Discovering Bombay through the writings of Colonial visitors' Paper presented for 'Writing Bombay – Exploring the City through Literature Old and New'

Dr. Hemalatha Ramachandran

- 'Role of stress and sex hormones on emotional memory', B Vedak, D Sinha, H Ramachandran, *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing* 11 (7-9), 293-298, 2020

Dr. Meeta Saxena

- Published research article ‘Information Communication Technology – The wireless learning for Specially Challenged Students’ in book titled “*Disability is not Inability: Shift Paradigm from Charity to Rights*”, ISBN No. 978 – 81 – 7880 – 877 – 2, 2021

Consultancy:

A number of our staff members are regularly invited as consultants at CAS processes, appointment interviews, guest lecturers, practical examinations, PhD assessments and viva-vozes.

Highlights of Departmental Co-curricular Activities:

BMM/BA (SCJ):

- The Film Society run by the Mass Media department organised weekly film discussions with the BMM / BA(SCJ) students. Each week, a chosen film was watched by the students individually, and then analysed through a conversation lead by FilmSoc executives.
- The Film Society also organised its **annual DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL** over two weeks from March 19 to April 3, 2021. The festival included five sessions held on Zoom, where filmmakers, who had made their films available for viewing in advance, interacted with the student audience to discuss the craft and process of making non-fiction films.
- The Photography Society worked diligently to improve its digital footprint, especially on Instagram, by organising regular activities and contests throughout the academic year. Student entries on specific themes were published on the society’s social pages.
- THE SCREENWRITING PROGRAMME was launched by the BMM department and conducted by Kuntal Bhogilal, who also teaches Understanding Cinema to the second-year students. 12 students were selected from the SYBMM and TYBMM classes. They worked in pairs to craft feature-length screenplays, working from the germ of an idea, all the way to a finished screenplay. The programme was held over four months from January to the end of April, 2021.
- “Diversity Discourse: a 360 Degree Approach to Gender, Religion, Disability and More” was a series workshops conducted in batches by Krishna Warriar, former journalist, and currently serving with the Xavier's Resource Center for the Visually Challenged, with our BMM students, discussing diversity in lived experience and representation in media. Eight such sessions were conducted in June and July of 2020.

- ADVANCED FILM APPRECIATION PROGRAMME Conducted by Kuntal Bhogila over 10 sessions on a weekly basis from June 1 to July 20, 2020, this programme was meant to enhance the cinematic sensibilities of its 20 participants from the current TYBMM batch. It took up where the Understanding Cinema paper left off in Semester III of the BMM
- About ten guest lectures were organised with various professionals from the field of media and advertising sharing their experience, insights and expertise with our students.

Chemistry:

- Webinar on 'Fascinating World of Carbon Nanoparticles' by Dr Kinshuk Dasgupta organised by Department of Chemistry in collaboration with IWSA on 23rd January 2021
- Nobel oration lecture Genetic Scissors: Rewriting the Code of life' by Dr. Debojyoti Chakraborty organised by the Chemistry department on 13th February 2021.
- Webinar series on 'Plasma & its Application & Nuclear Fusion' organised by Chemistry Department in collaboration with Indian Institute of Plasma Research on 10th March 2021.
- Online Inter College competition Chemscope 2021 - 4 different events were held. Students from 15 colleges participated and a total of 73 entries were received over four events namely Chem Meme, Chemistry Laboratory comes home, A beaker full of thoughts, College After Covid-19
- Students were encouraged to participate in inter college competitions. Several of our students participated and even won at several competitions.

Economics:

- Prof. Sandhya Krishnan from Meghnad Desai Academy of Economics (MDAE) delivered a webinar on "R programming" on 24th February, 2021.
- Prof. Ajit Karnik from Middlesex University, Dubai delivered a webinar on 'Auction theory' as part of Sophia Nobel Oration Series held on 27th February, 2021.

French:

- The French Dept. organised an online cultural exchange programme with the students of the l' Ecole St. Paul-2 . This was on Nov. 4, 2020, at 3.00 pm. It was the first International virtual programme of its kind, where our FYBA students performed 2 Indian dances, & sang 2 Hindi songs. Students of the Education Dept. had also prepared a power-point programme, focussing on some architecture of Mumbai, the education & transport systems of Mumbai & the production of the corona virus vaccine by Indian companies. This was presented in French by the students of the French department. The programme ended with some students & staff singing 'Bom -Bom- Bombay' in French, the

words of which were written by Mrs. P. Bhujwala. The students of L' Ecole St. Paul 2, then took the Indian students on a virtual tour of their school, & made short presentations of their activities in English.

The programme was commended by the staff & some senior educationists who were present. They expressed the desire to conduct more such virtual programmes in the future.

Education:

- an E-Poster competition, on the theme, 'The legal age of Marriage in India'.
- A one-credit course was conducted to equip the students with the skills required to optimize their use of some of the online tools available to prepare resumes, presentations etc.

English:

- a webinar on the Sophia Nobel Oration in Literature entitled 'The Nobel Everydayness of Louise Glück' by Dr. Sonya J Nair (Head, Department of English, All Saints' College, Thiruvananthapuram) on February 11, 2021 (under the aegis of RUSA).

History:

- Six-day online Seminar 'Of Offence and Defence: Weapons and Forts of India' (5th -12th April 2021). It was sponsored by the Luigi and Laura Dallapiccola Foundation and 106 registered for it. Dr. Kurush Dalal was consultant.
- Virtual tours and heritage walks through iconic areas of South Mumbai were organised
- A talk on 'Russian Folk Art and Contemporary Design' by Dr. Sofiya Karanjia was organised on 25th September 2020. The lecture gave a brief introduction to the history, technology and mythological background of some significant Russian folk-art forms.
- Dr. Rashna Poncha - 'Renaissance Art and Architecture' for SYBA History students on 23rd October 2020.
- Dr. Kurush Dalal – 'History as Myth; Myth as History' organised on 23rd January 2021.
- Dr. Christian Busch on his book 'The Serendipity Mindset' organised with the Dept. of English and Literature Live! 360@Campus on 19th April 2021.

Life Sciences:

- COVID-19 an Immunologists perspective : A talk was organised with Dr.Satyajit Rath (IISER,Pune) as our resource person on 29th May 2020.
- Celebration of women in Science :Rosalind Franklin the woman behind DNA discovery .This webinar was organised with resource person Dr. Vineeta Bal.(IISER,Pune) on 25th July 2020.
- SCRIBE our in-house journal with scientific articles was ready with the final journal in the on-line format ready for college website release.
- Understanding Epilepsy : A talk by Dr. Febin Farook on” Understanding Epilepsy’ was organised on 18th January 2021.
- An evening of anecdotes on having come a long way-sharing experiences of research in Life Sciences by our PG ex-students.This talk series was held on 28th and 29th January 2021.
- Awareness campaign by TY B Sc students based on UN International year of plant health 2020.The resources collected were then shared on the department YouTube channel. plan and organise Nobel talk series and received positive response from other departments.
- Organised, as part of the Nobel Oration series, a talk on the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine by Dr. Shahid Jameel.
- The Right to Choice, the new legal age of marriage in India a webinar was held in collaboration with the Department of Education by Adv.Lara Jesani on 12th February 2021.
- National Science Fest 2021 and National Science Day 2021 was celebrated with good participation by students. The Paper presentations were On-line and this was followed by a talk “Academic research and career opportunities in research in Oceanography by Dr.Grinson George and Dr. Aboobacker V.M.held on 27th February 2021.
- A talk was organised by IWSA and supported by BRNS-DAE on 1st March 2021 - “Chasing hope through stem cells by Dr. Chandra Vishwanathan.
- International year Plant Health 2020 awareness program presented by TY B Sc students and recorded on Department YouTube channel.
- Students of TY B Sc participated in The Sanctuary Debate for young India 2021 held on February 28th 2021. Our team was represented by 3 students.

Mathematics:

- A One-day workshop on **Math – Websites** for the students of FYBSc Mathematics
- Presentation on *Internship at RBI* by Sanika Dikshit (Stats 2016-17) on Friday November 6, 2020 at 12.00 pm

- Presentation on *Statistical Software used in Banking and Insurance* by Harshada Shringapure Deputy Vice President, Actuarial, Kotak Mahindra on Friday, November 20, 2020
- Presentation on the *Ram Nagar Drought Relief Camp* – The information involved was presented by Radhika Nabar and Nishta Sinha on March 6, 2021 to the students of FYBA and FYBSc.

Philosophy:

- Online Interclass Debate on the topic “Do ‘Souls’ Exist” on 21st October 2020.
- Online Guest Lecture on “Functionalism” on 23rd November 2020.

Physics:

- Students participated in online ‘Night Sky Observation’ on 21st November, 2020 at 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm organized by Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai.
- Students participated in online ‘Live Sky Observation with Mars’ on 8th December, 2020 at 7.00 pm to 7.30 pm organized by Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai.
- Students participated in online live web cast of the ‘Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn’ on 21st December, 2020 at 6.00 pm onwards organized by Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai.
- As part of the Nobel Oration series, a talk was organised on 5th February, 2021 at 5.00 pm on ‘Nobel Prize in Physics 2020: of compact objects and black holes’ by Dr. Jasjeet Singh Bagla, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Mohali.
- Students participated in online Science Day Activity by preparing ‘Cartoon Strip’ on ‘Inspiring Stories of Indian Scientists’ on 27th February, 2021.

Psychology:

- Online One credit Course: The Department of Psychology in collaboration with the IT Department organized an Online One Credit Course ‘*Covid times: Mythic Realities, Changing Frames.*’ (A practical course in Conceptual Psychology).
- Mental Health Amidst The New Normal - 28th January, 2021. The session was conducted by Priyanka Dalvi, a training coordinator for a field action project of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), with an emphasis on acknowledging mental ill-health and tracing the continuum of mental ill-health and wellbeing - emotions ranging from hopelessness, to resilience, pervasive sadness to

resourcefulness, or withdrawal to socially engaging and being active were also discussed.

- Two sessions were organized for the students in collaboration with the counselling Center of the College.
 - "Managing Time with Online Lectures" conducted on 15th October 2020 between 1pm - 2pm conducted by Ms. Deepika Bhandari, College Counsellor.
 - "Writing an SOP (Statement of Purpose)" conducted on 22nd October 2020 between 1pm - 2pm facilitated by guest speaker Ms. Sabah Shaikh
- The TYBA Single Major students were exposed to computer based experiments through the CogLab software. The faculty worked on creating a new paradigm for experiments that could enable students to conduct them in the lockdown/home environment.
- July 2020 : An interactive session was organized with the TY students of the previous batch with the current batch of TYBA Single/Double major students where they shared experiences and asked questions about their experience of studying psychology, opportunities and possibilities for further studies in India and abroad.
- A session was organized on 28th November 11 am with Ms. Delice Mascarenhas, an ex-student, now a talent manager, who shared her invaluable experience and expertise on preparing an impressive resume and how to go about exploring opportunities for exposure in the field of work experience both during undergraduate studies and after. She also shared valuable tips on negotiating one's salaries in the process of employment which is normally a very awkward topic to discuss.
- On 25th February 2021 4-5 pm on the Zoom platform session with Lavanya Mohan who studied BSC in psychological research from Oxford. And is currently working on marketing research. Lavanya shared her experiences and why she chose to study abroad. She shared tips on a number of topics with students who were seeking to apply abroad for post-graduation.
- On 20th February 2021 a session on "The Great Nature Nurture Debate: Understanding individual differences in behaviour and psychiatry - genetics versus environmental influences" was conducted by Dr. Cathy Fernandes, King's College, for our SY and TY students.
- A session was organized for the SYBA class on 8th December 2020 with the Gynecologist Dr. Charu Baheti who presented the Topic of PCODs extensively and also clarified the impact of hormonal disorders among teenagers.

- Nash Mukta Bharat Abhiyan was organized in collaboration with the FC classes for the FY & SY BA & BSC students from 15-22^h February 2021. 500 students actively participated in the awareness campaign.

Zoology:

- Organized online interactive session on Mystical Mangrove by Mr. Laxmikant Deshpande, 21st Oct. 2020. It was attended by 55 participants. The informative talk was an educational journey right from the historical significance of mangroves, the plant and animal biodiversity in this ecosystem and the commercial importance of these.
- Convened the National Level Faculty Development Program on Research-based Pedagogical Tools in collaboration with CoESME, IISER Pune from 24th to 29th May, 2021.

ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENTS:

At the human level, we were aware that staff could not come to the college during the lockdown periods. At that time, some of the admin and accounts office staff worked from home, and, at this end, the principal and one or two of the resident non-teaching staff were able to keep things going, liaise with the banks, etc. Once the worst of the first lockdown was over, it was possible to arrange transport for some of our non-teaching staff to travel to the college and to arrange accommodation and meals for them for two-three days at a time, so that administrative work did not suffer too badly. Later, once it became possible for our lady staff members to access the trains, the arrangements changed. With the goodwill and positive attitude of our staff, and with the support of the management, it was possible to ensure that none of our staff had to be laid off, salaries were paid on time and in full, and the administrative work of the college continued to be performed efficiently and effectively.

The existing MIS programme has been upgraded and a cloud-based ERP CCM (Centralized Management System) had been installed in the previous year. It consists of the following modules:

- * **Academic Management System** that facilitates Online Registration, Merit list generation, Online fees collection and transfer to Tally. The admission online forms had to be customized as it needed to meet our requirements as an autonomous college. We give a number of subject combinations and the software had to be designed to meet our needs. Change of subject can too be registered and attendance registers have been generated. All this was particularly useful this year, since we have been limited to the online mode because of the circumstances.

- * **Student Administration:** Transcripts, transfer Certificates (TCs) and Leaving Certificate (LCs), Recommendations and Bonafide Certificates can be applied for online and payment for these services can be made online.
- * **The Examination Management Module:** The Annual Students Management and Result Processing Module is designed to meet the needs of the college. This module also generates ATKT Results under Autonomy. This module is in place, results, marksheets and progression reports are being generated. Again, it is extremely helpful that the module was already in place and staff were familiar with it, given that all these tasks now have to be performed online.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Annual Theme of the year was “Hope, Courage and Resilience”.

The theme was explored and developed through curricular and co-curricular activities in all the departments in both Junior and Senior College, and in interactions between staff and students. Elements of the theme that were highlighted in activities as well as classroom discussions relating to current events. Some of these initiatives took place through organised events, while there was also much informal inclusion of the theme in topics directly or indirectly linked to the syllabus. While Kaleidoscope, our flagship event, could not be conducted because of the pandemic, our students were able to find a creative way to conduct most of the other events of the year online. Glimpses, Munsophical, College Day, Mijaaz – a month-long festival incorporating events from all the various clubs, bonding sessions within the departments, farewells for the TY students, all these took place in a unique manner, adapted to the circumstances and the constraints. IN addition, each club carried out a range of online activities for its members – webinars, workshops, interactive sessions...the list for each is too long to include here. Suffice it to say that the efforts spoke volumes for the determination of the club secretaries and executives to keep up the morale of their members.

SPORTS:

- The activities of the new academic session began in June 2020 with the celebration of **International Yoga Day**. We have arranged online session of **Yoga and meditation** for Junior college which was held from 20th to 24th June 2020.
- The next important event was held in **August 2020** with the celebration of **Independence Day**, which took place in collaboration with the NSS unit of Sophia College, in the form of various competitions. **Inter-collegiate competitions for Slogan-writing, Poster making as well as a Quiz** were conducted for a span of three days from **12-15th August 2020**.
- On 15th August, after the flag-hoisting in the morning, a webinar was conducted on the topic – **“The Armed Forces – An Insight”** in collaboration with NSS Unit and University of Mumbai via YouTube Live. The speakers were Col H. S. Grewal and Capt. Dr Suresh K. Vanjari, who have a vast experience of serving for thirty-two years in the Indian Army.
- An Instagram Live talk focussed on the theme, **‘The effect of COVID-19 on Sports and careers in the field of sports management.’** The talk was hosted by Jessica Lobo, a Senior Executive of the Sports Club, and featured Anushka Hirwani, a graduate of St. Xaviers College who completed her Masters at Deakin University and is currently pursuing Sports Management in Australia.
- **The National Sports Day, held on August 29**, was commemorated with a quiz titled, **“Quiz for the Sports Whiz”** to test the students’ knowledge and also sincerely honour the Indian Sports Legacy.
- To emphasise the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle that involves destressing from regular hectic routines, the Sports Club collaborated with the World Music and Dance Club (WMDC) to organize a **Zumba workshop** by Mrs Payal Ranjan, certified Zumba instructor from Florida. This was conducted on **23rd September** which is celebrated as **National Fitness Day**.
- a **workshop on Tabata, a high-intensity interval training** took place on the **24th of October, Saturday** for over 45mins. It was conducted by fitness and wellness coach, Tarini Tripathi, a master in functional training & Pilate’s instructor, who is also an alumni of Sophia College.
- An workshop aiming to release stress and develop flexibility was organized by the Sports Club in collaboration with Bharatiya Sanskritik Parishad. This **Hatha Yoga workshop for beginners** was conducted by Ritcha Roy, a passionate yoga teacher from Australia.
- The Sports Department organised a **‘Mat Pilates Workout’** session on the 22nd December in association of Moushu’s Pilates, a Rehab and Comprehensive Pilates Centre based in Pune. The guest trainers were Laila Ali and Saumya Joshi, both

internationally certified Balanced Body (USA) Barre and APPI Equipment Pilates instructors.

- Since Sports Day could not be held in the usual way, the sports flagship event took place in a new way called the '**Ultimate Fitness Challenge**'. The challenge aimed to test students' physical endurance and strength through a set of tasks which ranged from intense exercises, yoga poses to fun activities including bottle flips. The challenge was a submission-based event which required students to record themselves performing tasks and uploading the same on Google Drive. The event took place on 16-17th February and received around 90 registrations, from junior and senior college.
- A **self-defence workshop** was conducted in collaboration with MUNSophical. It was conducted by the eminent Sharif Babu on **13th March, 2021** at 6:30 pm. Mr Sharif Babu, is the President of MMA India and heads the Academy of Self Defence. Mr Babu delivered a very effective and informative session demonstrating various protective maneuverers that we can apply in public spaces. He ensured that the session remained interactive by posing several practical questions to the students.
- The Sports Club along with the Placement Cell organized a Career Connections talk on the 'Scope of Careers in Sports' on 15th March. This was hosted by the CEO of Sporjo, Mr. Srinivasan. Mr Srinivasan has previously headed the marketing and strategy function of the entire Reliance sports group and has been a key person in the team that had launched ISL – Indian Super League and has worked for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the IPL i.e., Indian Premier League.
- The last official event was a **Yoga session on 24th March** which was associated with Nikaya Yoga Studio, a studio focussed on mind-body connection. The guest instructor was Sanjana Luniya, a Hatha Yoga teacher and practitioner since 2013.

NATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE:

The academic year 2020-2021 saw the NSS unit of the college take the lead in reaching out to help those affected by the pandemic and lockdown at various levels. These ranged from distribution of grains and other food items to organising awareness sessions related to Covid 19, but also to HIV and Anaemia and Haemoglobin levels in Women, in various forums through the online mode. Sessions were conducted in developing a number of skills that could help in income-generation, as well as in developing entrepreneurial skills, and financial literacy. Webinars were conducted on Youth – the Power of the Nation, and on the Armed Forces and the Civil Services, to acquaint students with the career potential offered by these branches of public service. Our students also assisted the BMC and KEM Hospital with two blood donation drives conducted in prominent public spaces like Dadar Railway Station. The full list of activities is too long for inclusion, but it is

indicative of the spirit and commitment that infuses the group and makes us feel very proud that the tradition of service is upheld so visibly.

SOPHIA CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT
Activities conducted in the academic year 2020-2021

1. The ten month long Certificate Course in Food and Nutrition started on the 14th of June 2020

2. ALL ABOUT EVE: This was an online panel discussion organized with the authors (Anju Kapoor and Harry Kurup) of the book “Seven Personnas of Eve” in association with The Crossword Book store on July 4th 2020.

3. FES GENDERLOGUE

This was a two day online Genderlogue programme. On August 14th 2020, there was an online panel discussion on **Gender Stereotypes and Care Economy** organised jointly by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, India & Sophia Centre for Women's Studies & Development, Sophia College, Mumbai. The Panelists included Dr. Geeta Balakrishnan, Former Principal, Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work, Mumbai, Dr. Sandhya Iyer, School of Development Studies, TISS, Mumbai and Shri. Anil Hebbar, Helping Hands Charitable Trust, Mumbai.

Age-old stereotypes about the way men and women think and behave are persistent widely in all walks of public as well as private life and in all sectors of the economy. However, stereotypical expectations not only reflect existing differences, but also impact the way men and women define themselves and are treated by family members, kith and kin, employers and colleagues, political systems, and decision-making institutions. How society and policymakers address issues concerning care has important implications for the achievement of gender equality: they can either expand the capabilities and choices of women and men, or confine women to traditional roles associated with femininity and motherhood. The unequal distribution of unpaid care work between women and men represents an infringement of women's rights and also a brake on their economic empowerment key measures needed to address the increase in unpaid care work as a result of the pandemic, ensure adequate compensation and decent working conditions for paid care workers, and enable the participation of paid and unpaid caregivers in the policy decisions that affect them. These were the different perspectives discussed in the forum.

On the second day, there was a webilogue on **Viewing the Impact of Covid-19 on Youth Through a Gender Lens**. We invited student body leaders from

universities/colleges in Mumbai for an open house session wherein each one shared the experiences collated by them on the topic. This was followed by a Creative Quarantine Session where students presented 3 min short videos/ films, poetry and posters based on positive and creative themes that had been generated during the lockdown. E.g.: Gender Role reversals, fathers cooking, brothers cleaning the house, mothers working from home etc. The session was well received with over a 100 students attending from colleges all over Mumbai.

4. The SCWSD also organized the WLTP (Women's Leadership Training Programme) Conceptualised as a programme to empower Catholic women; the course is the result of collaboration between SCWSD and the Bombay Archdiocesan Women's Commission. Held online between 21st July, 2020 and 31st August 2020, the participants were drawn from different dioceses in Mumbai and beyond. The aim of the course is to infuse the participants with leadership qualities, and inspire them to take charge of a larger locus of control within their lives as well as within their own parishes.

5. The SCWSD organized an All India programme as a Western region centre for IAWS (Indian Association for Women's Studies) for IAWS (Indian Association for Women's Studies) on the topic "**Gender and Challenges: Work Continuum During and After Lockdown**" on 26th November 2020 from (3.00pm – 6.00pm). The programme included a panel discussion with eminent panelists like Ms Mariam Dhavale General Secretary AIDWA, Dr. Dhammasanghini WSC, STM Nagpur, Dr Sona Mitra , Principal Economist IWWAGE and LGBTQ rights activist Vicky Shinde. There were scholarly paper presentations from researchers across India.

6. The SCWSD organized a SHORT-TERM COURSE ON **GENDER SENSITISATION: A SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE** in association with UGC Human Resource Development Centre, University of Mumbai, from 4th To 10th February 2021 for lecturers from different institutions across the country . The following is a report on the same.

The number participants who successfully finished the course was 43. The programme was much appreciated by Dr K Shanthi, Director of the UGC-HRD department which had commissioned SCWSD to conduct the course.

7. The Sophia Centre for Women's Studies and Development & St. Xavier's Institute of Education in collaboration with The Russian Centre for Science & Culture, Mumbai are organizing a Panel Discussion on "**Emerging Avenues for Women in the 21st Century**" under the overarching event theme of celebrating "21st Century Generation Equality" on the occasion of INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, 8th March, 2021. The Keynote speaker for the event was Adv. Flavia Agnes (Women's Rights Lawyer and Cofounder –Majlis)

There was also a panel discussion on the topic with Ms Vaidehi Vaidya (Founder & MD at Women in Sport India Pvt Ltd), Mr Harish Sadani (Founder, MAVA), Ms Aloka Majumdar (Director & Head of Corporate International Sustainability , HSBC ,Mumbai)

Discussion Moderator: Ms Reena Agarwal (Co-founder, Xpress Story Telling)

The audience comprised mainly of students from the age range of (18-25) years from colleges all over Mumbai. We encouraged student participation as the aim of the program was chiefly to empower and equip young women with life skills needed for their excellence.

8. Our interdisciplinary journal ***Urdhva Mula*** (Volume 13) was published in December 2020.

CONCLUSION

The college was ranked 2nd in Mumbai for Arts and 3rd in Mumbai for Science by INDIA TODAY for the second consecutive year. It is important to us to continue to strive to keep the standards high, so as to ensure that the tradition we have inherited may be kept alive, developed and handed over healthy and shining to the next generation. With autonomy, the possibilities stretched out before us – we needed to engage with our future in a planned and focussed way, building upon our strengths, minimising weaknesses, grasping every opportunity and addressing our challenges with clarity, courage and faith. The lockdown has put this vision to the test, but as a united body, we have done our best to remain faithful to it. We look forward to taking this process forward with confidence and mutual trust. We hope that someday we will be able to hold face-to-face classes again, but in the meantime, we continue to put in our best efforts to make the College a vibrant and relevant space for the development and empowerment of women, in the spirit of Sacred Heart education, the world over.



8th September 2021

Dr. (Sr.) Ananda Amritmahal
Principal