

The Gyanodaya Philosophy

The “Gyanodaya Express” emerged as a fascinating concept from Professor Dinesh Singh, Vice Chancellor of the University of Delhi and put into action within a few months. A committee chaired by Prof. CS Dubey worked meticulously on every detail. The University of Delhi assisted by the Indian Railways organized a dedicated train “Gyanodaya Express” for an educational journey by 940 NCC and NSS girl students from 32 colleges. Accompanied by 60 teachers, the group embarked on 8th July, 2012 from the Safdarjung railway station to travel through central and western India for 12 days to understand the diversity of the country. Projects were given to the students under supervision of teachers and mentors so they could relate their knowledge to their experience. The students visited a number of historically and culturally important destinations such as Sabarmati, Mumbai Naval Base, Madgaon, ISRO and Wardha. The Vice Chancellor and his team members travelled in some segments of the journey

For the first time in India, a train carrying almost 1000 university people journeyed through India in the Gandhian spirit of understanding the multifaceted realities of the country. To impart experiential education and bring awareness of nation building, the itinerary was designed to promote confidence, knowledge and empathy in the students. While they were taken to centres of scientific excellence, they were also acquainted with the simplicity of ashram life and the discipline of our military personnel. Through such firsthand contact with a variety of places and people it was expected that the young college students would realize the responsibilities of citizenship and also resonate to the call of their inner voice. Most of all, Gandhi’s ideal of integrating the mind, heart and hands would be practiced during the journey.

The train was provided with laptops, internet connection and a library. Based on the journey, students were encouraged to study compartment design, food habits, sociological aspects of railway platforms, geography, agriculture, language and literature, ethnicity of people of the region. They were also asked to write book reviews and travelogues.

The first train journey was flagged off on 8 July and returned on 19 July 2012. More such educational trips are planned. It is expected that students on Gyanodaya Express would value Gandhi’s ideals of self help and integrate those principles with the modernising aspects of India.