

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CELL (IQAC)

Report 2024-2026

Since its inception the Equal Opportunity Cell (EOC) of New Alipore College is committed to promote inclusivity, equality and social justice within the institution. Throughout this period the Cell functioned in accordance with the principles of equity, non-discrimination, and empowerment as envisaged by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Constitution of India.

The Cell extend support through academic counselling, motivational sessions and extended guidance regarding scholarships and government schemes. The Equal Opportunity Cell collaborated with various departments (Dept. of Political science, Dept. of environmental Studies) and committees (Psychological Cell, Wellness Cell, Debate Club, SC/ST Minority Cell) of the college to organize programmes related to social justice, gender equality, mental health awareness, Human rights and constitutional values.

With the objective of creating awareness regarding constitutional rights, social justice and anti-discrimination policies alongside providing academic and psychological support to all, the Cell organized several seminars, workshops, awareness programmes and outreach activities to sensitize students and staff regarding equality, inclusiveness, and social justice. Thus, the Cell had been regularly engaged in awareness generation through multifarious means.

An interactive session titled **“UDDAN”** was organized on **21st December 2024** by Equal Opportunity Cell jointly with the Department of Political Science, Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), and IQAC of New Alipore College in collaboration with Bijoy Krishna Girls' College and Kishor Bharati Bhagini Nivedita College. The workshop adopted the concept of peer learning to encourage active participation, exchange of ideas, and collaborative understanding among students. A group of students staged a self-scripted drama conveying the message of “Empowering Minds for a Gender Just Society.” The drama effectively portrayed various social challenges related to gender discrimination and emphasized the importance of equality, respect and mutual understanding in society. The programme aimed at spreading awareness regarding gender equality, social sensitivity, and empowerment among young learners.

Consecutively, the Cell organized another talk on gender justice by Smitha Sehgal on **21st December 2024** in collaboration with Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Department of Political Science. Ms. Shegal discussed various aspects of gender injustice, social stereotypes, discrimination, and the need to build a more inclusive and respectful environment. Emphasis was laid on the role of education and youth in promoting equality and challenging gender-based biases. The seminar was highly informative and interactive. Students actively participated in the discussion and engaged with the speaker through questions and observations.

The programme successfully encouraged awareness and understanding of gender-related issues and reinforced the importance of mutual respect, empathy, and equality in academic and social spaces.

The Equal Opportunity Cell of New Alipore College organized a **Motivational Talk on Mental Wellness on 15th January 2025** for students, faculty members and staff of the college. The programme aimed to promote awareness regarding mental health and emotional well-being in academic and professional life. Dr. Nilanjana Deb, an eminent academician from the Department of English, Jadavpur University with her insightful and engaging deliberation highlighted the importance of emotional resilience, self-awareness, and maintaining positive mental health in today's demanding academic and social environment. She encouraged participants to develop healthy coping mechanisms and emphasized on open communication, empathy, and mutual support in building a mentally healthy community. The session was highly interactive where all participated actively in the discussion.

The Cell jointly with Cell for Fostering Wellness, an NGO Parichiti (Unit of CHSJ) and Vijaygarh Jyotish Ray College organized an interactive session on **“Gender and Masculinity for mental health and well-being of men” on 19th February, 2025** where ‘gender balance’ and ‘gender equity’ narratives were discussed from the perspective of a man. This workshop intended to build awareness and foster psychological wellness amongst all – independent of one's gender identity. This workshop focused on giving men equal space to voice their concern, share their experience and develop their identity for the overall betterment of society. This workshop was special as the participants were exclusively male students who actively engaged in candid and reflective discussions while challenging the deeply ingrained stereotypes. The session also examined the portrayal of hyper-masculinity in popular cinemas and its impact on young men, particularly when they express their emotional vulnerability. Around 100 students actively participated in the group work and also enjoyed the screening of videos on the concerned topic.

An interactive session titled “Chilling Reality: Fragile Future of Human Beings” was organized on 25th March 2025 by the Equal Opportunity Cell, Torkological Club, , Department of Chemistry, and Department of Environmental Science of New Alipore College in observance of World Water Day. The programme aimed to create awareness among students regarding the growing environmental crisis, water scarcity, and the urgent need for sustainable conservation practices. The session featured insightful talks by Dr. Pritha Bhattacharya, faculty member of the Department of Environmental Science, University of Calcutta, and Dr. Pradita Mukherjee, faculty member of the Department of Political Science, HMM College for Women. The speakers discussed the environmental, social, and political implications of water scarcity and emphasized the importance of collective responsibility towards environmental protection. The special talks were followed by an engaging students’

debate on the topic: "Should Water Conservation Education be Compulsory in Schools and Colleges?" Students participated enthusiastically and expressed diverse perspectives on the issue. The session successfully promoted environmental awareness, critical thinking, and active student participation.

A Special Yoga Workshop was organized on 3rd December 2025 by the Equal Opportunity Cell, the Cell for Fostering Wellness, and the Women's Cell of New Alipore College with the objective of promoting holistic physical and mental well-being among the college community. The workshop was exclusively designed for the faculty members and staff of the college and was conducted by Smt. Moitrayee Banerjee, a Holistic Yoga and Wellness Practitioner. The session focused on the importance of maintaining physical fitness, mental balance, and emotional well-being amidst the pressures of professional and personal life. The scope of the workshop included creating awareness about stress management, healthy lifestyle practices, mindfulness, and the role of yoga in enhancing concentration, relaxation, and overall wellness. The resource person demonstrated simple and energising yoga techniques, breathing exercises, and relaxation methods that could easily be incorporated into daily routines by faculty members and staff. The participants actively took part in the practical session and appreciated the interactive and rejuvenating nature of the workshop. The programme successfully encouraged awareness regarding self-care, wellness, and the importance of a balanced lifestyle within the academic environment.

The Equal Opportunity Cell regularly utilizes the platform of 'The Students Week' event organized by New Alipore College to inform students about various government and college sponsored scholarships available to assist them in their educational pursuits. The event primarily consisted of an informative talk aimed at enlightening students about the scholarships offered by the government. Through this session, students were provided with essential information regarding the eligibility criteria, application procedures, and contact details of relevant personnel involved in the scholarship process. This has a significant impact on the students by empowering them with knowledge about available scholarships and ensuring equal opportunity for all students, regardless of their background or financial status. The Cell through its focus on scholarship awareness, played a crucial role in empowering students and facilitating their educational aspirations. By promoting equal opportunity and providing essential information, the event contributed to the overall development and growth of the student community.

Over these years, the Equal Opportunity Cell successfully:

- Enhanced awareness among students regarding equality and constitutional rights.
- Encouraged greater participation of marginalized students in institutional activities.
- Helped create a more inclusive and supportive campus atmosphere.