Two Institutional Best Practices Successfully Implemented by the College

The College had proposed two Best Practices - *Shanti Paath:* Environmental Peace and Harmony and *Khazana-e-Virasat*: Treasure of Heritage of Knowledge, Historical Traditions, Art and Culture in its first Self Study Report (SSR) submitted to NAAC in May 2015. Subsequent to Accreditation, the College in the year 2016-2017 announced these two practices as Best Practices to be pursued and developed over five years. Since then, they have been followed with rigour, energy and enthusiasm. These two practices, during the last five years, have continued to encourage awareness and practices of sustainable development within a holistic vision of the environment and its relation to society, generate environmental consciousness and cognizance, sensibility and respect towards heritage and conservation of inheritance. These practices not only encourage ethical and human values but also instill a sense of belonging in the College community.

Best Practice I – *Shanti Paath* is inspired by the Vedic *Shanti Paath* that emphasizes on the value and significance of environment, the cosmic system and its inhabitants. The College inspires into its surroundings and its people the desire for environmental peace and harmony and encourages an organic connection with the environment. The College, with its dense green cover and phenomenal biodiversity serves as a laboratory for both observation and practices. It is committed to the optimization of its available material and human resources and inculcation of a life-style that promotes environmental consciousness, conservation of energy and other natural resources. Endeavouring towards clean environment, a workshop was organized on 'Indoor Air Quality and Human Health' and the College was a station for Air Quality Monitoring during Diwali in the year 2017-2018 under a project initiated by the National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi. The College regularly conducts Green Audit of its campus and its facilities. Activities in the College are organized around tree census, bird census, butterfly and dragonfly count and a vigorous Waste Management Program. An important step towards Waste Management was taken by the College in 2019-2020 under the slogan of 'No Waste Leaves the Campus' through Project *Nidaan*, a project for Solid Waste Management, initiated by the College's Centre for Earth Studies. Recycle projects were revamped during the year to create knowledge on waste segregation at source and dedicated repositories were installed for waste collection. A leaf composting machine was installed on campus in addition to the compost pits and bins already present. The College uses leaf litter to make compost, canteen food waste to make organic manure and recycles paper waste in association with the NGO, *Greenobin*. Recycled Paper is used to produce College Memorabilia. Electronic and plastic waste is disposed for recycling in collaboration with the NGO, *Chintan*, which feeds the income generated into the project of education of street children. The College optimizes its water usage and practices water management through waste water recycling and rain-water harvesting. There are seven water harvesting pits on the campus. Heritage well built in 1917, located in the College campus is used to facilitate water management and waste water recycling. The well is used for channeling irrigation, drinking water and for fire extinguisher. The College has its own Green Lab that practices urban farming and grows organic vegetables. This provides a further boost to the College's efforts and commitment to maintain environmental sustainability and biodiversity.

The College has taken a major step towards alternative sources of energy and energy conservation by harnessing solar energy, a major renewable energy resource. Solar Panels have been installed in the College campus to reduce dependence on electricity consumption from the grid and to promote the use of renewable energy. The College uses solar lights on its path. There are solar panels in the two hostels of the College that house 450 students. The solar panels are used for heating water in both the hostels. The College uses LED Bulbs, power efficient equipment in the two hostels of the College and the two academic blocks of the College, namely, New Academic Block and ECA/Academic Extension Block.

The College campus is an Animal-Friendly campus. There are dogs, cats, peacocks, mongoose, and kites, varieties of migratory birds and rescued birds and animals on the campus that are looked after by the College community. The College collaborated with Wildlife Rescue NGO to develop the College Campus as a habitat for controlled release of injured birds. The Wildlife Rescue provides basic healthcare to the birds and then releases them in the birds-friendly ambience of the College. The College's lush green campus and floral diversity provide a habitat for more than 40 species of birds, 11 species of butterflies and 4 species of dragonflies and damselflies. Bird Diversity Census is conducted on the College campus. The College took the innovative step of conducting a Bird walk for visually impaired students, using acoustical and tactile means to identify birds. The College, through the Department of Environmental Studies, encouraged the students to implement a project 'Creating Auxiliary Nesting Habitat for Birds around the College Campus' supported by TERI, an NGO and Genpact India.

The biodiversity resource of the College is well-documented and monitored by the sustained efforts of the Centre for Earth Studies and the Department of Environmental Studies through Biodiversity Trails, research projects, regular census and Green and Environment Audits. The Garden Committee of the College and its trained, meritorious gardeners through their expertise and hard labour maintain the green, clean, refreshing environment of the College. The College prepares its own fertilizers and manures to provide nutrition to its gardens, lawns, trees and plants. The College has large sprawling gardens and exquisite floral variety, which makes a remarkable, award-winning impression at the Annual University Flower Show. Each year, the College wins several prizes for its plants and flowers in different categories at the University Flower Show.

The ECO Club organizes several programs that add to awareness and sensitization towards environment. It organizes Annual Nature Bazaar, a day long festival on Basant Panchami, inviting Environment NGOs and Groups to showcase and sell their green products to the College and the neighbourhood community.

The College received the World Ecology Environment and Development (WEED) Award in the 26th World Environment Congress organized by the Indian Institute of Ecology and Environment in October 2017. In October 2018, the Principal, Prof. Babli Moitra Saraf was given the Lifetime Achievement Award on the occasion of United Nations World Teachers Day coinciding with the Teacher Education and Research Summit for a Cleaner World by the Educational Standards and Testing Council of India, Confederation of Indian Universities, National Institute of Cleanliness Education and Research and Indian Institute of Ecology and Environment. The College is also a recipient of 'Plastic Free College of the Year Award, 2018'.

Best Practice II – *Khazana-e-Virasat* is inspired by the commitment and passion to preserve and conserve the vast resources of historical knowledge inherited in the form of artifacts and documents that can be traced to the beginning of the twentieth century as early as 1904. The College, the first women's college of the University of Delhi has a history that has intersected the movement for women's education, the movement for independence and the feminist movement. To preserve, conserve and display its heritage and historical traditions, the College established its own Archive in 2006, thus becoming the only College of the University of Delhi to house its own Archive. To encourage the consciousness of heritage, history, conservation and restoration of tangible and intangible heritage, the Archive was expanded into Museum and Archive Learning Resource Centre and inaugurated in 2016. This fostered a sense of heritage, a sense of belonging to the traditions of the College and the idea of a community and citizenship. The entire College community thus became both the participant and custodian of the shared wealth. The Museum and Archives Learning Resource Centre (MALRC) captures not only the history but also the cultural and political ethos of the College. There are many fascinating details, interesting moments and events in the life of the College – now in its 97th Year – which deserved to be retrieved, preserved and brought to a larger audience. The commitment of the College to preserve, conserve, digitize, catalogue and house the inheritances on a continual basis and sensitize the College community to its heritage led to the expansion of MALRC, adding another wing for display, projections, seminars, symposiums and research projects. The Museum and Archives features the period 1904-2006 and 2007-2020. It displays rare documents and photographs of the colonial period, the city of Delhi, the history of the College and its transition over time to a modern, progressive institution of liberal learning. It is a significant addition to the corpus on institutional histories, heritage learning, gender and the city of Delhi and has facilitated researchers, scholars and all such persons who wish to explore these issues. The documents, newspapers and photographs are digitized, conserved, restored and catalogued, making MALRC into one of the gleaming, modern Centre of the College. A few QR (Quick Response) codes with details on selected displayed items have been put up which can be scanned with Smart Phones and which are linked to the College Website.

The Museum and Archives Learning Resource Centre, since 2016 after its inauguration, has continued to attract Research Scholars, both national and international, interested in the history of Delhi, institutional history, gender studies, freedom movement, women's role in it, women's education and the invaluable Indian and Australian women who contributed significantly to the making and consolidation of the College. Significantly, the first Principal of the College was an Australian lady, Ms. Leonara G'meiner. In January-September 2016, Prof. Emerita Heather Goodall and Dr. Devleena Ghosh, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia expressed their interest in researching at MALRC on an Australian Research Council Project focusing on connections between Indian and Australian women in the mid-twentieth century. From among these women, the focused research was on Ms. Leonara G'meiner. On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Quit India Movement in August 2016, Hindustan Times Education Times for its feature *Yaad Karo Qurbani*, did a Photo-Shoot and an interview on the History of the

College. The College collaborated with *Sahapedia*, an online encyclopedic resource on South Asian History and Culture for a Project on 'Education in Delhi: Charting its History' featuring Indraprastha College for Women and photographing the College. *Sahapedia* prepared an online documentary interview with the Principal and some faculty members which was uploaded on the YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d12_LHnd_ZQ

In the Year 2016, a student from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi researched in MALRC for a Seminar Paper on 'Architecture of Indraprastha College for Women'; in 2017, students from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and Ambedkar University, Delhi researched in MALRC on their projects on history of education with special reference to women's education and academic reforms in higher education in India respectively; in 2018-2019, the Museum and Archives Learning Resource Centre served as a pedagogic tool for the students of the College to study Papers on Gender and Contemporary Women and Empowerment. In the same academic year, MALRC facilitated three research projects, namely, undergraduate centenary decade research grant project entitled 'Beyond Nationalism: Revisiting the History of Indraprastha College through Student Magazines, 1937-1977' by a student of BA (Hons) Multi Media and Mass Communications. It was published subsequently in a Student Journal; research on Sucheta Kriplani, an alumna of the College was undertaken by a Journalist with *The Indian Express*. The article was published entitled 'Sucheta Kriplani: India's First Woman Chief Minister, Chartered her Own Independent Course' in indianexpress.com. In September 2019, a student of Ambedkar University, Delhi researched in MALRC on her Ph.D. Proposal 'Roads to Motorization: Public Transport, Urban Life, and Mobility in Colonial and Post-Colonial Delhi, c.1880-1960. Research and Photo-Shoot was conducted in September 2019 for Voice of America by Ms. Ritul Joshi to do a story on Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan (formerly Irene Pant, who taught Economics in College in the 1930s). The story was uploaded on YouTube VOA Urdu in October 2019. The research for the book on Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan was done by one of its authors, Deepa Aggarwal in MALRC. The book was published by Penguin/Viking India in June 2019 and was featured in Jaipur Literary Festival 2019.

To sensitize new entrants to the College to values of heritage, conservation and awareness about the history of the College, Heritage Walk of the College is conducted annually as a part of the Student Orientation Program under the aegis of MALRC. MALRC has often participated in Delhi Walk Festival in association with Delhi Heritage Walk and conducted heritage walks for the visitors and the College community.

To capture the live heritage and ethos of the College, MALRC since its inception in 2016 has been bringing out a Heritage Calendar annually. Till date, it has brought out six Heritage Calendars. Heritage Calendar is proposed to be published every year culminating in the centenary year, 2024.

The College's endeavour to excite passions, sensibilities and consciousness towards inheritance, heritage and historical knowledge is enshrined in Best Practice II.