

Cover Story

Industry Interface in Bridging the Skills Gap

To address the need of the hour in the skill development sector, the sixth National Convention of Don Bosco Tech (DB Tech) was organized at Don Bosco Technical Institute, New Delhi.

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Forging New Partnerships

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Feature

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Centre in Focus:
Don Bosco,
Sulthan Bathery
(Kerala)



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Published by
Fr A. M. Joseph sdb on behalf of DB Tech

Message from Executive Director



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All of us have a task to perform and a role to fulfil, which the almighty entrusted to us when we came into to this universe. So instead of perceiving ourselves as one insignificant individual among billions of people, we are urged to see ourselves as a spark of the divine to make a difference by any means in the society. When we live with this joyful awareness, we potentially have an infinite effect on the universe. A wave of energy not only illuminates the periphery but also those who will witness the light, become enlightened. Those who were unaware of their divine power will notice the difference, and those who were aware – but not living as if their lives mattered - will be attracted and begun changing. So recognize and live your life as part of the Great Way, and help bring balance into the world.

Do not entertain doubt about our impact on the world; instead, develop a vision for Earth and convince ourselves that we are perfectly capable of contributing to this vision, whether it's grandiose or small.

It is said that when a butterfly flaps its wings, that energy flows thousands of miles away. Therefore, everything we think and do extends outward and multiplies. Live our lives knowing that the difference we choose to make is toward wholeness, not destructiveness. Even if no one sees or acknowledges it, an act of kindness contains energy that impacts our entire universe. And a silent blessing or thought of love toward others contains a vibration that will be felt throughout the cosmos.

The anthropologist Margret Mead addressed this idea in the following observation: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has".

This New Year brings great scope in creating a better world. The positive vibration that we generate in skilling and empowering people add colour to our lives and the world.

”

Fr. Aikarchalil Joseph

Cover Story



National Convention on Industry Interface in Bridging the Skills Gap

New Delhi: The sixth National Convention of Don Bosco Tech (DB Tech) was organized at Don Bosco Technical Institute (Okhla, New Delhi) on November 30 – December 2, 2010. To have an exhaustive discussion on the concerns, opportunities and challenges in 'Industry Interface in Bridging the Skills Gap', the leaders from industry, social sector and government gathered on one platform. Mr. T. Vijay Kumar (Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India) was invited as the Chief Guest for the convention. Other dignitaries who attended the opening session of National Convention included Ms. Kshitija Krishnaswamy (Lead Corporate Citizenship, Accenture India), Mr. Niranjana Khatri (General Manager –Welcome Environ Initiatives, ITC Welcomgroup), Mr. Ravi Bhusan (Head, Training – BIP BOP, Schneider Electric), Mr. Danny Van De Putte (Program Coordinator – DIOS COMIDE) and Fr. Thomas Anjukandam, SDB (Provincial, Bangalore Province). Over 142 representatives from Don Bosco skills training institutions and decision makers from different regions united at this convention to have a discussion on the industry partnership in the skill development sector. Fr. Thomas welcomed the delegates and participants to the sixth National Convention and wished that the convention provides an opportunity for all to have open minded discussion on industry partnership in different steps of the skill development programmes. He extended his special thanks to the delegates from COMIDE for their long association with DB Tech.

Spread across 132 countries, Don Bosco has been working for the adolescents with a mandate to train youth, especially the poor. DB Tech, the skill development wing of Salesians of Don Bosco in India, has been working for this mission by offering vocational training through its state-of-the-art facilities, equipment and infrastructure. In this regard, DB Tech has been partnering with various government departments and corporate houses to impart training to underprivileged youth. Few organisations are MoRD (Govt. of India), Accenture India Pvt. Ltd, Schneider Electric, ITC Welcomgroup, Sobha Developers, Indian Hotels and ASSOCHAM. DB Tech piloted different possible partnerships with these likeminded organisations to utilise their expertise in the skill development program. In this convention, the industry leaders showcased their successful models and also discussed the need for industry to involve in various skill development initiatives.

In the opening panel discussion, Mr T. Vijay Kumar briefed about different wage based employment or self-entrepreneurship programs of Govt. of India to eradicate poverty in rural and urban India. He said, "Moving away from charity models to empowerment models, we should follow the rule to teach how to fish instead of giving a fish to the needy. Under NRLM programme, Government will be proving vocational training to one crore youth in the next seven years. And DB Tech is a preferred partner due to its grass-root level reach in these 60 naxalite / extremist effected districts in 9 states in North-East and Jammu Kashmir." He asked DB Tech to intervene in the education sector by initiating bridge schools for the dropouts, which will mainstream the children to formal education and skill development programs.

Addressing the gathering, the Lead Corporate Citizenship of

Accenture, Ms. Kshitija said, "Being a good corporate citizen, Accenture supports non-profit and community organizations to help them adapt to change, become efficient and effective to serve the communities. With its corporate citizenship theme 'Skills to Succeed', Accenture has been focusing on building skills of marginalised and underprivileged individuals by enabling them to participate in and contribute to the economy. We have tried a different model with DB Tech, where we have involved an industry leader, who will look after the technical aspects." As a knowledge partner, Taj Group of Hotels and ITC Welcomgroup not only provide technical expertise but also facilitate the youth to receive on-job-training and placements at their facilities.

Highlighting the role knowledge partner, Mr. Niranjana said, "Under ITC's socio business model, we have been partnering with different non-profit organisations having intervention in skill development to support soft infrastructure, training curriculum, training of trainers, guest lectures, on-the-job training, assessment, certification and placement assistance for trainees." He also requested other corporate houses and industries to partner with social organisations so that every youth of our country should be empowered with market-driven vocational training.

Mr. Ravi from Schneider Electric shared about the partnership with DB Tech in Electrical sector which is an exemplary model in its own. He said, "Schneider Electric India Foundation (SEIF) partnered with DB Tech to impart vocational training in Electrical sector to the underprivileged youth and to assist them in self and wage employment efforts in the same domain. Schneider helps DB Tech to develop the curriculum, infrastructure and co-certification for the training programme."

Expressing his happiness, Mr. Danny Van De Putte said, "The partnership with DB Tech gives us an opportunity to achieve our objectives to reach out to the youngsters with appropriate skills, which not only lead them to a great future for their immediate dependents and but also will have ripple effect in the economy of the nation."

The three days National Convention consisted of panel discussions in Retail, Automobile, Construction and Apparel sectors. The panel discussion was a deliberation on Industry involvement in these sectors. The noted leaders from industries, academicians and training experts invited to have a detailed discussion on requirement of skill based training, involvement of industry in curriculum design and industry ratification, establishing centres of excellence, assessments, certification, grading and retention. The group has picked up lots of inspiration, information and ideas for further reflection, discussion and action. Many industries were keen to tie up with DB Tech for supporting on training, exposure visits and placement at their various facilities. DB Tech looks forward to establish industry led partnerships in skill development for construction, healthcare, retail and automobile trades, to reach out to large numbers of youth. This annual event ended after further deliberations for internal cooperation to achieve the mission of DB Tech, 'Skilling India'.

Forging New Partnerships

With Accenture

Don Bosco Tech (DB Tech), in partnership with Accenture Services Pvt. Ltd and ITC Welcomgroup of Hotels, launched skill based training programmes in Hospitality and Facilities Management for youth (18-29 years) belonging to the economically impoverished



backgrounds. Accenture, the global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, will be the funding partner for the project, whereas ITC Welcomgroup will be the knowledge partner, who will support soft infrastructure, training curriculum, training of trainers, guest lectures, on-the-job training, assessment, certification and placement assistance for trainees.

This three months' training programme will start at New Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata. DB Tech will identify, train and provide potential livelihood options for 960 marginalized youth from urban slums.

With Schneider Electric

An MoU has been drawn up by the DB Tech and Schneider Electric India Foundation (SEIF) to impart vocational training in Electrical sector to the underprivileged youth and to assist them in self and wage employment efforts in the same domain. Schneider Electric India Foundation is the social arm of Schneider Electric India (SEI), which is a subsidiary of Schneider Electric Industries SAS recognised as global specialist in energy management.



Funded by SEIF, this four months skill based training will impart technical skill in Electrical domain, basics of computer, spoken and written English, customer interactions training, soft skills and on-the-job training to school/college dropouts (18-25 years) from lower economic strata. In the first phase, seven centres will be set up in Purnea (Bihar), Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Jumaikela (Chhattisgarh), Chinchwad (Pune), Kolkata (West Bengal) and Shillong (Meghalaya). After completion of the training, successful trainees in the evaluation will be co-certified by SEIF and DB Tech.

With ASSOCHAM

DB Tech and the **ASSOCHAM** Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) entered into an MoU for best practicing and knowledge sharing in skill development training.

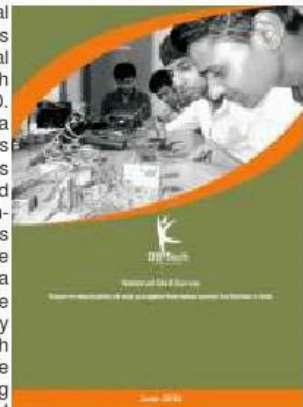


ASSOCHAM is India's premier apex chamber that covers a membership of over 2 lakh companies and professionals across the country.

The objective of this partnership is to build a repository of initiatives and best practices in the area of vocational training and skill development. Under this partnership, ASSOCHAM will help to develop the curriculum keeping in view the industry requirement for entry level opportunities, design competency based assessment standards for industry certification and arrange assignments, guest lectures, on-the-job training and placement support for the trainees of Bosco Academy for Skills and Employment (BASE) through its member firms and organisations.

National Youth Survey Released

After publishing four regional Youth Survey Reports, now it is time to release the National Youth Survey Report, which was published in June 2010. The National Report is a compilation of 66,966 samples collected from 31 centres across North-Central, East and North-East, South and South-West regions. The samples were collected from the places, which are located in a radius of 15 kms around the Don Bosco training centres. By adopting qualitative research techniques, the samples were analysed through assessing correlation amongst different variables, which were highlighted in the National Youth Survey Report. The report assesses the caste distribution, educational status, employment status, youth's willingness to migrate for employment, etc.



The report reveals that there are large numbers of unskilled and semiskilled rural youth, who require some kind of technical and soft skills to become employable. Based on the findings, DB Tech developed inclusion strategies for program implementation, mobilization, domain selection and placement. The survey enables DB Tech to address the larger goals for skilling youth of the country for employment.

Centre Inaugurations

Dimapur: The second batch of BASE project was formally inaugurated at Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre (3rd Mile, Dimapur) on November 24, 2010. The function was graced by Visasolie Lhoungu (Project Director, DRDA, Dimapur) as the Chief Guest. 93 trainees with their parents attended the inaugural function. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Guest urged the trainees to cultivate the culture of hard work, dedication and sincerity at all costs to achieve the glory of 'financial independent'.



After the Inaugural function, there was a discussion hour with the parents and the state team of DB Tech to share their concerns and opinions about the project. One of the participants shared that BASE provides appropriate training for the dropout students from lower economic pyramid, who cannot continue their further studies. These youngsters have already experienced how difficult it is to earn money in this society and how to take up challenges in life. Now this training program will help them to earn a livelihood through technical and life skills offered by BASE.

Golaghat: The second batch for Bosco Academy for Skills and Employment (BASE) project, funded by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) was inaugurated in Don Bosco (Golaghat) on December 13, 2010. Sri J. N. Satrudar (Executive Engineer-National Highway, Golaghat Division) graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Mr Arun Kumar Kharia (Retired Lecturer, D. R. College, Golaghat) and Achyut Gogoi (Junior Engineer-National Highway, Golaghat Division) were the Guests of Honour. Fr. Rajesh Lakra sdb (Rector) presided over the function. 98 students with their parents and community members attended the inaugural function.



While addressing the trainees, the Chief Guest encouraged them to make use of the three months' training program, which enables them to enter into the main stream of the society. He also extends his support for exposure visits and on-the-job training of the trainees at the sites of government projects.

Training Programmes

Project Cycle Management Training

Bangalore: BREADS and DB Tech organized a two-day training programme for the principals of Don Bosco Technical Institutions on July 26-27, 2010. The training was organized on Project Cycle Management (PCM) and Logical Framework Approach (LFA) at Don Bosco Provincial House (Bangalore). The workshop was facilitated by Fr. Arul Maran sdb from Don Bosco (Trichy), who is a renowned trainer in PCM and Community Development.



The aim of the workshop was to equip the participants with the necessary ideas and tools to effectively manage the different

cycles of a development project. On the first day, the workshop focused on the concepts of Project Cycle Management, stakeholder analysis and problem analysis. Beside the concepts of PCM, the participants exchanged their ideas through group discussions, debates and presentations. The second day sessions were on the importance of objective analysis and preparation of logical framework, development of good indicators and monitoring and evaluation.

Life Skill Programme at Nitika

Kolkata: A three-day life skill training programme was organized by the DB Tech team for the students (Fitter and Carpentry) of DBTS at Nitika on September 6-9, 2010. 30 students participated in the training programme. The resource persons for the programme were Mr. Manoj Acharya (Instructor, DBTI, Park Circus), Mr. Samit Shekher Banerjee (Placement Officer, Anudip Foundation) and Fr. Saroj Mullick (Don Bosco, Nitika). Fr. George Maypen (Administrator, Don Bosco, Nitika) in his welcome address explained the importance of life skills in ones' life and how one can improve those skills in their day-to-day life.



The programme was designed to equip the youths with skills necessary for day-to-day living. Beside that various topics like, time management, leadership development, communication skills, and positive thinking were covered in the training programme. The programme was fully interactive with games, role plays, group work, presentations, video clippings, etc.

Life Skill Training for Trainers

Goa: 'Training of Trainers' in Life Skills was organized by the DB Tech (Goa) at the Don Bosco Provincial House (Odxel Goa) on August 30 - September 1, 2010. The programme was inaugurated by Fr. Ian Figueiredo (Provincial, INP), who highlighted the importance of the life skills to improve the quality of lives of the youth and help them to cope with the situations arising in their lives. 19 participants from the vocational and technical institutes, mobile schools and youth animators of Don Bosco (INP) attended the workshop, which was conducted by the Fr. Issac Arackaparambil (Director, Amrut Dara, Dakor). The three days programme focused on the methodology of presenting life skills programme for youth to strengthen personal competencies, such as communication, self-confidence, decision making, goal setting and healthy lifestyle.



The programme also emphasized on the role of the trainers, the various teaching techniques, strategies of using visual aids, team work and leading effective discussions. The participants were taken through sessions of preparing and presenting the modules given in the programme prepared by the G.E. Foundation. The highlight of the workshop was the practicum session in which the participants showed remarkable teamwork by presenting the life skills modules.

Orientation training for Construction students

New Delhi: A two days orientation program was organized for second batch students of Construction domain at DB Tech National Office (Delhi) on October 27-28, 2010. A group of 24 students from Jharkhand and Bihar, who were en-route to Bangalore to undergo training at the Sobha Academy (Bangalore), attended the training program. The orientation program was facilitated by the team from Learning & Development department of DB Tech. The main objectives of the orientation program were to create awareness amongst the students about the training, to clarify the doubts & fears related to new environment and to motivate and encourage them to understand various dynamics of the workplace.



Various activities and exercises were introduced to them during the sessions, which helped them bond together and work as a team. The orientation program helped the students to open up and interact with others. The students cleared their doubts, got focused and were ready to take on any eventualities that might come on their way and make the best in life.

Valedictory Functions

Borivali: A valedictory function was organized at Don Bosco Technical Institute (Borivali) on November 1, 2010. Over 120 students from Sankalp and BASE project, who completed their three months skill training in Hotel Management, Welding and Automobile, were present at the function. The dignitaries present at the valedictory function included Mr. H. N. Shrinivas (Sr. Vice President-HR, Taj Group), Mr. Pankaj Sampat (General Manager, Taj President), Mr. Durga Maruwada (Sr. Operational Manager, Accenture), Mr. Malay J Sheth (Manger, Accenture), Mr. Marshal Dias (Manager-HR, Taj President), Ms. Merlyn Pereira (Manager-Corporate Sustainability, Taj Group), Fr. Anthony Santarita (Director, Bosco Boys Home) and Fr. Bastin Thomas (Administrator, Bosco Boys Home).

The program formally inaugurated with lighting the lamp by the distinguished Guests. After the inauguration, Fr. Anthony Santarita briefed about the project Sankalp and MoRD to the dignitaries and students. He also shared his happiness for successfully completion of the batches of both the projects. He wished for success of all the students for their future endeavor. He also thanked the Accenture and Taj Group of Hotels for their valuable support to execute the program. All the guests were also motivated the students with their inspirational speeches. Both the partners also assured their full support towards training and placement of the students.



The program then concluded with the distribution of the certificates to the students, who are graduated from the Institute and vote of thanks by Mr. Dayanad Patil.

Beyond BASE

AIDS awareness workshops at BASE

Kokar and Hatia: An AIDS awareness workshop was conducted at BASE centres in Kokar and Hatia on the occasion of AIDS Day (1st December). Br. Jacob (Director, Pratyasha) invited as Chief Guest and resource person for the awareness program. He visited both BASE centres and delivered the lecture on HIV/AIDS. 127 students attended the lecture at Kokar center; and 87 students attended the lecture at Hatia Center in presence of all the team members.



The two-hour workshop began with a short introduction about the reason of the gathering. Br. Jacob briefed about HIV, AIDS, how AIDS affected, the symptoms of AIDS, how to prevent from AIDS, significance of Red Ribbon and NACO. During the lecture, he shows photographs of AIDS symptoms and also conducted a question answer session to give an clear understanding about the deadly disease. The lecture ends with the best wishes to the students and to the DB Tech family. Regarding the workshop, Br. Jacob shared, "I had the great pleasure to come to DB Tech to give lecture to the youth. They were very energetic and attentive to the lecture. I wish them a great success."

Exposure Visits

Kokar (Ranchi): The centre team of BASE located at Kokar (Ranchi) arranged a field visit for the trainees of Welding trade on December 6, 2010. 20 trainees participated in the field visit to CPC Equipments (Tupudana). Mr. Anoop Sarkar (Manager, CPC



Equipments) assisted the trainees to understand the Welding techniques by demonstrating the operations of the machines. The trainees spoke to the employees of CPC to know more about the functions of machineries.

According to trainees, this field visit is really a great experience to know-how the real work culture in the Welding sector. Some students said that they would definitely like to visit such companies again so that they can learn more about these machines.

Induction Programmes

Guwahati: The five days' induction programme for the new trainers of BASE programme was conducted in Guwahati on September 6-10, 2010. 20 trainers from East and North-East region attended the induction programme. This programme was organized to introduce the process of BASE programme. The inductees were comprehensively briefed on life skills training and various elements of the BASE process (right from mobilization to



placement). Besides that the resource persons from L&D department highlighted on facilitation skills, adult learning methodology and life skills. The sessions were packed with various activities like role plays, games, group discussions, story sharing, etc., which brought out the best in the participants.

Bangalore: The Induction training programme was organised for the new trainers of BASE projects (MoRD, Schneider Electrical and Accenture-ITC) at Don Bosco Provincial House (Bangalore) on September 18, 2010. 30 trainers from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Kolkata and Odisha participated in the five days' training programme. Mr. Stanley Jones (Sr. Manager, L&D - DB Tech) was the resource person for the training programme.



Fr Joy Nedumparambil, (Regional Coordinator, DB Tech-South) welcomed the gathering and explained about BASE project, which is being implemented successfully across India. Fr. Joseph Elavanal (Executive Director, BREADS) in his speech, enlightened about the life of Don Bosco, the Vision and Mission of the Salesian Congregation to the participants. Fr. Jude Anand sdb,

(Coordinator, Groups and Movements - South Asia) spoke about preventive system of education. After two days training on the BASE process, the trainers for Accenture-ITC & Schneider had three days of domain specific training at their respective companies.

New Delhi: The induction program was conducted for new trainers at the DB Tech National Office (Delhi) on November 8-12, 2010. The trainers participated in the induction mainly from the three newly initiated centres at Fatwa, Muzzafarpur and Jahanabad in Bihar. Altogether, 30 trainers and centres-in-charge attended the induction training program. The program was facilitated by the team from Learning & Development (DB Tech). Rev. Fr. Raju Philip (Assistant Director, DB Tech) welcomed the group and introduced to them the society of Don Bosco and called upon them to work earnestly in bringing about a change in the society through the little initiatives that they can take up.



The orientation program helped the participants to understand the vision, mission and objectives of DB Tech and helped them focused towards achieving the goal of the organization. Since many participants were working in the development sector for the first time, especially with youths from the marginalized section of the society, the resource persons oriented the participants on how to deal and interact with the youth from lower economic strata and get the best out of these youngsters. The trainers had a good time for interacting amongst themselves and bonded very well which would help them to work as a team once they go back to their respective centres.

Kolkata: An induction program was organized at Nitika Don Bosco for the newly appointed trainers for West Bengal and North East centres. All together 23 participants attended the orientation program. The training started with welcome speech by Fr. Sibby (Principal). Fr. M. C. Jose (Provincial Economist) introduced the 'Society of Don Bosco' to the group and shared the mission of Don Bosco.



The objectives of induction program are to introduce the organization's vision, mission and objectives; acquaint the trainers about the BASE project and its process; facilitate the trainers on life skills and soft skills and bring about a better understanding of the curriculum followed in DB Tech. The participants were taken to an in-depth approach of the BASE program focusing on the pre-implementation, implementation and post-implementation stages of the model. The approaches were supplemented with activities and role plays, which helped them to understand the whole process in a better way.

Refresher training program for trainers

Five refresher training programs were organized for the trainers, who have completed the first batch of BASE training. These refresher training programs were facilitated by Mr. Piyush Singhal (Carte Blanche Solutions) and Learning & Development department (DB Tech). Mr. Piyush is an IIM-Ahmedabad graduate and having rich experience of handling training programs for senior levels in various organisations. The objectives of the refresher training program are to identify the challenges faced in carrying out the BASE process and to reinforce the life skills, interpersonal skills, soft skills for optimum team synergy.

The refresher training was full of activities like FIRO-B Test, Lost at Sea, Prisoner's Dilemma, etc. FIRO-B Test explains the importance of interpersonal relationship within a small group. The activity is based on the belief that when people get together in a group, then affection, control and inclusion are three main interpersonal needs obtained in a small group. In 'Lost at Sea' activity, every participant rates his choices of importance and then negotiates within the groups, which ultimately determine how a team works at the times of crisis. Whereas the Bidding game helped them built their self-confidence and repose faith in their team members. This exercise is necessary as they work in a team and need to understand each other's strength and weakness to achieve the common goal. In between the activities, motivational movies and movies on crisis management were shown to the participants and discussions were taken up. The role plays on the placement process helped them identify their weakness and strengths and the corrective measures they can adopt in the next batch. The activity on delegation of responsibilities was also conducted, which helps the participants to share the responsibilities and work as a team.

New Delhi: The refresher training program was organised at DB Tech National Office (Najafgarh, New Delhi) for the trainers of North-Central region on October 13–16, 2010. 35 trainers from



Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar participated the training programme.

Kochin: The second refresher training program was organised at Don BoscoTech (Vaduthala) for the trainers from Kerala on October 26–29, 2010. 21 trainers from Vaduthala, Alappuzha, Mala, Sulthan Bathery, Trivandrum and Aluva participated in the training programme.

Kolkata: The third refresher training program was organised at Nitika Don Bosco (Kolkata) for the trainers from West Bengal on



November 10–13, 2010. 39 trainers from Nitika, Park Circus, Krishnanagar, Berhampore, Azimganj and Siliguri participated in the training programme.

Bangalore: The fourth refresher training program was organised at Don Bosco Provincial House (Bangalore) for the trainers from south



west region on November 14–17, 2010. 42 trainers from Ashalaya, Badravati, Belgaum, Bidar, Chitradurga, Davangere, Hassan, Hospet, Hubli and Mysore participated in the training programme.

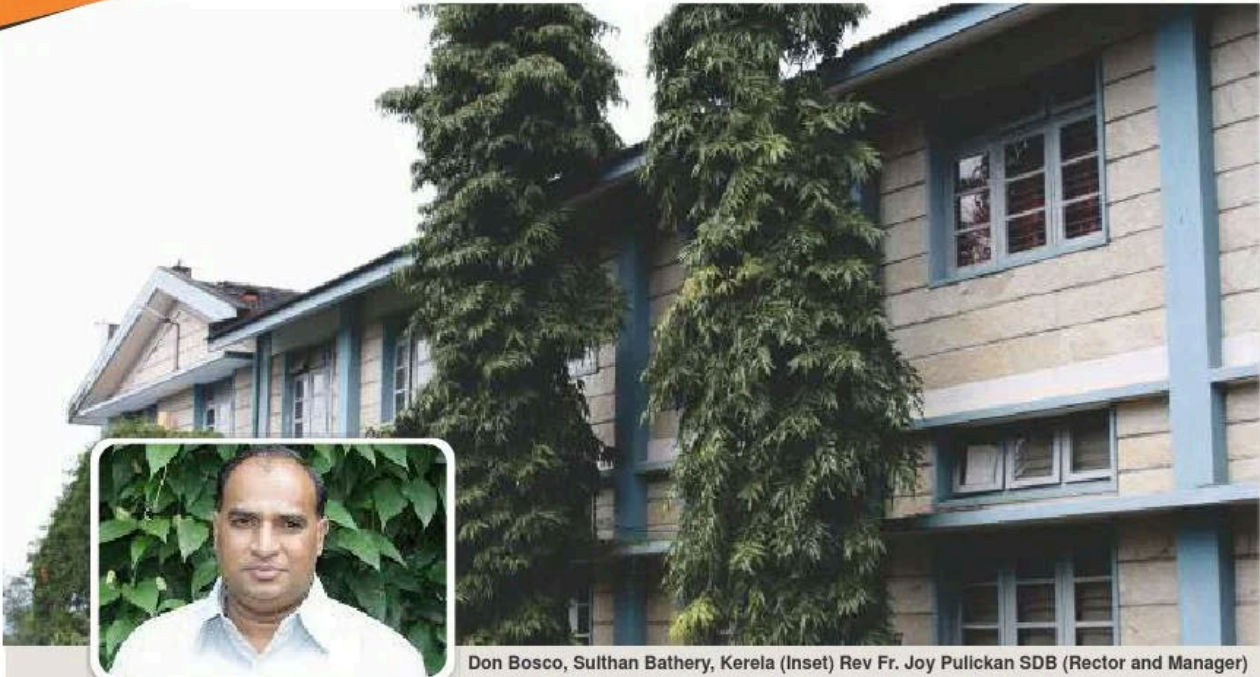
Guwahati: The fifth refresher training program was organised at Bosco Reachout (Guwahati) for the trainers from North-East on December 19–21, 2010. The training program was facilitated by a team from Learning and Development department of DB Tech. 23



trainers from Maligaon, Kharghuli, Umran, Shillong, Dimapur, Golaghat, Kohima and Aida participated in the training programme.

Feature

Centre in Focus: Don Bosco, Sulthan Bathery (Kerala)



Don Bosco, Sulthan Bathery, Kerala (Inset) Rev Fr. Joy Pulickan SDB (Rector and Manager)

When the motto is to Dare and Soar, when they intent to fly as kites – fly highest not with the wind but against the wind – then certainly there is nothing to stop them to get the glory of self-reliant. May be an ordinary in their life style but always ready to accept the challenges to become extraordinary. Everyone strives to become extraordinary in some way in the Don Bosco (Sulthan Bathery). Located at the top of the green paradise, it is indeed an enchanting centre with varied and colorful flora and fauna. Clean and pristine, charming and hypnotizing, the small town Sulthan Bathery belongs to backward district Wayanad of Kerala. According to Rev Fr. Joy Pulickan SDB (Rector and Manager, Don Bosco, Bathery), "Wayanad is supposed to be the financial capital of Asia because of the cultivation of costly spices like pepper, cardamom, turmeric, ginger, etc. Somehow in the recent past, people are opted to refrain from agriculture because of low production and various other reasons. To meet the household needs, the farmers compel to migrate to other places and in some cases, choose to end their lives by committing suicide." There were always efforts from different spheres to make the youth of this region a responsible citizen, who appreciate whatever is good and noble in the multi-cultural aspects of their life. In 2004, the Diocese of Kottayam sent an invitation to the Salesians to work for the intellectual, cultural, social and physical formation of the youth through technical training. Putting the Salesians' mandate more clearly, Fr. Joy says, "Instead of giving one bag of rice that will last for one month, our congregation thought of opting for the life, which means train a person from the family so that he in turns through his hard work and the training received from the institute can support the family." The Salesian Society started the technical school on a non-formal basis in five trades, i.e. Computer Application, Motor Mechanics, Electricals, Electronics and Welding.

In September 2001, the Don Bosco Technical Institute obtained accreditation to conduct 'O' level computer education under DOEACC. Afterwards this institution has become an official study centre (Off-Campus) of the Mahatma Gandhi University and

conducts courses like BCA, MCA, MSc, MBA, etc. To respond to the same need of youth, the Society established Don Bosco College to run full time courses affiliated to Calicut University in 2005. The college offers B.Com, Computer Science and Travel & Tourism courses to youth irrespective of their financial condition. "We look for the youth from poorest section of society. No child will be left out from quality education because of financial problems. In this regard, those who cannot afford this nominal fees, the organization is giving fee concessions to those students," says Fr. Joy. "If we found that any student is not able to pay the fees, then we are collecting a token amount of Rs 500 from the student and same amount of money is given by the institution. The total amount is deposited in the post office. Whenever the student will be graduated from the college, the passbook will be handed over to the students, so that they can use this small amount for any noble cause," he adds.

Not only for the youth, the Salesians have been making efforts to mainstream the tribal children to formal education. Unavailability of school in the vicinity of tribal pockets refrained the children from the education. The schools are located at Bathery, but the tribal children are very reluctant to travel such a long distance for schooling. To resolve this issue, Don Bosco provides transportation facility to the children from tribal pockets. In addition to that, Don Bosco also provides books and stationery to the needy children so that they will not discontinue their studies due to financial constraints. Everyday morning Don Bosco college bus packed with school children leaves the campus. All the children at that locality will gather at the campus around 8:30 am. The Don Bosco college bus will pick them up to the school. The activities like gathering the children, ensuring the attendance of every child and accompanying them from their locality to the college campus are completely handled by the youth from Don Bosco College. Besides that Sulthan Bathery centre has lots more community level initiatives which earn the trust of the local community.

Building a worthwhile future

An Interview with Fr. Antree Kannampuzha SDB (Principal, DBTI, Sulthan Bathery).

Having an intense involvement towards youngsters, he always wants to work for youth being with them. He neither knew anything about Don Bosco nor attended any gathering, but his ardor towards the youngsters magnetizes him to join the congregation. He has the passion in his heart to work for the youth that ignites to devote his whole life for the needy youth who could not afford to have quality upbringing due to any socio-economic issues. Fr. Antree Kannampuzha is not only well known in the Sulthan Bathery for his generosity towards the youth-at-risk but also well known at the national level as an International Institute of Welding (IIW) certified trainer and examiner. DB Tech News team got an opportunity to interview Fr. Antree about his experience in various programmes at Sulthan Bathery centre.



DBTN: What motivated you to involve with this Society, and where do you aim to take this centre?

Fr. Antree: My love for youngsters and their adventurous life filled with full of activities have influenced my choice. I firmly believe that this is a gift from God, which inspires me at every moment to enthuse the youth for a meaningful life. I want to establish this centre as a fountain of life for youngsters.

DBTN: When was the Institute founded? Is there any specific reason to choose this location 'Sulthan Bathery' in Kerala?

Fr. Antree: Don Bosco Technical Institute at Sulthan Bathery was founded by in 1996. It has different stages of growth; I mean, some enhancements at different levels are still on. The institute was set up after receiving an invitation from the Kottayam Diocese. At the same time, the mission of our congregation is to serve the youth, especially the abandoned. We accepted the invitation because our survey shows that majority of tribal population are marginalised and poor in this region. It was also found that a technical institute at this locality would meet the needs of unemployment. Wayanad being a backward region of the state, a technical school could help the school dropouts, *adivasis* and other poor people to earn their living through learning a skill.

DBTN: What are the courses offered by the Technical Institute?

Fr. Antree: We are offering a variety of technical courses to the youngsters of Wayanad district to make them employable. With accreditation from National School of Open Schooling (NIOS), we



are providing technical courses in Automobile Mechanics, Welding Technology, Electrical Technician, Secretarial Practice and Certificate in Computer Application. With affiliation from Indian Institute of Welding (IIW), we are offering International Diploma Courses in Welding and Advance Welding.

DBTN: At what point, then, did you decide to found a college for youth?

Fr. Antree: There was never a specific plan to start a college at the beginning. It was the result of a project proposed by community leaders in Sulthan Bathery. At that time, there were only three colleges in Wayanad district. In those days, Calicut University was inviting applications for new affiliations. We thought it would be good for the youth to have a college in this town, which would regulate the migration of students to other states. That was the intention behind establishing Don Bosco college here.

We are offering a variety of regular and off-campus professional courses with affiliation from Calicut University and M.G. University.



Besides that we are providing need based training in career guidance, personality development, etc for holistic development of students.

DBTN: Being a very short duration skill based training programme, when BASE programme was launched, what was the first question striking to your mind about the success of the programme?

Fr. Antree: We have been offering various courses of short durations. Hence, launching of MoRD programme of short in nature did not affect us much. We had the prior experience of training programs having duration of 30 days, 90 days, 6 months and one year. Consequently we did not feel any difficulty with regard to this 90 days training programme.

DBTN: Most of the students for BASE programme are from tribal communities and have hardly completed their schooling. Are you confident enough that the training imparted to them is sufficient to meet the demands of the industry?

Fr. Antree: We get good number of youngsters from tribal groups for this programme. In Kerala, we cannot simply say that all the youth from tribal community are illiterate or non-school goers. Discontinuity and lack of motivation are their problems. Moreover, some political leaders are making deliberate attempts to keep them underdeveloped. I am confident that the training that we impart is enough for the situation, provided the trainees must stick to the schedules and programmes.



DBTN: Are you planning to offer any course in service sectors like Hospitality, Sales and Marketing, Housekeeping, etc in the forthcoming batch?

Fr. Antree: When you think about the locality 'Sulthan Bathery', you rarely find any opportunity in the service sector. Secondly, my intention is to create an optimum use of the resources that we are having in our centre. Having many courses, especially in these short duration programmes may affect the quality of the training, placement etc. But whenever we feel any course related to service sector is appropriate for this remote locality, then we will be happy to offer that to these needy youth.

DBTN: Most the courses offered by DB Tech (Sulthan Bathery) are imparting technical knowhow to boys. Do you have any specific courses for girls in the next batch?

Fr. Antree: The courses like computer application and secretarial practice of Don Bosco Technical Institution are mainly designed for girls. Today many firms require girls of these jobs. As far as DB Tech is concerned, in the second batch, we are also promoting girls for Automobile and Electrical trades. These days you will find many stores and outlets of big companies need manpower, who are having multi-facet knowledge and can work efficiently. For example, in an authorised automobile workshop, a girl who has

studied the automobile trade can function at multi levels; such as receptionist, customer care, store keeper, ordering items, maintain specific spare accounts etc. That means youth (particularly girls) with sufficient technical knowledge and soft skills will smoothen the functioning of these sectors. In the forthcoming batch, we will mobilize girls for these technical trades.

DBTN: You have vast experience in this sector. Is there anything you found which we need to change in our approach / any improvements that we need to make in this programme?



Fr. Antree: We need to make our programmes strictly hour based. When we have too many things which need to be accomplished in these 90 days, we should become more strict towards the time that we are spending with youth and vice versa, so that every minute change that we expect in them can be flourished in this stipulated time. If you allow me, then I want to make it a complete residential programme, where every student and trainer have to follow each and every activity related to technical skills or soft skills as the way as it is needed.

DBTN: What is the best moment which you really cherished?

Fr. Antree: My students come up in life through their hard efforts and the practice of our instructions to become responsible citizens. The most cherishing moment is when they start their own enterprises or get a well paid jobs in India / abroad and return to the institute with their parents having a big smile on their faces to share their achievements. I think that is the most cherishing moment for a priest like me.

DBTN: Any message to those alumni who have completed the course from DB Tech?

Fr. Antree: Live well what you have learned from Don Bosco.



Rising Star: Anoop TT

For Anoop TT, the BASE project funded by MoRD was like a ray of hope – a true life saver! Having failed 10th examination, this 18 year old had lost all hope of studying further and getting a job. Anoop hails from a small family in Mananthavady Taluk, Sulthan Bathery, Kerala. His father is a farmer who cultivates banana and has a small plot of land. His meagre income of Rs 1000 per month is insufficient to meet the household needs.

Financial difficulty coupled with his academic failure were making him depressed. After failing in five subjects in 10th standard, he dropped out from the school. Sitting at home and being clueless about what to do next, that is when his friend told him about the course offered by DB Tech. His father suggested him to give it a try. Then both visited the DB Tech centre located at Sulthan Bathery.

Based on his academic background, skills and interest, he was advised by the trainers to join the Automobile course. Expressing his gratitude he says, "I am thankful to Fr. Antree and DB Tech for the training that I received here. Only wish if the course was for a longer duration. Having no idea about Automobile, this course was as eye opener for me. It helped me to learn a great deal about Automobiles. Now I am eager to do a one year Automobile course. Though I was weak at studies but my teachers were very supportive."

About his studies, English teacher Vinaya Joseph shared, "I am glad that Anoop has been placed. When he joined the course, I had to start from A, B, C, D... right from the scratch. Academically he is weak but thankfully, you don't require English to be a good mechanic. If you know English, then that is an added advantage. Not knowing it should never be taken as a barrier. An interesting incident is that in his monthly assessment, not knowing what to write, he copied the questions on to the answer sheet." She says, "He left no room to give a big 'O'. But I am glad that he cleared his life's examination after having bagged a job that fetches monthly salary Rs 3000 with free lodging, boarding and other allowances."

Having a lots of dreams, he says, "Once I receive my first salary, I would like to buy a mobile for my father, a saree for my mother and some months later, I will buy a bike for my younger brother to ride." Perceived to be the weakest in his class, today he is among the first few students from Sulthan Bathery who have been placed successfully. For his father, Thankachan, it was like a dream come true to see his son employed in Maruti Authorized Service Station at Sulthan Bathery. He says, "Don Bosco has given a new direction to my child's life."

When asked about his ambition in life, Anoop says, "I would like to own a BMW." He laughs and says, "Even if I may not be able to achieve it, but there is no harm in dreaming big." For Anoop, these three months course have changed his life – igniting a spark to live and a spark to give back to the society."

Wanna be a
BMWer



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