

## Five day science camp for students from Dantewada concludes

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A five day camp for honing scientific temper in students from Naxal-hit Dantewada concluded here today.

Opening an avenue for self-development for the batch of fifty students from Dantewada, the camp was held by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER).

Hosted by city-based Jnana Prabodhini Trust, which offered logistic support to the class nine students which included 15 girls from Chhattisgarh, the camp was described as part of 'Bachpan Banao,' an educational fellowship programme being implemented at three government-run schools in Dantewada, involving volunteers from across the country.

"The focus of the camp was on hands-on activities for the participating students in order to inculcate a scientific temper with an exposure to outdoor environment rather than only confining them to classroom sessions," said Kaustabh Deshpande, coordinator of the camp.

Elaborating on the features of the camp, Deshpande said it comprised sessions on "aeroplane-making" as well as microscopy at the labs of IISER.

Describing the response from the students as "encouraging," Deshpande said one of the activities at the camp involved a biodiversity field visit to the Sinhgad valley in the vicinity during which they evinced keen interest in collecting biodiversity samples.

Another highlight of the deliberations at the camp included a visit to the Inter-university Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) situated at the sprawling campus of University of Pune and a "Vigyan Ashram" located at nearby Pabal.

"They were taught to make scientific toys at the IUCCA the activity which they enjoyed. In view of their background, they were also taken on a visit to small and medium scale industrial units in the city," he added.

The IISER programme here was in continuation of a three day camp organised at Dantewada from October 19-22 where science education activities were conducted for about 55 students drawn from 25 schools in the district.