

Outcomes of the one-day seminar on 'Extreme Expeditions'

A seminar on 'Extreme Expeditions' was organized by the Department of Biotechnology under the Star DBT scheme on 3rd October 2023 in the Swamy Vivekananda room at 11:30 a.m. Dr. Preethi Pandit was the coordinator of the program. The resource person for the session was a science filmmaker, Mr. Rakesh Rao. He presented to the students, his experiences of the expeditions in the Antarctica and Himalayan region.

The outcomes of the seminar were as follows: -

1. **Increased Knowledge:** The students learned about the challenges, risks, and techniques involved in extreme expeditions, including mountaineering, polar exploration, snow hiking, and more.

2. **Inspiration:** Hearing about the adventures and explorations during the extreme expeditions was incredibly inspiring for the students. It ignited a passion for adventure and exploration within them.

3. **Safety Awareness:** Extreme expeditions come with significant risks. The students understood the importance of safety measures, risk assessment, preparation, equipment, training, and precautions necessary to minimize risks during such adventures.

4. **Networking:** The like-minded students, such as adventurers, outdoor enthusiasts, and experts in nature photography expanded their network, connected with potential expedition partners, and learned from others' experiences after the session.

5. **Practical Tips:** Due to the practical advice offered on planning, financing, and organizing extreme expeditions by the resource person, the students gained a deeper insight. Mr. Rao shared tips on logistics, permits, visas, and how to choose the right gear during an emergency situation.

6. **Mental Toughness:** Extreme expeditions often push the person to their physical and mental limits. The students witnessed the mental resilience and coping strategies of seasoned adventurers from the videos and photos shared by Mr. Rao. This helped the students develop their own mental toughness and adaptability.

7. **Environmental Awareness:** Mr. Rao took the students on a virtual tour of many remote and pristine environments through his photographs and stories. He emphasized the importance of conservation and responsible exploration, raising awareness about the global crises of climate change. He encouraged the students to watch his film, The Climate Challenge which is freely available on YouTube.

8. **Career Opportunities:** Mr. Rao encouraged the students interested in pursuing a career in adventure tourism, expedition guiding, or related fields, to consider the documentation of scientific projects as potential career paths.

9. **Personal Growth:** Undertaking an extreme expedition is a significant personal challenge. Mr. Rao shared the knowledge and skills gained from his adventures that contributed to his personal growth, self-discovery, and the development of leadership qualities within the students.

10. **Cultural Understanding:** The resource person shared many experiences of his interaction with different cultures and indigenous communities. He emphasized cultural sensitivity and the importance of respectful engagement with local populations.

11. **Appreciation for Nature:** Towards the end of the seminar, the students were awe-stricken as they witnessed some of the most breathtaking and remote natural landscapes on Earth. The students expressed that the seminar made them appreciate the beauty and fragility of these environments.