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The Pandemic Warrior

Shivangi Basu

"Like many others, I used to wake up to headlines and news channels detailing the horrors COVID-19 had inflicted on people's lives all across the world. The fear of being its next victim, endless prayers to protect my family, blaring sound of ambulances on the streets and grieving voices at the hospital- all of it, fresh in my memory. During these disastrous years, I was on the field as a part of a COVID Task Force to help people in need. Why? It's because I truly believe that there's something worse than a pandemic- hopelessness.

Am I a hero or a warrior? I don't know. I'm still Joshua Hangzo. A Master's student in the Social Work Department of St. Xavier's University, Kolkata, and the General Secretary of Kolkata Mizo Students' body. Nothing's really changed for me but there's a sense of pride in knowing that I might have had a role to play in somebody else's life taking a turn for the better.

At the heart of the aforementioned organization, is the intent to provide a home away from home. Upholding this spirit, a task force was formed in collaboration with Calcutta Mizo Welfare Association [CMWA]. Looking at my grandmother, Late. Mrs. Manglianthangi, who was still with me at that time, I always thought about the plight of many like her who were left stranded overnight. Thus, there was no question of second-guessing my involvement.

While talking about my experiences, it is imperative that I address the rampant racial discrimination faced by those belonging to North-Eastern part of our country. Even though I was subjected to it at local shops now and then, I grasped the magnitude when we helped 7 students in the Birbhum district of West Bengal. They were being denied essential commodities for basic sustenance. Not opening your doors, I understand but not opening your minds? How do you justify that? We're a part of India, and it's not just during Derby matches or ISL.

Despite these appalling episodes,

when I overheard one of the students telling her mother that she just left and was 'finally coming home', I knew that I was headed the right way. My team further restored my faith in humanity. Funds were secured from the

I was involved in primary contact tracing and quarantined after hospital visits. Was it worth it? Absolutely. There was no merit in complaining from within the comforts of my home. Rather, the relief and smiles that I saw on

say, 'a simple act of caring creates an endless ripple'. Start from your home, and go on to your neighbours, community and a nation. After all, if not us, then who will?"



COVID Task Force

CMWA accounts and generous donations by the members. Procuring oxygen cylinders, distributing essential goods to families, providing monetary support to migrant workers who were rendered unemployed due to lockdown- we were constantly on our toes.

The most exemplary feat though transpired between May 18th, 2020 and June 9th, 2020. Aided by the Office of the Joint Resident Commissioner, Mizoram House, Kolkata, we managed to help 535 individuals return home safely by bus. Special Flights for more than 150 people including patients were arranged. This was the end result of a prolonged process and joint meeting between DGCA officials on behalf of Mizoram government and the task force members. Efforts were made to transport the dead bodies of COVID-19 patients to the bereaved family members via road, for which inter-state permits and NOC from the West Bengal health department were acquired. In proverbial terms, the team lent a shoulder to cry on and we looked after their daily requirements to the extent possible.

Personally, I constantly feared for the well-being of my close ones.

the field, will forever be etched in my mind. It is my firm belief that our generation must rise to the occasion, always. As they



Joshua Hangzo.

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Migrants going back to their homes amidst the raging pandemic

I have survived, I am here

By Samantha John

With a world so fast paced and advanced, sadly sexual abuse still prevails. Irrespective of what the statistics would like us to believe, everyday atleast 1 among every 10 individual face some sort of sexual assault in their childhood which consists of 53.22 percent of children every year, out of which 52.94 percent are male and 82 percent are females. The brutal truth of the current scenario revolving around abuse is that 99 percent of them are not reported due to various factors including the violated innocence of a child. We the students of MA-1 Mass Communication happened to interview one such girl from our very department who happened to face the traumatic experience of being sexually assaulted in a public bus. Although our classmate has chosen to remain anonymous, she never thrived to gain any sympathy through her traumatic experience. She has powered through all adversities that were thrown at her and wants to inspire other people to be stronger and talk more about their personal adversities, to break past the taboo around abuse leading to systematic victim shaming in the society. She recalls herself being an 8 year old child getting ready to visit the church one evening, wearing her favourite Saturday Church outfit. She remembers boarding the 5.15 pm bus along with her parents which was heavily crowded, leaving no seats for her to sit. Just when she thought the entire 45 minute ride would be strenuous for her, what seemed like a kind old man approached her mother and offered to make her sit on his lap. "My mother gratefully agreed to make me sit on his lap thinking I won't be able to bear the long journey while standing", she says. But, halfway through the journey she recalls being stunned when she felt a hand caressing her thighs. She ignored it, thinking maybe the man was holding her properly so that she wouldn't fall or hit her head on the front seat when the bus driver slammed on the breaks. However, this "caressing" she felt did not stop there, his hands kept moving up to her torso which is when she started to feel uneasy, but still did not complain. Eventually

she mentioned, "The man groped my chest. I turned around and looked straight into his eyes out of bewilderment and the man's gaze remained unaltered, as if what he was doing was completely ethical." Even the shocked gaze of an 8 year old did not stop him, he kept lingering his hands on her little body. Our victim recalls

sense of relief as soon as I joined my parents after the journey but still the question remains, how safe was the 8 year old me?." While leaving the bus, she looked back at the old man one last time, unaware about the fact that this incident would go on haunting her years later. The man simply looks back and smirks at her, raising his hand

hopes to inspire all those people who have been victims of sexual abuse, not only by random strangers, but by blood related family members as well. She hopes that people like her will finally speak out and she says "Speak about it only when you are comfortable enough, what happened to you will never be your fault". We also reached out to Mrs. Atreyee Roy Banerjee, who has been practicing counselling for more than 7 years now, both in and out of educational institutions. According to her, 9 out of 10 cases she deals with on a regular basis is related to childhood trauma due to sexual abuse which emerges once to person is conscious enough to accept what had happened to them at a young age. "I have couples coming in for marital counselling where the root cause of their relationship issues is due to severe lack of intimacy. After 3 to 4 sessions with the couple, the individual finally decided to tell me that they were sexually abused by their own family member at the tender age of 10, an age where kids blindly trust everyone around them." She also goes on to tell us that most of the sexual abuse cases that she has dealt with roots from abuse by their own family members and some from random strangers and most of the cases which involve the exploitation of a child by a stranger go unreported. Her advice to us was for parents and educational institutions, especially schools to teach children the concept of "good touch and bad touch." She further advised that parents need to be open about discussing topics like these with their children, since even using the word "sexual" is still considered a taboo in a country like India. Her final advice to us was,

"Be a listener when people come to you with their stories, do not start drawing petty conclusions before even giving them a chance to speak their thoughts to you. Do not be judgy and start circulating their sensitive stories just for sake of gossip. The individual confines in you thinking of you as their safe space, so be their safe space for them, support them and be there for them in whatever way possible in their self healing journey."



Source: Pinterest

desperately looking around for her mother who was nowhere near to be seen as the passengers blocked her sight. This seemingly kind old gentleman does not stop there, and goes onto pull the final string by putting his hands up her dress. "This continued for the rest of the hour-long journey, which felt like an eternity to me", she says squeamishly. Eventually her father comes along and informs her that their stop had almost arrived. Ironically, her father thanked the man for being nice enough to take care of his daughter. "I felt an odd

slowly, and he waves her goodbye. Our victim did not come to terms with what happened to her right away, in fact she tells us that she had forgotten about this incident for a great extent of her life, until one day this trauma came rushing back to her. She took a deep sigh and said, "It took me more than 10 years to come to terms with it and to finally realize that what happened to me that fateful evening was not my fault. I was simply just an 8 year old kid, whose body was slowly being subjected to natural changes." Through her story she

The Man In Bell Bottoms

By Diya Shah



Pintu Da- The man in bell bottoms

Pintu Basu, popularly known as Pintu Da, is one of the most familiar faces on campus and has always been one of the most hard-working people at St. Xavier's University, Kolkata. Pintu Da joined the university in 2017 and has been diligent in his work ever since. While the faculty members know him for his diligence and hard work, he is infamous amongst the students as the man who won't allow them to eat lunch inside class. Pintu Da is known for his dedication. He comes to the university everyday at 7:30 in the morning and sometimes, even on Sundays. When asked about what motivates him, he said, "Discipline runs in my family's bloodline. Two of my family members are in the army. But the credit for this actually goes to my Grandfather who is currently 84. He was an employee at AnandaBazar Patrika but post retirement he took a job at The Indian Museum, after which he started his own card printing business.

That is when I thought that if my Grandfather can still work at 84 years old, why can't I?". When asked about his relationship with the students, this is what Pintu Da expressed, "Sometimes I do need to take some steps, so things don't get out of hand. Sometimes I don't let students enter the class even if they are 5-10 mins late. They might discuss me behind my back or despise me but at the end of the day, it's for their benefit. There are also students who are afraid of me. I don't know why. But I do like the students of this University. See, at the end of the day we are just mere staff. To keep contact with a staff member is really what I appreciate. Not everyone will do that. Some time ago there were few students who'd mimic me and I actually enjoyed that. In fact, one of my fondest memories from this place would be the one where I gave a similar interview like this one to a student from the first ever MA Mass communication batch and

after that, we had a sort of bonding to an extent, where we even stayed in touch via WhatsApp." Keeping students in order and maintaining decorum can be exhausting, but Pintu Da is never tired and is always smiling. When asked about the secret behind his spirit, what he had to say was nothing short of being motivational, "I have always been an optimistic person, it helps me to stay happy all the time. People say, I smile most of the time, it's because I have never felt that I'm lesser than anyone. This doesn't just help me to be happy but spreads happiness among others." And like everything else, all activities in this University were put to a halt because of Covid. However, according to Pintu Da, things have changed post pandemic, "But things have changed after covid. I don't feel like students connect to each other anymore, maybe it's because of the isolation effect of the lockdown, but something's

definitely missing for sure, and that is the case for almost all of the colleges. The pandemic was definitely a tough time for everyone. Luckily for me I got to spend some quality time with my 5-year-old son. But I did miss the university and the students. Once the university reopened during the unlock phase the campus felt like a graveyard to me, not a single soul to be seen. And then gradually things were starting to get normal, students were coming back and that is the reason why I love working here." Pintu da has always considered the students of this university to be his younger siblings, and he had something crucial for us all to listen and carry forward in life, "I believe that if you work with full dedication and honesty, you will definitely get rewarded in life. If you are sincere with your work, you would surely grab the eye of your superior and also your co-workers. You will be seen through your perseverance"



Pintu da in his unusual glory

You Are The Best, Because You Try

By Shrestha Manna

While interviewing, the famous gym trainer of St. Xavier's University, Riya Ghosh began by quoting Alexander the Great, "There is nothing impossible to they who will try". Coming from a Bengali background, Riya always had an ordinary life, but what made it extraordinary was what she had made out of it with her diligence, utter determination and focus. Every child has their own dreams to accomplish when they're growing up, and as we grow up we tend to grow apart from that dream unless we are determined to never let go of it. Karate was something which our Riya loved doing, since she was young. During her Masters from Visva Bharati University in English, she took a step towards learning and understanding Karate despite her parents not being too comfortable with the idea. Riya simultaneously started gyming, to stay fit as it would subsequently benefit her in all the Karate postures effortlessly. Her story got seemingly interesting when we found out that Riya

never thought that associating herself with a physical activity could actually lead to a successful professional career. In school, Riya was a very studious child, who would meticulously take notes in class and thought her only goal was to grow up to acquire a job that could sustain her, even though she always had her fondness towards sports, she never played any tournaments growing up. But little did she know life had its own story to narrate, from being a simpleton who wanted nothing more than to be employed in a government firm to when she realized her happiness lay elsewhere. In 2017, while preparing for her competitive exams for government jobs, she realized that the gym was actually her haven.

During this continuous period of time, Riya had not only trained herself but went back to her hometown, Nadia where she trained other people, imparting her knowledge of fitness to their benefit. Being in the industry for less than 3 years now, she kept digging

for opportunities to push towards her knack for training, that is when she saw an opening in St. Xavier's University. Riya took little to no time and applied for the job, which has now grown very dear to her. Furthermore, Riya even wants to continue studying about the curriculums related to Gym, like nutrition, which she believes will help her explore the subject and give her an understanding about what she truly likes.

One thing that Riya Ghosh had sworn by is, "Everything in life could be achieved with true determination, consistency and focus. It doesn't matter when and what you're starting, you just need to try your best. Often we feel insecure about the things we do because we think we are not good at it, but what if we are? There's immense



Pictures by: Prerana Dasgupta

beauty in trying even if it isn't perfect, because surely hard work and focus will never go to waste". Riya takes immense pride in what she does and where she works, and she feels it's completely normal for a woman to be a trainer. She may not indulge much in heavy weight lifting but her advice on fitness is no less than what a male trainer will have to offer.

A few years ago, I went to a house party. I was in 11th grade back then. There I met a guy who was a drug dealer. One of my friends asked me not to talk to him, but I didn't listen. I was curious and since the guy approached me and started conversing with him.

He introduced me to some drug saying that the trip will be amazing. He said it was not a hallucination drug but a recreational one. He taught how to consume it and I couldn't stop after that. Every week I used to go to a party and consume some or other kind of drug.

I started lying to my parents for money to buy drugs. My girlfriend tried stopping me but I did not listen. I used to be intoxicated; life felt 'good'. Later my girlfriend took an initiative and told my parents about it. She wanted to take me out of the addiction. I became dependent on the drug. I used to hallucinate at night, get anxious at school, and my hands would shiver. As soon as my parents came to know about it they talked to me.

It was a cold winter night. At 3a.m. I left the house, left my phone at

home, went out and sat on the pavement. Later my father found me lying on the pavement and he took me back home. I didn't go to school that day.

The same day my girlfriend came home and asked me to have breakfast with her which I found to be very strange. Suddenly, I spotted a white colour van just 2 feet away from us. Some men came out of the van, approached us and said they were from the police station and I was supposed to go along with them because I was found to be an addict. They took me in the van. I was super tensed because the van was odd and took a turn towards some different place. Soon I realised that I was taken to the rehabilitation centre. I felt like I was deceived by my closest people.

They put me in a very small room which was claustrophobic. It had a desk and a few motivational books

Surviving

By Kulsum Sheikh and Aritra Das

which were of no use. I started skipping food and used to shiver all night. I used to feel left out. I was not even allowed to call my parents for over a month due to the rules and regulations of the rehab. I only had one question at that time for my parents- why did they send me here? I wasn't mature enough to understand that I was there for my good.

During this one month, I had continuous withdrawal symptoms. I used to shiver, shake, and felt like beating people up. I engaged in a fight with a guy and ended up with injuries. Later we were both punished. We were isolated from other people and barred from meeting or even talking to others and were served only veg meals. A man used to come to keep the food and leave. Those seven days of punishment made me realize that I wanted to talk to people, and socialize. I was dying to

do so. That was the time I realized that's how human beings are. At a point, we would go out and talk to people and interact with them. After a month and a half, I was permitted to call my parents and I questioned them why they sent me here. They told me that they did not betray me. They had no option. They wanted me to get better and this would make me sober.

After 3 months my parents and my girlfriend came to visit me. I immediately went to my dad and hugged him. I asked him to just bring me back home, and promised I won't do drugs. I started crying when I saw them. I was fortunate enough that the therapist said that I can go back home. She said that if I ever feel like taking drugs again I should call her and take a session, and I will be alright.

I don't think that rehab does any good to an addict until and unless one has the willingness to quit. Drug addiction is a very difficult thing to get out of. Getting into it in the very first place is something one should not do.

Momo Magic

By Ronit Kr Saha



Somnath

The way to someone's heart is through their stomach and Somnath has successfully won the hearts of all the xaverians by fulfilling their momo craving, for the past five years. Somnath says, "This university students remind me of my hotel management days. How I used to live my life, going through all the rough patches, but still tried to be positive and productive". He continues, "I faced a constant financial crisis during my academic

years which had a negative impact on my mental health, but soon after my graduation I realised that my struggle was finally paying off. One month after I graduated college, I bagged a job in the five-star hotel "The Park" (Park Street). I soon started networking with a few of the reputed personnel from St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata, who had been regular customers of The Park. From the day I joined The Park and I got to talk to people from SXC, I felt like my life took a 360-degree turn, from being doubtful about pursuing studies to being a white-collar employee, it couldn't get any better for me at this point." Somnath adds, "When former captain and current BCCI president Sourav Ganguly opened his own cricket-themed restaurant in the city, I was part of the first ever crew to work in that restaurant. Everything was going alright but I

felt very washed out. From waking up to going back to sleep, nothing seemed different. That was when I realised the need for a change and decided to weigh my options. While going through recruitment sites, I saw a vacancy for the canteen job in SXUK. Though I was hesitant at first since I already had a pretty decent job, I still gave it a shot and got selected. At first, the sudden change of environment hit me hard. However, as days went by I started feeling less burnt out. I realised how a change of scenery had not only helped me gauge what I was comfortable with but also gotten me accustomed to the pace of the work." "It is something about being passionate for your job that no five-star hotel can beat. I've had an experience of 18 years in this industry, but nowhere I have worked, made me feel this way."

Paws-itive Campus

By Madhusree Dutta



Rani and her little Friends



The lives of humans and animals have been intricately intertwined mostly with warmth, love, fondness and friendship, since time immemorial. There is a growing trend to include pets at home, at work, and even while shopping. Nowadays, customers are also seeking more pet-friendly products and services, or a location that is friendly for humans and pets alike.

The students of St. Xavier's university is blessed with a campus that has incorporated a pet-friendly culture. Our furry pals here never fail to make us feel at home. The students of SXU feed them and take care of them, regularly. Some of them being pet parents have a better understanding of the food which is good for their four-legged friends. "I've seen people feeding them, some people feed them what they shouldn't eat like the leftovers from their plates or the spicy greasy food they sell at the canteen", admits a girl who is herself a mother of 12 cats. The students share a delectable bond with all the animals living on campus and treat them as they would their own pets. Most of them claim that on their blues, our campus pets gave them a warm paw to hold in exchange for nothing more than a few head scratches and pats, which turned their mood instantly better.

The number of pets have seemingly increased after the lockdown, earlier there were two dogs in the campus but now the number has increased to three. Recently a cat also gave birth to three kittens on campus, who are constantly being taken care of by all the people on campus. A security guard has kept them on a chair to prevent them from getting hurt as they are very small and fragile. During recess, students gather around the chair to see the kittens, some of them even click their pictures and play with them.

Both cats and dogs stay together in the campus, sharing a good mutual relationship, which is very rare. On certain occasions, they are also seen playing together. "The dogs actually respect the cats", mentioned a newcomer. "The dogs are actually a little afraid of the cats", he added sarcastically. These four-legged friends have become a vital part of some students' groups, taking part in all their break-time gossip and daily chit-chats. These pets help the students to cope up with their stress and frustration. The students and staff cannot think of a campus life without their four-legged friends. They have eventually become a crucial part of the university with their wholesomeness and warmth. Everyone here loves them dearly and takes care of them as their own. They are indeed the most adorable support crew in St. Xavier's University.

I'm Stronger Than I Know

By Rounak Majumdar



Shibani, M.A. English

I went totally numb at this phase of life, I didn't know how things would work out without my mother, I was too young to comprehend everything happening around me. I knew back then that I have to take care of my father alone and take difficult decisions too at some point. I am Shibani,

a student of M.A English in our University. It was just in the month of June when I left my home ground in Sambalpur, Orissa and shifted here to Kolkata, where I was unaware about the entirety of how I will survive alone. I had a happy childhood until things started falling apart when I lost my mother. I was in class 9 then, but with each passing day, I evolved as a person. At a tender age, I realised the bitter truth of life that one should move on even when everything around their life is not something they could dream of. When others would enjoy their school life, I had to make difficult decisions and move on in life. I was very far from living a normal life and being my true self. I remember that even though things were rough, managing everything

on your own is tough when you don't want to trouble your dad when he is already moving through tough days and giving his best to me. I tried to be a good daughter so he can be assured that I can take care of some things independently. However, teenage days are turning points for many, you experience the ups and downs of relationships and friendships where you are engrossed mentally into it that thinking about your health just slips away. "The tough part is when people you thought you can always rely upon, leave you in the middle of nowhere, you are just confused and depressed, you become pessimistic and wrong thoughts creep into your mind and try to engulf you into the dark oblivion. They say that the universe always works in the favour

of those who just don't give up. I knew that I had to collect broken pieces of me and work further to evolve into a better person. Gym, came to my rescue as I found my way out of all the turmoil in life, after joining the gym, I realised that I was relieved from all the stress and it really helped me to be in good health and shape when I totally submitted to the thought that my situation isn't going to be better anymore. Things have changed and now even though I chose to pursue and grab the opportunity of moving into a different city, the thought of leaving my father alone makes me feel heavy. However, I decided to take the opportunity and pursue my career keeping my father in mind. Initially, it was difficult to adjust here, in the university. But gradually I made friends. I feel I have changed for the better. I used to be a carefree, fun loving kid and now I have become more responsible and capable of making tough decisions.

The Xaverian In Action

By Nameera Aman and Anuroop Nandi



Atherva Yogeshwar- Xaverian in action

Atherva Yogeshwar is a student, who came from another state and is now studying at St Xavier's University Law Department, stated, one fine morning, in a conversation, I would pursue Law in order to help the unprivileged people who can't afford to get themselves an attorney. As and when I started discovering the new city of Kolkata, campus and college life at Xavier's University I came across a wide range of societies

that mastered in various genres of life and the most important one that caught my attention was Xaverians In Action also known as the XIA. I joined the XIA to educate, nurture and harness the unprivileged children of the city from the suburbs of Kolkata. During my workathon at XIA, I loved the way they carried out their work in order to help the uneducated, underprivileged and needy children of the society who can't afford their own education.

XIA to me was helping them understand the basics of life so that wherever they go, they don't feel alienated and intimidated by difference. Giving them knowledge on how to use a computer, how to read and write as well as communicate are the basic mediums of communication through which they can overcome the barriers. It gives me immense joy while working for XIA when I see students running in from nearby suburbs to the university, all eager to read, learn and know new things, within a mere time of 2 hours. My motto is Let's learn together! Since, I can't understand Bengali, I am accompanied by a second volunteer to help me out in the process of translation, and this acts as a two way educative mechanism as I also get to understand how to speak in Bengali through the children. I not only teach the children but also help in sowing their artistic seeds. Me, along with my fellow XIA members help the students coming from the government college of such villages by teaching them the aspects of performing arts like Fine Art, Dance and Music. Every weekend, two or more volunteers go to their government schools and

teach them either of these aforementioned activities. On Ignatius Day, a "Sishu-Mela" was conducted and it's main motive was to focus on the happiness of such children. This day, these students from the government colleges are made to participate in fun activities and there is a wide range of games or activities they can choose from. The children are dressed up in various avatars like panda, tigers etc. Their parents were also invited to this festivity where they were made to sit in front of their children and saw them showcasing their talents they learnt from us which included Singing, Sketching and Dancing. For me, having an in-depth human interaction with such people from different parts of the society, teaching them, learning from them, is what seems amazing! To know new people, to understand what they think, to talk in their language, to help them in need, is what is important. My story is the story of a person who came all along the state boundaries, learned the from people who were once mere strangers to me, learned about their needs and helped them, learned their hearts and taught them to be happy!

The Wonder Women

By Hiya Rajda, Maliha Siddiqui, Muskan Kothari

The University could not be any different from the public perception of security, which has always been that of a male security guard leading in protecting a premises or static in a building or gateway. In our university, a security chief's job is all about serving as an ambassador, going out into the community and welcoming visitors and students. The emphasis is on engaging with people, assisting them, and providing excellent customer service rather than on enforcing rules and resolving conflicts.

Here, we had the opportunity to meet the Wonder Woman of St. Xavier's University, whose blue uniform has repeatedly saved us—from when she served as our institution's head of security today to when she helped shift people's perspectives. She does a fantastic job of communicating with university staff, parents, and students, and the students adore her.

To learn more about her opinions on life and herself, we have asked her a few questions. Watch what she says as we proceed;

We asked her, How was Lockdown for you, came a subtle and shy reply, making us smile.

She said, When the lockdown initially started in India, I was finally able to give time to my family, which turned out to be a boon for me because of the pandemic. After a long time I was finally able to be a part of my children's family which I had been missing out on due to the hectic work schedule. But like everyone else a

monotonous lifestyle began to grow on me and after spending 3 months at home doing the same things, (doing household chores, getting vegetables) it started to bore a bit as well.

So the lockdown had its own pros and cons, yes I had a kinda of a monotonous lifestyle but it was also nice simultaneously because I had my family, specially my children around me. And they were safe and secure, which is the most important thing for anyone.

During the normal days, I used to get up early in the morning to get to work and even get home late, being unable to spend time with my family. So the lockdown can be said to be blessing for me as I got closer to my children.

We were in an awe, and decided to explore the questions with experience. Of the years in which you have worked in this Prestigious Institution, what would you describe as the most memorable moment or memory you have with

this institute.

Well it's quite tough to point out a single Memory per say, every day of work in this college has its own adventures and mischief. From emotional and entertaining moments with the students because most of our time we spend with the students, chatting with them and listening to their stories as to what flabbergasting things happened in class today and who got scolded by the Dean or VP.

We also have few embarrassing encounters with the parents as at times we are unable to guide them properly as to how to go about things. So overall it's an everyday rollercoaster over here in this University.

The next set was, What are the changes you think are being portrayed due to the generation gap between your time and ours.

Obviously there's a huge difference which can be observed between the two generations. Our generation kids were more outdoorsy,

we used to play many outdoor games the entire day while now-a-days because of the technological development per say, the kids are stuck to their gadgets 24/7 as if the entire world is within it. We say the world outside our home's door and today's kids see the World within their home screens.

Obviously nowadays gadgets are important academically and socially, but that spark which we used to have, that energy and enthusiasm is somehow lacking in today's screen stuck eyes. She was smiling throughout this interview so we couldn't help but ask her, What's the reason behind your ever smiling face? She replied, it's Because of you kids of course. Stuck between home and work and all the chores of my day to day life. You kids are my strength and smile which gives me the courage to smile and overcome all the obstacles of my everyday life.

The last conclusion for us was to know, how did you juggle between your professional life and your personal life.

It just happens as i go along. I don't plan as to how it would go, i just see my child's face and think about the future I wish to give him. And i automatically find the strength to work everyday.

One thing which I make sure about is that i do not bring my work stress at home and vice versa. It somehow just plans out.

Aparna didi, as we all call her has helped us realise that life can take a lot twists and turns, but true determination helps us reach our goals



The wonder woman with students of MA 3

Women Can Weightlift (too)

By Anvi Nawalgaria

I had some apprehensions when I first started my body transformation and weightlifting journey. Initially, my main reason for going on this journey of weight loss and body transformation was because I just wanted to look better and feel more comfortable in my own body. All throughout school, I faced a lot of bullying and teasing for my weight and how my body looked. My friends who were supposed to support me became my biggest bullies. This motivated me to do something

about it. All my teenage years I had heard people telling me to do something, go to the gym, and lose weight. So, like every other confused teenager trying to be healthy, I decided to join one. When I first joined the gym in my society, I was advised by my parents, as well as my friends, that I should stick to the cardio form of exercise. They saw weight lifting as a way to gain muscles, which I later realized is far from the truth. My gym trainer taught me that weight training and strength training could actually benefit me. I had been under the impression that it was solely for people who wanted to bulk up, but soon found out

that there were other advantages as well. For instance, it helped improve my posture and gave me more energy throughout the day. When I talked to my trainer at the gym about how I could go about losing weight, they suggested that I focus on strength training and lifting weights. I was told it was the only way I could tone up my body. Weight training is directly proportional to strength, both physical and mental. It is also a great stress buster. Now, whenever I am given off-handed comments on my physical features, I have learned to ignore such remarks and do what feels right. I urge all women to not be afraid of

societal standards and myths about how a woman's body should look.



Ritiksha Pal in the gym



Source: Google

Challenging My Chronic Illness

By Namrata Das

We have decided to share the fascinating experiences of a student from the department of law who loves to travel and has immense love for trekking. We are talking about Mahima Kar. When we had a talk with Mahima, she shared her thrilling story with us. "I have been to 3 hill stations with my Parents. That's when I developed my love for mountains. At the age of 14 I was diagnosed with asthma and I was advised to avoid travelling to hilly regions but this incident couldn't stop me. I started going through treatments and started practicing swimming and

yoga to make myself fit. I started getting my training and became fit for trekking. She continues, "One fine day, I decided to go on my first trek from Buxa to Jayanti considering my love for the mountains. For those of you who know me, know that I was the most timid person ever. However, my love for the mountains had helped me to overcome my fear and nothing could change my decision. They say mountains teach us. The mountains taught me to face my fear and beat my illness. She adds, "At the age of 21 I went for my second trek at Sandakphu. I still remember the

mesmerizing sight. It was on a cold and windy morning on the 4th of March at Sandakphu and it was my happiest trek moment. My team had reached Sandakphu on the previous day and camped at Aahl, 20 minutes from the highest point in West Bengal, for the night. My trekmate, and I woke up early the following morning to catch the first rays of the sun hitting the Sleeping Buddha. Thankfully, the sky was clear and bright, which instantly uplifted our mood. When I trekked near Munsiyari, in Uttarakhand I witnessed landslides and heavy rain, for which we had to wait for

1.5 hours. There I also witnessed dynamite blasts. After that I went to many other places and fulfilled my dream. She also mentions, "I battled severe asthma. I found it difficult to run even 1 km without having short of breath. But thankfully my asthma attacks reduced significantly when I entered my late teens. Now I want to trek extensively on long treks. Willpower makes us strong and brings a smile on our face in the hardest situations.

You've got to keep going to achieve your dreams."

The Gatekeeper

By Subarna Chongder



Suman Adhikary

Life in St Xavier's University is easy only if you are carrying your ID card, otherwise the main gate won't treat you with kindness, and the person who always reminds us that 'rules are rules' is one of our security guards Suman Adhikary. "I have adopted a lot of positive changes in these five years of my association with this university", says Suman Adhikary. He continues, "I have seen many ups and downs in life. I used to study before I began working as a security guard here. I obtained this position when I was in my third year and completed my graduation while working. Back then life was

so tough. Everything around me started to falling apart. I had to get a job to support my family. Soon I realised that I won't be able to pursue my education, also accepted the fact that life always doesn't go according to our expectations. Financially, my family was not stable which made me take up this job. After sometime things started to take a positive turn and everything started to run smoothly. I married after gaining financial stability. But, just as I said life doesn't go as per our wish." Suman adds, "All of a sudden the Pandemic hit our country. Lockdown was declared nationwide by our prime Minister. During the lockdown all of our general postings were cancelled, the university was shut down and shifting duties were the only effective work that we could hold on to. Not everyone was called for duty everyday. Traveling during the pandemic was extremely

difficult due to the lack of public Transports. Before the lockdown, I took a loan of Rs. 3 lakhs to build the terrace of my home, but couldn't finish the terrace as I was not working regularly when the lockdown was on and the money got used in other activities. I gradually paid off the first debt after things started to normalise. Now, again I took a loan, built the terrace, and even purchased a bike. From staying in this field since last 5 years I have felt that University students are bound to maintain the rules." He again says, "Few students sometime get offended because of the restrictions but these rules are to be followed, which will help the students in the long run. We do not intentionally stop them at the main gate. The orders from higher authority make us to do that. I learnt that life always gives a second chance to everyone and this university gave me a chance to grow in a better way.

The Twin Connect

By Ishani Hazra and Paroma Dey Sarkar

Who hasn't heard of the Sprouse brothers? From our story teller Jughead to the wise Trevor Matthews, from the crimes of Riverdale to the love stories of After, right? Yeah, you are right, that's the periphery that is shared by our twin brothers, of Xavier's, Ayush and Ankush Bandopadhyay of the Economics department, born just minute apart, not exactly together though, otherwise where will the sibling banter go? "Belonging to a culturally enriched family, we both share a strong passion for the art form of music, we even play the same instruments. From recording at Akashvani to performing for a large audience at the Indian we have done quite a lot, that too at the tender age of 19! be it in XUCAS (Xavier's University Cultural And Arts Society) or the

XAV Cultural Club, or even in the Sports Society, our musical contributions have played a significant part in all of them. Our matured perspective on life, probably, leads



Bandhopadhyay twins

us to create our own distinct individual identity, you know, it's still so amazing to be different within similarities! Our looks, style,

physique, accent, even hobbies and interests are so similar that we are most often perceived to be one and the same. Our selection to XUCAS in fact is one of the most legit instances. Yeah, so that's the story of confusion between us twin brothers, you never know, who came and who is absent, maybe within a blink, one was asking for

did! But, no matter what, we will find something to distinguish, at least our professors will, no messing with attendance at Xavier's, huh!? Despite all the similarities, there are certain other differences - differences that are subtle yet make us stand out as individuals. We complement each other and remain connected, maybe through hearts or maybe through faults! One of the best qualities, that we can tell about ourselves, is the desire to constantly learn new things while assimilating ourselves into new surroundings, giving our own unique perspective to it, leading quite a fascinating and exciting university life during the past two years. We are mirror images of one another, and have now become those

Life is so much better when you have a twin..

momos, and the next moment, the same person is asking for an alu paratha! Uh, they messed up the cuisines too for us, haha, yeah they

What Is An Artist Without Art ?

By Ritika Nath

Right now I am still trying to get back on track, and I hope one day I will be able to dance the way I used to before. It is said that when you try to achieve something you need to push all your limits to achieve that and I guess that is what motivated me throughout my life. I am Esha Chakrabarty, a student from St. Xavier's University, Kolkata currently pursuing an M.A. in English Literature. The stage is my religious place; dancing on it is like offering prayers. Dance makes me feel alive!! My passion for dancing started taking shape early in my childhood. It has been 20 years since I started learning Bharatnatyam. I have always been thrilled about participating in local dancing competitions and have won most of them. The winning moment I still reminisce about was when I won the 3rd position in Semi classical category at Spanish Foundation International Dance Competition, held in Hyderabad. Esha's journey in the world of Dance

had to travel through a dark tunnel. I was at the peak of my dancing career, and by God's grace, everything was going as per my plans, but one hurdle changed almost everything in my life. In September 2019, I got an opportunity to perform in Delhi's C.R. Park during Durga Puja. I was thrilled to find out I got such a unique opportunity at the best time of my life. So I did not waste any time and started rehearsing for that event. But while rehearsing, I fell and suffered a significant ligament injury, making me almost bedridden. I was devastated; I couldn't believe I would hurt myself, leading to missing out on such a huge opportunity. It felt like my dreams were shattering right in front of my eyes. I rested for 2-3 weeks, and again I started rehearsing for the program. My guru and my colleagues supported me throughout this journey. And finally, the day came when I could perform in front of the crowd of C.R. Park. I tried my best, and everyone was pleased with me, but I knew if I hadn't gotten the injury,

I could have performed far better. The injury came with a high cost. Post her recovery, Esha had to face the dread and monotone the pandemic brought with itself. The girl who believed that the stage was her temple, she was now just stuck into the four walls of her house. One day, I decided not to be stuck at home with my agonizing thoughts, so I started taking dance classes online. Taking the classes online was next to impossible as I couldn't see the movement. But this hectic online dancing motivated me and was the reason for my recovery from the drudgery the lockdown brought. During that time, I started training other children. Social media helped me so much during that time. I posted my dancing videos online on Facebook and Instagram, and the support I received from my



Esha Chakrabarty

followers was phenomenal. That helped me to gain the confidence I lost when I hurt my ligament. Every dark tunnel has light at the end of it, and Esha never gave up and soon found hers!!

Let's hit the Road

By Shraddha Chowhan and Anushka Mitra

"With unconditional support, grit and determination, I've been able to complete Super randonnee 600 kms in just 22 days, Grand Endurance challenge 11/77 in 2020, 100 days of non-stop 50 kms, and clinched a gold medal in 50 miler organized by Cycle network grow. One would think that I cherish my journey as a randonneur because I have a lot of accomplishments under my belt. It's one of the reasons, yes. However, in my opinion, sports is more than the titles that come along with it. In its truest essence, it is a celebration of life, of values inculcated and of memories you can look back upon. It was during the COVID-19 induced lockdown period, when my routine activities came to a halt, that I decided to devote more time to my overall well-being. One of the most effective ways of remaining fit is to practice a particular sport according to your convenience. I bought a bicycle and that was the beginning of it all. What started as a coping mechanism during the pandemic years slowly transformed into a serious pursuit. At first, I believed that I'd be content if I could cover 15-20 kms. There was a slow progression—two-three loops of Victoria, trips to Prinsep Ghat or even a quick grocery run. Few months later, I went on to cover the length and breadth

of the state of West Bengal—from Kolkata to Jamshedpur to Kharagpur and so forth. The journey, till now, has been enriching to say the least but it has been equally gruelling. On most days I was exhausted after each ride, and not possessing a high-end bicycle served as a hindrance but not once did I think that it was the end. My lead, Ashish Bajaj, and my family became my pillars of strength and encouraged me to push my limits. It's not always about winning but it's about trying to the best of your abilities. Isn't there a saying by Einstein that life is like riding a bicycle? Truly, to keep your balance you must keep moving. Any sporting event can turn competitive within the blink of an eye. Having said that, randonnuering as a sport is very participatory in nature and sort of fosters an organic bond with the people you meet along the way. I remember two instances in particular which warm my heart. Once, when my tire started leaking during a ride, my friend Souvik pumped my tire every 5 to 7 kms just so that I could complete my 100 km challenge. During my 600 km challenge from Kolkata to Jamshedpur, my friends came to surprise me and escorted me till Jamshedpur at night as there weren't any street lights along the



Sandeep Mundra on bicycle ride

route. Friendship like the ones we see in movies, isn't it? I stand as a testament to the fact that even a 5-minute conversation at a roadside tea stall can add value to your life. While on the road, I admired the beauty that nature offers us. Riding a cycle is an environmentally conscious choice but not one which is made very often. How many cycles do you see in and around our campus? I understand that it may not be feasible given the hectic schedules followed by students but today's generation needs to go the extra mile to preserve the environment for their own future. Recently, Kolkata has ranked second in terms of pollution levels in the country. I've noticed several cycle stations around the city. Replacing personal vehicles with bicycles for shorter distances can also make a huge difference, not only for the

environment but also for individuals. I've learnt how to be resilient in the face of adversity, built my endurance, gained a sense of composure—all of this would not have been possible if I hadn't hit the road. As the Officer-in-Charge of Xavier's University Sports Society, I interact with young minds on a daily basis. There's no denying that students in this fast-paced world face undue amount of stress and anxiety. Most of them do not have time for themselves. This needs to change and through my story, I'd like to set an example. Taking out some amount of time and channeling energy towards a productive extra-curricular activity can change your outlook towards life for the better. If it happens to be a sport, you should know Sandeep Mundra sir will always be there to guide you."

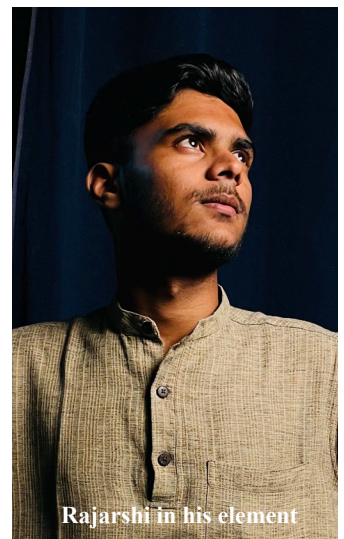
"For the longest time, theatre has been spoken of as a dying art-form, but theatre still continues to be a significant part of our culture and contributors to the development of creativity from all fields and disciplines. Despite this, the question many theatre lovers and artists face are: why do we need theatre? Why do we encourage young people to participate in plays and musicals? Says the UG, Mass communication student Rajarshi, who is associated with Bengali theatre, 'Natok Katha'." He adds, "I always wanted to be a part of theatre. After doing two years of workshops under eminent persons, I was not able to find a good platform to showcase my talent. After years of searching, one fine morning, my father saw an advertisement in the newspaper, it stated 'Want to learn theatre? Learn

acting from Jaydeep Dutta. I was elated and could not stop myself from getting enrolled. Thanks to my stars, I got selected and I started working in this group. I worked in several plays with them and many more are yet to be staged. I've always been an introverted person, who could never communicate properly with family and friends. I was never able to share my thoughts and feelings with others, and it affected me badly. I was in depression for more than 6 months, and after taking proper medications and therapy, I gradually recovered. I learnt the importance of talking to people and expressing myself during this phase of life. In theatre, my team and I had to arrange everything to make the set ready with props in place, therefore, theatre helped me a lot to be a better person and

Life After Theatre

By Anusree Chakraborty

taught me to work hard and also it enhanced my communication skills. We have to read a lot of books before performing, because it boosts the character-building process." He continues, "We hardly get paid for the shows due to lack of audience. We're still struggling and facing turmoil everyday, and we are trying to deal with it in an artistic way. For the sake of passion and love for theatre we're still involved with this art form. There's a lot that goes on for a show to work. We need some modifications to engage the young crowd into this. We're trying as much as we can. My request to all will be to visit theatre one or twice a month, you'll definitely love it."



Rajarshi in his element



In the month of August, 2022 St. Xavier's University witnessed a grand celebration of the 76th Independence Day of India on the 15th of August. The celebrations commenced with a well organised march past which was lead by the Security guards of SXUK in their proper official attire, they were followed by the boys of the Tagore Niwas hostel, Non-teaching staff and faculties of various departments and then at last the girls of the Mother Teresa Niwas Hostel. The march past started from the boys hostel and went all the way till the Britto House. The emceeing of the event was done by Father Mario Martin Louis. Followed by this the flag hoisting of the Indian National flag was done by Reverend Father John Felix Raj and then he addressed the students and faculty members, announcing the name of the St. Xavier's Law

Happenings Of August

By Mohana Bhowmik

School Legal Aid clinic as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Legal aid clinic. At last there was distribution of food packets and there was also arrangement of tea and refreshments for the teaching faculties. In later half of the month St. Xavier's University also witnessed an artistic photography exhibition by Xposure(the photography society of SXUK) called "XHIBIT". The theme of the exhibition was "Independence". The exhibition took place at the Hall of Fame on 26th from 3:30-4:45 P.M. There was a plethora of works by students across various departments. The exhibition featured photos on

the theme of freedom and gave complete creative liberty to the participants (who were 40+ in number) to interpret the theme. This encompassed a wide range of over 120 entries. XHIBIT had the privilege of having a panel of eminent personalities like Mr. Asok Dasgupta and Mr. Debashis Sen Sharma as the Judges for the Photography Exhibition. Over a period of 2 hours, the exhibition witnessed a footfall of nearly over 200 attendees, who visited and appreciated the work and talent of the participants. The exhibition proved to be a fruitful endeavour for the participants

and the attending students alike. Having to express their creative-minded outlook through a form of art, albeit challenging, allowed the participants to explore the depths of their imagination and perceptions. The theme 'INDEPENDENCE' enabled multiple, intrinsic interpretations; each different from the other. Each and every participant, with the frame of their mind, captured an intriguing story to tell. Furthermore, the students who attended the exhibition were in awe of the astounding talent they were surrounded by; helping to ignite a spark of creativity and inspiration within them, as well. All and all, the event was profoundly immersive. The volunteers, participants, and the attendees heightened the graciousness of XPOSURE's much-awaited exhibition.





“The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity, and a understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen. “

People. I truly believe people, with their similarities and differences, with their unique quirks, with their struggles, with their differing opinions; is what builds a great Institution. And the nurturing environment here at Xavier's celebrates our differences, giving us ample space to grow as individuals. When you walk in through the huge gate of St. Xavier's University, you will automatically know how essential the term “community” is on the campus. We talk, we listen, we uplift each other, each and every day. There's

no distinction between the teaching and non-teaching staff, everyone is treated with the same respect. This issue of our newsletter celebrates the uniqueness in each of us, the unheard stories that build us. I wish from the bottom of my heart that we keep on striving to keep the “unique” alive, and that we never bow down to silly conventions.
Happy Reading....
-By Mouli Majumdar

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