

ROYAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOR WOMEN

REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL VISIT

NAME OF THE PROGRAM: Nature Trail and Visit to Historical Monuments – Vasai Fort

DATE: 29th November 2025

VENUE: Vasai Fort, Maharashtra

TIME: 6:15 am to 12:00 pm

NO. OF PARTICIPANTS: 26

COORDINATOR: Asst. Prof. Ms. Mandrita Mitra & Dr. Jasvanti Adhangale

OBJECTIVES

- To explore biodiversity and understand the importance of conserving nature and wildlife.
- To identify various species of birds, insects, and plants present in their natural habitat.
- To study the historical significance, architecture, and cultural heritage of Vasai Fort.
- To provide practical learning outside the classroom through real observations and field study.
- To develop awareness about environmental protection, sustainability, and heritage conservation.

REFLECTION

On 29th November 2025, the B.Ed students of the Royal College of Education and Research for Women participated in an Educational Nature Trail and Historical Monument Visit at Vasai Fort. This visit provided an excellent opportunity for experiential learning as it combined the study of nature along with the exploration of historical architecture.

During the nature trail, we walked through the lush surroundings of the fort, surrounded by thick green vegetation and natural landscapes. The environment was peaceful, and we experienced the soothing and refreshing atmosphere of nature. We heard the natural calling and chirping of birds, which made the trail more beautiful and lively. We also used **Merlin Bird ID App** and **Seek by iNaturalist App** to identify and verify bird and plant species, which made our learning more scientific and technology-based.

Some of the bird species we observed and identified included House Crow, Black Kite, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Alexandrine Parakeet, Shikra, Common Myna, Common Koel, Coppersmith Barbet, Palm Swift, Common Tailorbird, Woolly-necked Stork, Jungle Babblers(Never separated), Greater Caucal, Fly Catcher, Drongos, White King Fishers, Common Ibis, and Common Jay.

Along with birds, we also saw a variety of butterflies and insects such as Plain Tiger, Yellow Emigrant, Common Sailor, Jezebel, Pansy, Common Crow, Dragonflies, Caterpillars, Grasshoppers, Crickets, Giant Wood-Spider, Plant-hoppers, Mosquitoes, and Ants. We also observed natural formations like pagoda ant hills, mushrooms, spore prints, and frog/toad habitats, and we identified various plants and trees including Chikoo Tree, Cotton Tree, Fig Tree, Jamun Tree, Abelmoschus manihot, Lantana camara (poisonous), and mushroom growth.

We were guided by **Mr. Shubham Darekar**, **Mr. Giridhar**, and **Mr. Ammar**, who explained everything in detail and helped us to understand both natural and historical aspects with great clarity. Their explanations enriched our knowledge and made the learning experience more interactive and meaningful.

In the second part of the visit, we explored the historical monuments of Vasai Fort, originally built by the Yadava dynasty and later reconstructed by the Portuguese in 1536. The fort played a major role as a Portuguese administrative and trading center. Inside the fort, we observed beautiful Indo-Portuguese architecture including arched doorways, gothic-style church remains, watchtowers, bell towers, thick stone walls, circular domes, vaulted windows, pillars with stone carvings, and symmetrical corridors. We also learned about the famous Battle of Vasai (1739), where Maratha leader Chimaji Appa defeated the Portuguese and regained control of the fort.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Nature Trail Learning Outcomes

- Identified various species of birds, butterflies, insects, plants, and trees in their natural surroundings.
- Used Merlin Bird ID App and Seek by iNaturalist App for digital identification of species, improving technological and research skills.
- Developed scientific observation skills, patience, cooperation, and field-based research skills.
- Improved listening skills by identifying species through bird calls and natural sounds.
- Understood ecological concepts such as biodiversity, food chain, food web, habitats, and interdependence among living organisms.
- Strengthened teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, and communication skills during fieldwork.
- Gained awareness of the need for conserving nature and protecting natural resources for future generations.
- Understood the role of nature education in promoting mental well-being and emotional balance through direct contact with the environment.

Historical Visit Learning Outcomes

- Understood the historical, cultural, and political significance of Vasai Fort.
- Explored Indo-Portuguese architectural structures such as Gothic arches, vaulted windows, bell towers, domes, watchtowers, and church ruins.
- Learned about the Battle of Vasai (1739) and the leadership and strategic planning of Chimaji Appa.
- Developed analytical skills by examining architectural design, purpose, and strategic military planning.
- Realized the importance of conserving heritage sites and cultural identity.
- Enhanced critical thinking by understanding how historical events shape societies and cultural development.
- Built emotional and cultural connection with Indian heritage and national pride.
- Understood the value of experiential learning beyond textbooks through real historical site visits.

CONCLUSION

This educational visit was highly enriching as it combined the study of nature and historical heritage in real settings. It helped us connect theoretical knowledge with practical observation, enhanced our understanding of biodiversity and history, and inspired us to protect both the natural environment and historical monuments. As future educators, we aim to promote experiential learning and encourage students to appreciate nature, culture, and heritage.

REFLECTION OF STUDENTS

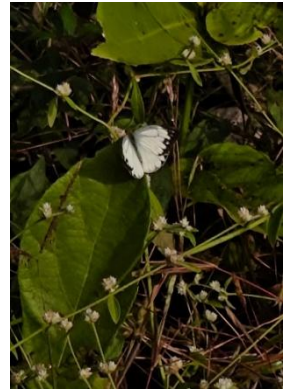
Kashish Khan (F.Y.B.Ed) – The visit helped me gain practical knowledge about nature, wildlife and history. The experience encouraged me to observe, explore and value our environment and cultural monuments with greater responsibility.

Varsha Lodha (F.Y.B.Ed) – This educational visit to Vasai Fort was a valuable learning experience that helped me to connect with nature and history beyond the classroom. Identifying birds and plants and exploring the fort's architecture strengthened my observation skills and curiosity. It inspired me to appreciate and protect our natural and cultural heritage.

Glimpse of the visit

Nature trail





Historical monuments

