



Cover Story

New lease of life for Kashmiri youth

Efforts by the like-minded organisations to train and build up skilled manpower which will engage the Kashmiri youth for a constructive development at their personal and national level at large.

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Published by
Fr. A. M. Joseph sdb on behalf of DB Tech
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Message from Executive Director



Don Bosco with us

Dear Friends,

The practice of venerating and praying at the mortal remains of some great souls has a long history, dating back to ancient times.

The sacred remains of St. John Bosco started its 130 country pilgrimage from Valdocco (Turin) on January 31, 2009. The relic arrived in Imphal (India) on April 29, 2011 and will visit all ten Indian Salesian provinces till November 30, 2011. The pilgrimage is also a preparation for Don Bosco's 200th birth anniversary, on August 16, 2015.

The mortal remains of St. John Bosco (the right hand) is placed in the waxed body of the saint. The mortal remains of Don Bosco reminds us the purity of his life and the sacred principles that guided his work.

As a poor peasant boy, Don Bosco dreamed big and toiled hard to convert his dream into reality. As he had no means to buy books to study, he borrowed books to read and gain knowledge. He productively used his time for study, while tending the sheep in the field. To meet the expenses for his studies, he worked as a tailor, store keeper, cobbler and table boy. When he became a priest, he took up the challenge to look after and care for thousands of youth, who were migrating to Turin and other cities of Europe in search of a job and livelihood. He was the man, who toiled day and night. He begged and borrowed money in order to take care of thousands of poor youth. His love and dedication for youth made him so popular and he was called 'the friend of youth'.

DB Tech is carrying out the very same mission that he started. It is a great moment of joy for all of us to get closer to this great Saint, to touch him, feel him and breathe his spirit. He has so much to tell us.

Don Bosco used his hands to bless all, who came to him, wrote so many wonderful things, trained thousands to earn a livelihood. The hand that loved and cared for millions, is coming to bless us.

May Don Bosco rejuvenate us with motivation, zeal and inspiration to make our lives meaningful with the sacredness of purpose!

Fr. Aikarchalil Joseph

Cover Story



New lease of life for Kashmiri youth

Bullets, mobs, soldiers, terrorists, bombs – these words and scenes are always very closely associated with Kashmir valley. On the other hand, these words are also somehow directly or indirectly linked with the youth of the valley. Every other day, either there is a *bandh* by separatists or a curfew by the government. During the period of unrest, every Kashmiri is apprehensive as to what the day has in store for them. Everyone wants peace, normalcy, conducive environment for study, calm workplace atmosphere, etc.

There are always efforts by the Government to train and build up locally groomed expertise and skilled manpower, which will engage the Kashmiri youth for a constructive development at their personal and national level. Government of India recently rolled out a job plan for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), envisaging training of 100,000 youth to get jobs in the next five years. This engagement with the local youth has drawn the aspirations of Kashmiri youngsters to join the national mainstream. The highlights of this initiative are skill development, direct employment initiatives, improving skill sets through access to placement-linked, market-driven skill training to youth of J&K. Besides Government, corporate houses also have come forward to enhance the skills of youth, which would improve their employability.

As one of the largest program implementation partner, Don Bosco Tech in partnership with Ministry of Rural Development (Government of India) has initiated the BASE program to impart skills to youth so that they could be employed in the growing manufacturing and service sectors. DB Tech launched the program at Pulwama (Jammu & Kashmir) on April 9, 2011. Shri T. Vijayakumar, IAS (Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India) was invited as Chief Guest to inaugurate the first centre of this public-private partnership. Kashmiri youngsters like Rayees Rouf Qureshi, who dropped out from college to support his

family, will be benefitted from this program. Rayee's father was working as daily labourer in a handicraft industry with a meager wage. It was really a tough time for the family, when he suffered from Anemia and doctor advised him to have complete rest. At that moment Rayees opted to dropout from college for an entry level opportunity, which is very difficult for him due to lack of minimum skills. Not only Rayees, But many youth in the Kashmir valley also need an opportunity, where they can hone their skills to become employable.

Addressing the trainees, Shri Vijayakumar said, "Never thought to begin this initiative from Pulwama. It is really commendable for the response from the youngsters of this district. To provide these youth a new lease of life, DB Tech not only imparts quality skill training, but provides entry level opportunities to the trainees, who have successfully completed this three months' training. Before establishing a centre, DB Tech conducted a survey related to placement in various sectors. Based on those inputs, curricula for different domains are designed." In this short term vocational courses, the trainees are given technical inputs prepared in consultation with industry experts and professionals. The curriculum, which is constantly upgraded and improved in tune with actual industry requirements, includes exposure trips, guest lectures and assignments. Valuable life skills are also taught through an interactive teaching process. DB Tech assists individual trainees with a view to impacting the larger community around them, in the form of increased local area spend, improved education levels, reduced gender inequality and lower crime levels. In a larger sense, DB Tech gives the youth a sense of direction in their lives, and creates role models for other underprivileged youth. This empowerment and the subsequent employment generated from this exercise will definitely go a long way in stabilizing the youth of the valley and providing them opportunities to lead a fulfilled life.

Shilpangon 2011: Exclusive career fair for DB Techies

Shilpangon 2011 - a job fair organized by Don Bosco Tech (Kolkata) for formal and non-formal students at DBS (Park Circus) on May 20, 2011. This is the first of its kind expo, where prospective students from DB Tech meet, interact and interview with several top employers under one roof. This job fair was planned in two-tier format, where the first half consisted of inauguration and conducting symposium on the topic 'Bridging Gaps' and the second part involved recruitment and interview sessions for the aspirants. Mr. R. J. Amalan (Regional Director, RDAT, Eastern Region, Govt of India) was invited as Chief Guest for the symposium. Other dignitaries present at the function included Mr. Sankar Goswami (Regional Head-East, Siemens), Fr. A. M. Joseph, sdb (Executive Director, DB Tech), Fr. E. A. Thomas, sdb (Provincial, Don Bosco, Kolkata), Fr. Jose Podimattam, sdb (Technical Head, Don Bosco, Kolkata) and Fr. Siby Vadakel, sdb (Rector and Principal, Don Bosco School, Park Circus).

Fr. Siby Vadakel welcomed all the dignitaries, organizers and students to the fair. The welcome address was followed by lighting of ceremonial lamp, which signified illuminating all present for Shilpangon 2011 to a path enriched with knowledge, truth, hard work and commitment. A short motion picture 'Shaping Nation Builders' was featured to give a glimpse of Don Bosco Technical Institutions and the skills provided at institutes in West Bengal. Addressing the participants of Shilpangon, Chief Guest, Mr. Amalan briefed about Government's plan for empowering youth to bridge industry's skill gap. He spoke about the challenges in skill development in India like skill recognition, social angle, skill mobility, apt deployment, private partnership, certification, etc. Briefing the gathering about DB Tech's role in 'Bridging the skill gap', Fr. A. M. Jose outlined BASE project that spreads across twenty five states across India with an objective to train one lakh BPL youth by 2012. He also highlighted the value based training provided by DB Tech through which right attitude can be instilled among the students at their psychological, emotional and social levels.



Addressing the gathering, Mr. Sankar Goswami shared the partnership with Don Bosco which helps Siemens to recruit right candidates. Fr. M. C. Jose inspired the youth with the simple life of St. Bosco and his mission to empower the youth, especially the poor. The symposium concluded with a vote of thanks by Fr. Jose Podimattam. He expressed his gratitude to the core team, sponsors and supporters (like Sachi, Kingfisher, Sana Beach, Tata Steels, Munna Maharaj), Past Pupils of Don Bosco, designers, companies attending the job fair, students and dedicated staff.

21 companies (8 companies from mechanical domains, 10 companies from Hospitality domain and 3 business houses) attended the job fair to recruit quality candidates for their organizations. A total of 1069 candidates from various Don Bosco Technical Institutes attended the recruitment and interview sessions. Out of which 150 candidates were absorbed on-the-spot by different companies. This initiative was appreciated by the Heads of the Don Bosco institutions and corporate houses. Shilpangon brings together job seekers and employers thereby linking demand and supply of manpower and bridging the gap across industries.



DB Tech cements new partnerships**Sustainable Construction Academy with Tata Housing**

Don Bosco Tech has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tata Housing for providing training and enhancing employment opportunities for underprivileged youth from adjoining areas of its project sites. Tata Housing is one of India's leading real estate developers and a subsidiary of TATA Sons Limited. It is focused on developing and transforming real estate in India since 2006.



As one of the largest companies in the construction arena, Tata Housing extended its support to impart functional vocational training in Electrical, Plumbing and Construction Operations to youth from the weaker sections of the society. The partnership will impart skill training to 270 youth from low income backgrounds in three centres located at Vashind (Kalyan, Maharashtra), Talegaon (Pune, Maharashtra) and Banshankari (Bengaluru, Karnataka) within one year.

Retail Academy with Accenture

In partnership with Accenture, Don Bosco Tech (DB Tech) has been providing demand-driven skills training in Hospitality trade and livelihood options to 2500 marginalized urban youth since 2009. After successfully testing and implementing the project in Hospitality domain, Accenture is venturing into replicating the project to other domains. Under this new partnership with Accenture, Don Bosco Tech (DB Tech) will provide vocational training in Retail Skills to 1170 poor and marginalized youth.



Accenture, the global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, will be the funding partner for the project, whereas Quest Alliance will be the content partner who will support soft infrastructure, training of trainers, assessment and certification. The project envisages skills training in Retail – classroom model in 13 centres. Also a pilot of two centres is planned to test, correct and later replicate blended learning i.e. e-curriculum and trainer led learning together in equal proportions.

**With Schneider-Lead Training Partner, India**

A MoU has been drawn up by the DB Tech and Schneider Electric India Foundation (SEIF) to impart vocational training 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.

Under this partnership, Don Bosco will be the Lead Training Partner (LTP) of SIEF in the area of Skill Development to provide training to marginalized youths in electrical Sector and its related trades. As a LTP, Don Bosco will facilitate and help other training partners, identified by SEIF to setup the training infrastructure and equipment's with financial and technical aid from SEIF.

**'Way Forward' meeting with Technical Commissions**

To discuss the future plan of action, the 'Way Forward' meetings were organized with Provincials, Directors, Rectors and Heads of formal and non-formal technical institutions. The main focus of these meetings was to plan ahead for the skill development projects and to suggest new projects under DB Tech in ten Don Bosco provinces.



The DB Tech (Goa Province) organized the meeting for Rectors and Heads of formal and non-formal technical institutions at Don Bosco Provincial House (Odxel) on May 19, 2011. Briefing about the project, Fr. A. M. Jose (Executive Director, DB Tech) said, "We are in the right direction to achieve the goal of providing quality training to the youth. Since the inception of the BASE project, 15,000 youth had been trained in 105 centers around the country. Within a span of 15 months, the DB Tech has been evolved as a strong brand in skill development sector at the national level." The meeting concluded with the Provincial Fr. Ian Figueiredo addressing the participants. The Provincial lauded the efforts of the centers in the province for effectively conducting the BASE and DB Tech programs.

Similar 'Way Forward' meeting was arranged at Community Hall, Citadel (Kilpauk, Chennai) on June 24, 2011. 23 Principals of vocational training centres and Rectors participated to discuss the move forward and concrete ways to improve the skill training. Fr. A. M. Jose began the session with a brief introduction on the BASE project which was followed by a presentation on the various components of the project. Towards the end of presentation, he addressed certain queries from the participants to clarify their doubts with regard to the project implementation. He appreciated the performance of the DB Tech activities in Tamil Nadu. At the same time, he shared that there are lots of scope to start skill training centres in collaboration with government departments and corporate houses in province. To take forward the NSDC project at the province level, a core committee has been formed with four members consists of Rev. Fr. Jeffrey Gladstone, sdb, Rev. Fr. Lawrence Varaprasatham, sdb, Rev. Fr. Francis Xavier, sdb and Fr. Sathiaselvan, sdb.

Utkal Divas celebrated by BASE comrades

On the occasion of 75th foundation day of Odisha state, the centre team and trainees of BASE (Berhampur, Odisha) celebrated Utkal Divas on April 1, 2011. The state was in celebration mood with cultural events, rallies, campaigns in memory of 1936, when Odisha was carved out of Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh on linguistic basis. The day was poured with special offers and new vows. People offered flowers at the statues of great leaders who had fought for identity.

The members of DB Tech family were also in jubilant mood in the wake of the day. The trainers at DB Tech are always different from the conventional teachers, so they believe that the best brains sit at the back benches of the class room. It truly reflected when trainees come out with



creative activities at instant preparation. In the afternoon, half an hour was given to the trainees for preparation of any activity and another half an hour for performance. It was heartening to see without having any formal lessons of painting, trainees could draw the pictures of patriots and great leaders. It was also overwhelming to see that some trainees spoke up with all historical references of the key roles played by legends in attaining the state identity. 'I believe in myself' atmosphere at DB Tech disclosed another facet of the trainees. They shared their treasure of poetic talent.

Food Fiesta at DBTI (Borivali, Mumbai)

On May 3, 2011, the students of the Hotel Management Training Program supported by Accenture and ITC Welcomgroup had a wonderful day as they all participated in the Potpourri Day. The food fiesta was organised by Mr. Dayanand Patil (Coordinator, Hotel Management Program) at Bosco Boys Home (Borivali). It was a good time for the students to come together and also a time of fellowship. Every student had to prepare something to eat and bring to the institute not just for one person but more than one. The reason of organising feast is to show concern for each other. The entire lobby area of Bosco Boys Home was set by the students under the guidance of Mr. Sanjay Mehta and Mr. Sachin Pyati.



There were counters of non-vegetarian, vegetarian, *pani puri*, *ice gola*, dessert, and the bar counter with non-alcoholic drinks. Fr. Anthony Santarita along with Fr. Bastin Thomas, Br. Alex and Br. Sachin were invited to open the food counter. Addressing the participants, Fr. Anthony mentioned that it was a good idea to have an event like this and appreciated the hard work put in by the team.

Prizes were given away for the best performed students. For the first time, all the students with the staff had a wonderful time of sharing different cuisine prepared by the students. Truly everyone's pot was filled.

A workshop on Preventive System of education

One day training on Preventive System of Don Bosco was organized at AIDA for all DB Tech staff of Dimapur Province on June 11, 2011. Fr. Johnson (Executive Director, Bosco Reach Out, Guwahati) facilitated the programme. The sole objective of the programme was to familiarize the participants with the Salesian Educative System, popularly known as Preventive System. The participants were reminded that it is important for the BASE staff as part of Don Bosco team to know the Don Bosco system of education.



The resource person with his dynamism and vigour kept the participants on their toes throughout the programme. The facilitator started the session highlighting the importance of knowing Don Bosco to be effective in our work especially as we are working with BPL rural youth. Fr. Johnson explained the life history of Don Bosco and elaborated the dream of Don Bosco at the age of nine – "the dream of changing the world / a dream of making the world different" – through reason, religion and loving kindness. In the second half of the training, Fr. Johnson made the participants to reflect on the song, 'Show Me the Way' in groups and asked them to share the outcome of their reflection. At the end of the day, all expressed happiness for having attended the training. There was smile on the face of everyone for getting the opportunity to know a little more about Don Bosco. "The training has motivated us immensely and the interaction with a very resourceful facilitator was enriching. We look forward to such kind of training in the days to come," was the reaction of Mr. Andrew Gangmei (State Coordinator, DB Tech, Dimapur). The 25 participants left the training centre having learned something more about Don Bosco.

AASU appreciates Don Bosco for Skilling India

AASU (All Assam Students Union) paying homage to the Relic in the middle of the street in Uzan Bazar (Guwahati) signified the way that young people of Assam reciprocate the great love Don Bosco had towards youth. His relic was presented with wreath by the office bearers of the AASU. Leaders from various cells of the student union presented 'Pushpanjali' to honour the Relic of the great saint. Dr. Samujal Bhattacharjee (Special Advisor, AASU) spoke to people thanking the



Salesians of Don Bosco for its various activities towards the upliftment of youth through education, skilled training and employment oriented programmes. He thanked the Salesians for making the relic available to common people. He also mentioned that the life of Don Bosco was an inspiration for all the youth of Assam and his values are important and applicable today.

It is to be noted that the AASU is considered as the parent student organization in the entire Northeast India that spearheaded a political change in the state of Assam in the early 80s, and which continues to be active in calling for concrete action on behalf of the students and for progress and policy implementation.

Act of Charity by the BASE Students

We all know that when you receive something, you feel good. But when it comes to giving, really you need to have a strong desire to reach out to the needy, which is always not easy. Fr. Anthony Santarita (Director, Don Bosco Technical Institute) always says to the students of BASE program at Bosco Boys, "Charity always brings immense joy. Whatever you have received from the society, you should always give it back to the society by any means."



25 girls of the Hospitality domain visited 'Ashadeep - an orphanage' in the vicinity of Borivali (Mumbai) on June 03, 2011. The moment when they arrived at the orphanage, a group of children of age group 5-13 years welcomed the students with a big smile. Entertainment always plays major role in the lives of this group of 19 children, who are orphans and HIV infected. The entertainment started with the welcome itself when the children welcomed with a song "Tare Zamin Par". Then students asked the children to dance on the song "Do the Hokey Porkie". Apart from entertainment, they should be some learning. So the BASE students taught the children a song and obviously, the students chose Fr. Anthony's favourite 'When you are happy and you know clap your hands'. The students had purchased some gifts for these kids from their pocket money. Someone bought noodles, and others biscuits, juices, etc. They presented these gifts to those little stars who are sparkling in their little world. These multifaceted children wove bags, which were purchased by some of the trainees. The BASE trainees spent an hour and then it was time for all of them to return back to the institute. But it gave the students a day to remember for the good work that they did in their little means.

Assam Chief Minister visits DBI (Guwahati)

May 30, 2011 goes down as a red-letter day in the annals of Don Bosco Institute, Guwahati, India. This day saw the solemn welcome accorded by DBI to the sacred relics of St. John Bosco. The Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Tarun Gogoi, paid respects to the relic and spoke of the services done by the Don Bosco society to the people of North East. He specially appreciated the work of the Salesian society in providing job oriented courses and employment opportunities to the youth of Assam. He released 'The Hand' - a video documentary of the arrival of the Salesians in North East in 1922 and a presentation of its activities and services. The documentary is directed by Fr. Joseph Pulinthanath sdb

of the Guwahati province - a national film awardee. The Chief Minister also gave away the DBI awards to two students, who had successfully appeared for the class X exams this year from the village of Joypur. Ten others of the village will receive a similar award from DBI.



The other dignitaries - a good many of them Don Bosco past pupils, included Shri Prodyut Bordoloi, Minister (Govt. of Assam), the Vice-chancellor of the Guwahati University, Principal Secretaries to the govt. of Assam and various commissioners, as also eminent citizens and friends of the Institute - were present at the occasion. Many of them spoke of their experiences of being Salesian past pupils or of their association with the Don Bosco Society. Live coverage of the programme was telecast by TV channels and the print media covered the program in large numbers.

BASE trainees become Fire Fighters

Fire fighting equipment is mandatory in every residential building, so in every technical training institute. Everyone is so accustomed to see the red coloured fire extinguishers rusting away in some corner of our premises; perhaps the trainees gather some information regarding fire extinguishers in the initial stages of the training and then forget about it altogether. At Bosco Boys Home, approximately 240 students have been undergoing training in various trades such as Motor Mechanic, A/C Refrigeration, Electrician, and Hotel Management. Practically everyone was ignorant about the use of fire extinguishers particularly how to operate a fire extinguisher and what to do when there is a fire.



On May 30, Don Bosco Technical Training Institute organised a fire fighting demonstration in the campus. Mr. Dayanand Patil (Development Officer, Don Bosco Technical Institute) organised workshop to make aware of the function of fire extinguishers. He introduced Mr. Bruno Dmello (Officer, Agni Corporation) to the students and also shared the objectives of organising the workshop. Students of Accenture/ITC, MoRD, and Sankalp Project assembled on the ground. Then Mr. Bruno Dmello informed them about the types of fire and fire extinguishers. He took a cylinder in his hand and showed how to operate it demonstrating the right way to put the fire off. After a brief information about the equipments, to demonstrate the equipment in a better manner,

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intentionally fire was lit and the cylinder was handed over to a girl and a boy as per the weight of the cylinder and asked to put the fire off. In this workshop, the students not only learnt about the different kinds of extinguishers, their chemical compositions, etc but also learnt how to operate the extinguisher. The entire exercise was very interactive and practical in which the students participated whole heartedly.

Exposure Visits

Bhubaneswar: On April 05, a field visit was arranged for the trainees of Sales & Marketing domain of BASE (Kendrapada Centre). 20 trainees accompanied by Mr. Abhaya Kumar Panigrahi (Trainer – Sales & Marketing) and Mr. Jyoti Ranjan Matha (Trainer – Communicative English) visited N-Mart – a large retail store in unit-II market in Bhubaneswar.



The trainers briefed Dr. S. K. Tripathy (State Coordinator, N-Mart Retail) about the purpose of the exposure visit. Based on the objectives, he extended all possible support to the trainees for understanding the nitty-gritty of sales trade like display of products inside the showroom, customer relations, convincing skills, negotiating skills, etc. Exposure visits give the trainees experimental learning experiences and concrete skills about Sales & Marketing. It also gives them the chance to experience and witness things that they are only taught in the classroom.

KGF (Karnataka): A field visit to Coramandel Substation was organized for the Electrical trainees of BASE (KGF) on May 4, 2011. Ms. Hema (Assistant Engineer) extended her support to the students for better understanding of the trade. She explained about the incoming lines of 66KV, the SF-6 Breakers, transformers and its parts, the capacitor bank, lightening arrestors, outgoing feeders, VCB breakers and the distribution system. Based on the inputs, the trainees asked to draw single line diagram (SLD) of the substation, from which one will be able to read the entire distribution system of the substation. This industry visit not only gave them a chance to learn how to read the drawings and the symbols used in the drawing but also helped them to understand how the electrical power is stepped down and distributed to other areas through respective feeders. Besides that, the trainees also learnt about the meters used and how the readings and faults in the meter can be checked. She also explained about charging the breakers and the bus



coupler.

Later the trainees visited the winding section of the transformer, where they witnessed the winding of the transformer and the steps to be followed during the winding. They also saw the types and materials used for winding, the size and the type of wire used for primary and secondary winding of the transformer. They also learned the procedure of winding the transformer coil.

Davangere (Karnataka): As a part of DB Tech skill training, a daylong field visit was organized for the Sales and Marketing trainees of BASE (Davangere, Karnataka) on May 7, 2011. The trainees visited MORE supermarket (A retail chain of Aditya Birla Group) located at Davangere.



The trainees from Sales and Marketing domain visited different counters of the supermarket to experience the real workplace atmosphere. The MORE floor staff and the floor manager interacted with the students and explained them about stacking, billing, stocking record, etc. The trainees interacted with the staff and clarified the concepts that they have been taught in the classroom. The interaction with the staff helped them to understand the theory classes and its applicability. This field visit will help the students to apply the concepts to the existing atmosphere. The MORE staff and manager were very happy about the candidates and assured placement for the candidates.

HIV/AIDS Awareness Program

Hubli: To enhance student's knowledge and awareness about HIV/AIDS in order to prevent the spread of AIDS, a guest lecture was organized at DB Tech centre (Hubli) on April 25, 2011. Mr. Santosh Rahinj (Medico Social Worker, Community Medicine, S.D.M. Medical College, Sattur, Dharwad) was invited as the resource person for the lecture. On behalf of Don Bosco Tech, Ms Ashwini welcomed the resource person and introduced him to the students.



Starting the lecture about the deadly disease, Mr. Santosh briefed the students about the differentiation between curable and incurable diseases. Stressing upon incurable disease, he gave few examples of incurable diseases like HIV/AIDS, cancer, etc. He said, "The HIV virus is most commonly transmitted by having unprotected sex with a HIV

infected person, by using unsterilized syringes and scissors, by having a blood transfusion with blood from an infected donor or from an infected woman to her baby." Giving a brief history about the disease, he said, "The first HIV positive case was found in India, in the year 1986 at Chennai." The lecture was concluded with a question and answer session to clarify the doubts and queries raised by the students. Lastly he informed the students to create the awareness program at the locality to spread the message regarding HIV-AIDS.

Alappuza (Kerala): An AIDS awareness programme was organized at BASE Training Centre (Alappuza) on May 19, 2011. Mr. Thomson (Coordinator, National Rural Health Mission, Ambalappuzha) was invited as resource person for the program. In India, there is a serious stigma attached to those infected with HIV/AIDS, particularly among the youth from lower socio-economic strata. These youngsters have limited knowledge about HIV/AIDS and are not educated enough to understand the causes of AIDS and how it is transmitted. To improve HIV/AIDS awareness, education and care of HIV-infected patients, DB Tech incorporated a session in BASE activity planner to foster awareness of the disease and work to change attitudes and behavior towards those unfortunate enough to be infected.



Sharing some facts and figures related to the deadly disease, Mr. Thomson said, "In India, about 5 million people are affected by this disease. The main reasons for contracting AIDS are unprotected sex, infected blood transfusions, and transmission during pregnancy." He also highlighted that protected sex, blood test before transfusion and proper guidance to pregnant mothers is essential. Students felt free to ask their queries. The session was very informative for the trainees. Most of the students are grateful for changing their concepts, unraveling the various myths related to AIDS. They also pledged that they will work together to create awareness among the ordinary people regarding 'Facts and fictions of AIDS'.

Centre Inaugurations

Ashalaya (Bangalore): The third batch of BASE program was inaugurated at DB Tech (Ashalaya) on April 15, 2011. The dignitaries



present at the function included Mr. Sudhakar (Panchayat Development Officer, Kundana Panchayat), Mr. C. H. Manjunath (SDMC President, Channahalli), Mr. Moorthi (Zilla Panchayat Member, Bangalore Rural), Fr. Joy (Regional Coordinator, DB Tech-South), Sr. Sunitha (President, Katherine Kasper Social Service Society), Mr. D. Suresh (Reporter, Prajavani Newspaper), Sr. Michelin (Counselor, PHJC), Mr. Laxmipath Chikjala, Mr. B.N. Narasimhamoorthy and Mr. Subramani.

Speaking on the occasion, Fr. Joy shared the vision and mission of DB Tech. He promised a bright future for all who get trained at DB Tech training center. He also asked the trainees to develop the right motivation and attitude to take up a responsible career and urged the students for maximum utilization of the opportunities provided to them. Mr. Sudhakar appreciated the work done by DB Tech and Ashalaya. The students were given an insight about the free training and job placement. He asked the students to make use of the opportunity. Sr. Sunitha encouraged the students for better participation and working towards a self-dependent future.

Jharsuguda (Odisha): DB Tech stepped in to the industrial capital of Odisha, Jharsuguda on April 11, 2011 with a new BASE centre, in association with IOWVA Badyashree Foundation. Jharsuguda over the years has seen immense industrial growth with emergence of corporate giants like Vedanta, Bhushan, Reliance Energy and Aditya Birla thereby paving way for greater placement opportunity in the sector. To manoeuvre this opportunity, DB Tech along with IOWVA Bidyashree initiated a BASE centre in Jharsuguda.



Mr. Mahendra Kumar Mallik (Project Director, DRDA, Jharsuguda) inaugurated the centre along with Mr Abijit Pati (COO, Vedanta), Mr Sanjeev Pattnaik (Associate General Manager, CSR, Vedanta), Mr. Vergil Lakra (CSR, Vedanta) and Fr. Naresh (Director, Don Bosco Service Centre, Jharsuguda). Ms. Rashmita Tete (Secretary, IOWVA Bidyashree Foundation) welcomed all the distinguished guests, followed by which Fr. Naresh appraised the audience on Don Bosco and its philanthropic interventions. Ms. Srabani Halder (State Coordinator, DB Tech) appraised the dignitaries, trainees and parents about the project, its deliverables, entitlements of the students etc. Two alumni of Hospitality domain from Upaya centre placed with Sodexo (Jharsuguda) also shared their experiences and journey with DB Tech, and encouraged the rest to take this new beginning with utmost priority. A total of 146 students have registered in the centre in Electrical, Welding, Sales & Marketing and Hospitality.

Kapadvanj (Gujarat): On April 11, Bosco Academy for Skills and Employment (BASE) was launched at Kapadvanj. Dr. Samuel Macwan (Chief Medical Officer, Herbal Medicine, Kapadvanj) was invited as Chief Guest for the Inauguration function. The programme began with lighting the lamp by the guests, which was followed by welcome speech by Fr. Ivan D'Souza. He briefed the gathering about the life of Don Bosco and objectives of the congregation. Addressing the gathering, the representative from DRISTI, Mr Sanjay spoke on various activities conducted by his organisation. Chief Guest Dr. Macwan said,



"Government declares many programs for the development of BPL families but they are hardly benefitted from these initiatives. Thanks to organization like Don Bosco for implementing this program for rural BPL youth." Fr. Mayank thanked all for taking time out and making this programme success.

The Bosco Academy for Skills and Employment (Kapadvanj) offers courses on IT, Sales & Marketing and Communication Skills. The mobilization for the BASE program began in coordination with staffs from DB Tech and DRISTI on March 11, 2011. After the end of the mobilization, 62 students enrolled in different domains of this short-term skill based training program.

Vaduthala (Kerala): The third batch of BASE program commenced at Don Bosco Tech (Vaduthala) on April 11, 2011. Mr. Riju Antony (Head - State HR, Reliance Retail Division), Fr. Devassy Chirackal sdb (Rector, Don Bosco), Fr. Joy Nedumparambil sdb (Regional Coordinator- South, DB Tech), Fr. Shibu Davis sdb (Centre in Charge), Mr. Soujith Antony (State Coordinator-Kerala, DB Tech), Mr. Bobby Jose (State Placement Coordinator-Kerala, DB Tech) were present at the occasion.



The programme proceeded with welcome speech by Fr. Shibu Davis, sdb, who welcomed all guests. Chief Guest, Mr. Riju Antony inaugurated the ceremony by lighting the lamp and delivered the inaugural address. Mr. Soujith Antony briefed the audience about the salient features and benefits of the program. The function was presided by Fr. Devassy Chirackal, sdb. He appreciated the BASE programme and its activities as a concrete realization of the vision of Don Bosco in the integral development of the youth. Rev. Fr. Joy Nedumparambil, sdb delivered the key note address and expressed his satisfaction over narrowing down the gap between industry and training institutes. The trainers as well as the guardians greatly appreciated the presence of dignitary from industry, which gave them a hope towards their job placements.

A total of about 150 participants comprising of trainees along with their guardians participated in the event making it a grand success. Mrs. Mary Agnes C J (Trainer-ITES, BASE) expressed words of gratitude to all guest present for the occasion, the trainees, guardians and all acquaintances who are directly or indirectly associated with the project.

Kalimpong (West Bengal): The BASE program was inaugurated at Don Bosco Joti (Kalimpong) on April 4, 2011. Rt. Rev. Bishop Stephen Lepcha DD was invited as Chief Guest for the inaugural function. Other Guests present at the function were Fr. Jose Pampadiyil (Vice Provincial), Fr. Pulickal Augusty (Rector, Don Bosco Joti Kalimpong), Fr. Noble KK (Principal, Don Bosco Joti), Mr. Kalyan Dewan (Associate Professor Kalimpong College), Mr. Rajan Banerjee (Deputy Bank Manager, Cooperative Bank) and Mr. R. K. Rai (GJMM president, Ecchey Basti). Besides that an energetic gathering of 99 BPL youth were present at the event to witness the inauguration.



Addressing the gathering, Rt. Rev. Bishop Stephen gave light to the youths about their upcoming future and market behavior. He discussed about the importance of skilled and semi skilled manpower to the nation. Mr. Biseswar Talukdar (Regional Coordinator, DB Tech) explained about the mission, vision, goal of DB Tech and also targets of the program. With his vast experience on market strategies and economics, Mr. Kalyan Dewan asked the youngsters to come up and face challenges with integrated commitments. In addition to that, Mr. Banerjee gave a delightful speech on the importance of life skills, personality development and soft skills that they are going to acquire during the training program. He also discussed on the relevance, significance and usefulness of the services rendered by Don Bosco in these past years. On behalf DB Tech, Fr. Pulickal welcomed the youngsters to the center and promised them help during their course of their training and placement.

Kokar (Ranchi): The third batch of BASE program in partnership with Schneider was inaugurated at Kokar centre on May 12, 2011. Mr. N. C. Agrawal (CEO, Meditron Ranchi) was invited as Chief Guest for the inaugural function. Other dignitaries present at the function included Fr. Helerius, sdb, Br. Rajesh, sdb and Abhilesh Thomas (State Coordinator, DB Tech).

The new Schneider batch was inaugurated by Mr. N. C. Agrawal. Addressing the gathering, he asked the students to make use of this course provided by Schneider Electric. He shared his satisfaction about the quality of the training and performance of the students. He also told



the students the secrets of an effective Electrician and recent market requirements of the Electrical trade. Fr. Helerius introduced Don Bosco and the objectives of the Salesian Society to the students. His speech motivated new students to achieve the job oriented goals. Br. Rajesh also interacted with students and said, "Like a seed, all the students also have many hidden talents which need flourish at the earliest. In this regard, DB Tech will facilitate them to make use their talents in a virtuous manner."

Training Programs

Dimapur (Nagaland): "You must be prepared to face challenges in life and make the best use of opportunity and facility available at the centre. Whatever you do must be out of your own conviction and decision but not out of compulsion," said Fr. K. V. George (Director, Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre) while addressing the trainees of the institute during the two-day training on life skills. "Your action must be accompanied by reflection and analysis," he added further. A life skill training program was organized at Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre (Dimapur, Nagaland) on June 9-10, 2011. The objective of the training was to equip the youth with various life skills which are necessary to cope with the demands of life. The two-day training mainly dwelt upon goal setting, self awareness, stress management or problem solving, communication skills, safety at work place, job commitment, time management and money management.



The training was participatory in nature using methods such as group discussion, group activities, games, songs, role plays, presentations and sharing. The two-day training definitely has contributed to the benefits of the trainees. Mr N. Mosa (Trainee, Driving trade) said, "My idea before coming to this centre was to learn only driving but now, I came to learn the importance of life skills; I have benefitted a lot from this training." Adding to her comments, Mr Yimtu said, "The games played have taught me a lot; I thought it be simple games but it has a lot to relate with life and our daily life."

Golaghat (Assam): One of the core aspects of human life is Survival Skills even in odds. 14 boys of Don Bosco Vocational Training Institute (Golaghat) undergoing training in driving had the privilege of being part of life skill training that was conducted at Don Bosco Vocational Training Institute on June 2-3, 2011. The resource persons were Fr. Dilip Bara (Director, DBVTI, Golaghat), Masanwangliu Jacinta (PRT Coordinator, IND), Tintus Here (BASE), Amos Ekka (BASE) and Rakesh Roshan Lakra (Data Entry operator, IND).

The teaching and skilling were facilitated through games, group activities and assignments. It was enjoyable but serious learning too. "I have learned from this training the importance of safety at work place, through the blind fold game, It's really difficult to live without a sight even for a short while.", Mr. Ismail one of the trainees commented. The



participants were given input on goal setting, stress management, problem solving, self awareness, safety at work place, job commitment, time management, money management and how to lead a happy family life. Candidates had ample opportunity to interact with the resource persons and steer clear their doubts. Mr. Matkam Pukum expressed his happiness about the training saying, "Now I am confident that I will do my job better because as a driver it is my responsibility to look after the passengers' safety."

Induction Training

Guwahati: A five day induction program was conducted for the newly appointed trainers at the Bosco Reach Out (Guwahati) on May 13-17, 2011. The trainers participated in the induction mainly from the newly initiated centres in East and North East region. Altogether, 27 trainers from the centres, 3rd Mile, Bora Pani, Dimapur, Garo Badha, Golaghat, Kharghuli, Nalbari, Nongstoin, Rangblang, Shillong, Tura, Umran, Wokha, Yupia attended the induction training program. The program was facilitated by Mr. Maheish Shetty (Asst. Manager) from Learning & Development (DB Tech).



The trainers are from varied backgrounds, selected for different domains and assembled together to acquaint themselves with the project. The participants briefed about the skill development program of MoRD and the rationale behind the partnership, which is imparting skills to the rural BPL youth, give them employment and thus create sustainable livelihood amongst the rural families. The orientation program helped them to understand the vision, mission and objectives of DB Tech and helped them focused towards achieving the goal of the organization. Since many of the participants were working in the development sector for the first time and especially with youth from the marginalized section of the society, it was necessary that the trainers were also oriented on how to deal and interact with the youth from lower economic strata and get the best out of those youngsters. The trainers had a good time

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interacting amongst themselves and bonded very well which would help them to work as a team once they go back to their respective centres.

Bangalore: A 3-day Training of the Trainers (ToT) was organized for the staffs of DB Tech (South) at Don Bosco Provincial House (Bangalore) on June 3-5, 2011. The ToT is meant for the newly joined trainers of the BASE project under DB Tech. 25 participants attended the ToT from the different centres of Kerala and Karnataka. The program was conducted by Ms. Baisakhi Sarkar (Sr. Executive) from Learning & Development (DB Tech). The induction programme was inaugurated by Fr. Joy Nedumparambil (Regional Coordinator-South, DB Tech) by giving a befitting and impressive introduction, setting the tone and direction for the take off. After a brief welcome of the participants, Fr. Joy mentioned the importance of the programme and asked for enthusiastic participation of all concerned.



Fr. George Mathew (Economer, Bangalore Province) enlightened the participants about Don Bosco Tech and its mission to skill India. Fr. Joseph Elavanal (Executive Director, BREADS, Bangalore) gave brief outline on the life of St. John Bosco and his intervention in the life of the young. Fr. K. O. Thomas (Vice Provincial, Bangalore Province) explained role and mission of DB Tech within the youth ministry of the Salesians in India.

The objectives of this training program would be to understand the process followed in the project and to know the key performance areas of the project, such as, mobilization, training, placements, post placement survey (PPS) and MIS. The ToT is to equip the trainers to train the trainees in three months and make them employable in their own specific domains.

Guest Lectures

Bhadravathi (Karnataka): Guest lecture is a prime component in the BASE program in which experts from specific sector will be invited to



share their experience and expertise. The first guest lecture for third batch ISMO students was organised at DB Tech (Bhadravathi) on May 10, 2011. Mr. Ananthram (Proprietor, Mytri Group of Companies, Shimoga) was invited to share some valuable inputs specific to appeal industry with the trainees of BASE.

In his lecture, Mr. Ananthram provided basic knowledge such as the classification of the industrial sewing machine, stitch type, defects of sewing, definition of terms and adjustment procedure. He gave a blue print of current scenario of garment industry and demand of skilled labours in various departments in this sector. He spoke on the importance of skill development training and its benefits in the present context. Since the lecture was on skill training, the trainees of Sales and Marketing and Electrical also took part in guest lecture. Mr. Ananthram assured placement opportunities for electrical students and placement for 15 top ranked ISMO students in Mytri Garment Industry.

Borivali (Mumbai): 'Chef what's Cooking' - A guest lecture was organised for the Hospitality students of MoRD and Accenture/ITC Welcome projects at DBTI (Borivali) on May 31, 2011. Mr. Bernard D'souza (EAM, Food & Beverages, The Club Andheri) along with his son Christopher D'souza were invited to share their expertise in Hospitality sector with the students. The main kitchen was all set by the students for the guest lecture conducted by Chef Christopher. Mr. Dayanad Patil Introduced Mr. Bernard and Chef Christopher to the students and then opened the kitchen for Chef Christopher.



Before starting guest lecture, the Chef Christopher gave a brief introduction about the sector and motivated the students by sharing the few tips that he had learnt during his Hotel Management training in Rizvi College. Presently Chef Christopher has taken up a job in food production department in Mahindra Holidays. During the preparation, he explained each step in such a way that the students could find it easy to understand. "The best part of his training that one of the students liked was that he called them up to taste the dish and then asked them to add seasoning to it if necessary," said Ms Gloria (Trainee, BASE). Chef Christopher presented Bell Pepper Soup, Steered Chicken with Mushroom Sauce, Mash Potato and Steered Broccoli. The presentation was really amazing and so was the dish that was prepared.

It was time to say goodbye to Chef Christopher and so one of the students Ms Stevena presented a card and a bouquet on behalf of the Institute, Ms Cindraela gave a vote of thanks saying that it was something new that they learnt. Chef Christopher and Mr. Bernard thanked and appreciated Fr. Anthony Santarita for the good work Don Bosco has been doing. Fr. Anthony personally thanked Chef Christopher for his time and knowledge that he shared with the students.

Feature

Centre in Focus: Don Bosco Yuva Sanstha (Karjat, Maharashtra)

Away from the city humdrum, Don Bosco Yuva Sanstha (DBYS) is the perfect refuge for those who are in search of something different. Situated at the foothills of Sahyadri Mountains, this 64 acres of picturesque property is a laboratory to develop, test and replicate many models that empower the disadvantaged youth. Set up in 2006, DBYS was not intended to be a technical training centre at the inception, rather a place where the marginalized youth are prepared for the transformation by emotional rebuilding at individual level. Within few months, DBYS became a platform to rebuild broken psyche of deprived youth, make them confident and also help them to make new plan for their future. This program is very effective and relevant for adolescents who lack opportunities to develop important skills relevant to life outside of their localities.

The efficacy of this life skill program spread across the region, which attracts many corporate houses to witness it. Some organizations also extended their support to impart the same training with additional technical skills to the youth so that they are truly empowered and can move up in life. In 2007, DBYS launched a program 'Work 2 Live' in an intention to set up technical training centre that could provide short courses of four months in multi skill training. The combination of both the life skill and technical skill proved to be a big boost to the candidates that showed extraordinary progress in their personal and professional level. Before launching the BASE program in Karjat, DB Tech conducted a youth survey to assess the employability of rural youngsters from 'Below Poverty Line'. It was found that there are



Don Bosco Yuva Sanstha (Karjat)

many opportunities in the nearby big cities like Mumbai, Kalyan, Badlapur etc., which results in migration of BPL youth to these cities to join unskilled labour force in unorganised sector. Keeping in mind huge opportunities in technical trades in the vicinity, Fr. Xavier Devdas, SDB (Director, Don Bosco Yuva Sanstha) says, "BASE program was started at DBYS in solidarity with the commitment of the Salesian India. It looked rather impossible to mobilize BPL youth, train them and also place them on jobs within an unaltered time line of 90 days."

What seemed impossible is made possible because of good team work, commitment and constantly adapting and developing strategies to meet the needs of the youth under training. Participatory model and highly delegated responsibilities have given birth to a sense of ownership to the project. Each obstacle has been a learning experience for them and each failure has opened the door to numerous new possibilities, which resulted to introduce strategies to mobilize, model to reduce dropout, capsule programs towards capacity building and personality development, additional skills for an alternate source of earning and effective budgeting. The constant support, understanding and encouragement from the Salesians at DBYS certainly help the team to build the confidence, to have collective ownership and also to achieve the common goal 'Skill India'.

Caring for disadvantaged youth and environment

An interview with Fr. Xavier Devdas, SDB (Director, DBYS)

He is a passionately dedicated individual who tries to solve society's most pressing problems by engaging himself in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation and learning. He is an environmental educator who is acting boldly without being limited by resources currently at hand, and exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served. Fr. Xavier Devdas, SDB is a Salesian who devoted his whole life to the unique mission 'uplift the disadvantaged youth'. With this prime objective, he always made an effort to help the young to know themselves, and make a positive contribution to their community which lead them to be good human beings and honest citizens. On the other hand, as a change agent of the social movement, he influences the individual behavior by educating in order to protect natural resources and ecosystem. DB Tech News got an opportunity to speak to Fr. Xavier about the innovations at DBYS.

DB TN: Why did you choose this serene location at the foothill of a mountain in Karjat? Is there any specific reason?

Fr. Xavier: Primarily as per the mission of Don Bosco, we always make an effort to assist the street youth who are financially or socially in a difficult situation. So we do intervene by providing 'skills for living' and also to have some training at a larger level. For that we need a large piece of land, which we can't acquire in Mumbai because the cost of land is very high. So we started moving out of Mumbai. Fortunately we got a big chunk of land in Karjat in this tranquil location to start Don Bosco Yuva Sanstha.

Fr. Xavier Devdas, SDB
Director, Don Bosco Yuva Sanstha

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DBTN: Without establishing a skill training centre in the beginning, how did you address the issue of youth unemployment of this locality?

Fr. Xavier: Basically we work for marginalized youth; and sometimes schools or technical training centres may not address the issue of empowerment. Sociologically we are empowering the marginalized which is not merely a technical training. Because technical training is a tool and empowerment is much larger than this. We thought to accept the youngsters and work on various areas related to them so that they will be in a position to face the past, reconcile, accept and come to a decision about the realities in life. Keeping this mind, we started ten modules of emotional rebuilding called 'Jeevan Sadhana', which will help them to understand life much palpably.



DBTN: What are the modules covered in *Jeevan Sadhana* that would instill social empowerment among the youth?

Fr. Xavier: Through this psycho-emotional rebuilding program, the candidates were trained in different modules like sociology, social rights and responsibilities, personality development, counseling and therapy, career guidance, holistic health, group living and family life education, economy, basic literacy, spoken English, eco-education, manual work, yoga/meditation, etc.

DBTN: At what point, then, did you decide to found a training centre in Karjat?

Fr. Xavier: After successfully running the *Jeevan Sadhana* for one year, everyone witnessed quality behavioral changes in the candidates whom we were sending out for training. In 2007, Dubai based MNC named Lamprell came forward to support financially and strategically for setting up a skill training centre in DBYS.

DBTN: Regarding BASE program, when you are aware that there are very less number of BPL youth in need for up-skilling, what motivated you to take up this program?

Fr. Xavier: When we are talking about social transformation and youth empowerment, we can't get localized by saying my village / area. I am looking at the country / across the border. In this belief, we took this challenge of accepting the offer to start BASE in Karjat. It is a golden opportunity, where we are getting so many things in one place. We are getting unified DB Tech and Don Bosco coming under one umbrella. The Province is also making a commitment. When so many things are polarized, we can't sit at one corner, just counting your few difficulties and cutting off. So we believe in ourselves, when there was adverse situation in front.

DBTN: How do you manage to start two domains with strength of 58 students?

Fr. Xavier: When BASE was launched, surely we did not have numbers with us. When the state is having millions of BPL youth, we can't say that there is no BPL youth in the local area. I need only 100 youth for my centre. Our periphery is not confined to Karjat only. So we started aggressive mobilization in the neediest parts of the state i.e.

Vidarbha and Marathwada which is over 700 Kms from Karjat. With great difficulty, we managed to mobilize 58 candidates for the first batch.

DBTN: What strategy you follow to mobilize the youth from faraway places like Vidarbha and Marathwada?

Fr. Xavier: When you are talking about Maharashtra, everyone knows Vidarbha and Marathwada for the drought-prone districts and farmer suicide. And our province was also searching for options to empower the youth in these regions. By setting up of training centres will not resolve the issue. But we can spare our resources, infrastructure, time, energy for them. We precisely went to that region and camped there with no contact literally. We started developing network with NGOs and met the community leaders. There we found a pulse of hope, belief and desire among the youth for a better tomorrow.

DBTN: Without having any contact, you must have faced lots of difficulty to motivate youth for the skill development program. Why don't you share your experiences during the mobilization of first batch?

Fr. Xavier: There are lots of doubts in the minds of people regarding the program like free training, free uniform, free food, free accommodation, placement facility and 90-day training program. Being a Christian organization, it certainly enhances their doubts. On the other side, the criteria to select the trainee for the program like must be from BPL family, 18-35 year old, unskilled and unemployed, motivated, etc. With these combinations, it is very difficult to select trainees for the program. With a hope, we went to faraway places assuming that the local NGOs would be happy to send children from their locality. Unfortunately it was more like a trading. Literally we put our foot down not by bearing their expenses for this activity as it could not become a business. We took a decision to stick to this resolution. As a result, now most social organizations in that locality become our outreach partners for this program.



DBTN: After reaching the centre, suddenly youth from faraway places found that landed at a place which is cut off from any form of enjoyment, which may have resulted in good percentage of dropouts. Do you have any innovative approach to reduce the dropouts?

Fr. Xavier: To address this issue, we developed our strategy of Foundation Course by calling boys for the training at any point of time and from anywhere. If the candidate fulfills the conditions, then he can join the Foundation Course of 10 days duration. At the end of course, we make an assessment. If he has the desire, eagerness, interest level for the training program, then we handover a certificate for completing the Foundation Course in which we are mentioning the course commencement date so that he can come back to centre to enroll in BASE. During that period, the aspirant knows everything about the location, training, hostel, food, friends, trainers, etc. After this exercise, we found, there are negligible dropouts. Till date, 70 boys completed the Foundation Course.

DBTN: What all jobs you are assigning to these aspirants during Foundation Course to assess their interest level towards the short term skill development course?

Fr. Xavier: In this course, we are giving them a chance to stay at the centre and experience this short duration course. A module was created in this basic orientation to workshop, basic skills in measurement, cutting, filing, etc. In these ten days, they have come up with certain jobs assigned to them. Besides that they will interact with students, stay in the hostel, cleaning, cooking, etc. The main aim was to create interest in the aspiring trainee towards the training, to get acclimatized with the living and working condition, and to get a firsthand experience of the things to come.

DBTN: Besides technical and life skills, you have introduced a model 'Youth Panchayat' for capacity building and personality development. Why don't you describe the model in detail?

Fr. Xavier: Together with the technical training, the trainees are given various opportunities towards capacity building and personality development. Here at DBYS, as soon as the new batch begins, the hostelers are divided into groups (called villages). Each village democratically elects their *Sarpanch* then the Centre Head (Central Govt.) deposes a *Gramsevak* to each village. Then the *Sarpanch*, *Gramsevak*, and the villagers of each village elect MLA. Seven members are elected as MLAs for seven departments like education, health, labor, sports, environment, food, finance etc. Then MLAs group themselves according to their sector and elect their minister like food minister, labor minister etc. This is followed by a campaigning speech by the *Sarpanch* and the Ministers for the election of Chief Minister and Deputy Chief minister. The entire assembly cast their vote to select the CM and the Deputy CM. Then the *Gramsevaks* get together and elect their own Chief Secretary. Thus the entire political education of democratic leadership training is given. Henceforth the entire in-house activities and responsibilities are planned and executed by this group. This gives ample opportunities towards cultivating leadership, program planning and execution, crisis management.

DBTN: You explain them the reality of their future in term of practical budgeting. What does it mean and how does it help them for a constructive future?

Fr. Xavier: We have an exclusive module on budgeting, planning and economy. First we ask them to set the quality of your life which will give you the quantum of your income that is needed. Then they need to decide the sources of income and earnings. After that every student should do practical budgeting in which they need to actualize the budget heads and expenses. They also have to decide the area of spending, investments and savings. We almost spend six to seven days at the evening for this module to discuss step by step (everyday breakfast, lunch, dinner, articles, festivals, etc.). After calculating the actual budget required for his family (having at least four members), the average budget will come around 10K to 12K whereas their salary is around 5K to 6K. They need extra 5K to smoothly run his family which must be generated from an extra source of income. Through this effective budgeting, the students can plan their future in a constructive way.

DBTN: All the students passed out from the institute are not only

imparted domain specific and life skills but also empower with alternate source of income generation. Brief us about the reason behind the noble cause of imparting additional skills for extra income?

Fr. Xavier: No doubt the sector in which they are trained would give them a job and monthly income but the reality is that with this salary it is very difficult to create and manage a family in the long run. Thus here we offer various short training programs to the candidates in making candles, statues, charcoal from waste leaves, handmade paper from waste, vermiculture, plant nurseries, etc. They can teach these skills to their family members which can be pursued part-time to earn more income for the family.

DBTN: As far as the delivery process of technical skills is concerned, you have been following a methodology which is another USP of your centre. Why don't you share the methodology with us?

Fr. Xavier: Here students are enrolled from different categories. Some of them completed 12th standard and others may not have completed 6th standard. So in this diversified crowd, we need to teach them most simple so that the weakest can learn. At the same time, we have given more challenging jobs to brighter ones. Our target group is expert in dropping out. When they feel that so many things to be learnt in this short duration then their first step is to dropout from the course. We break the technical modules to small units. Instead of showing the complete book, we disclose one unit every time so that they will not be frightened. Every day one card will be given to them that describes only the lesson of the particular day. This exercise makes them feel very simple, comfortable and easy to learn, which is accumulated with an assessment every week.

DBTN: Now two batches are completed with 89 and 96 percentage placement. Is there any specific modus operandi for such high placement record?

Fr. Xavier: We are not approaching to employers by bargaining mentality by sharing the sad story like poor, marginalized, etc. When India is moving towards a developed economy, Government has played their role by rolling out such programs and NGOs is helping to make it a reality. Youth of this country took the ownership on this. Now it is your (employers) turn to make it happen. By appointing our students, you will get a trained employee for entrance level which will save your money and time for training. Our approach is very different. It is paying well evident. In this approach, we are able to place almost all students of this current batch when we have still one month to complete the batch.

DBTN: Any tool you have developed to connect with the alumni of BASE?

Fr. Xavier: We are in the process to prepare a blueprint for networking the BASE. We need to track them, follow them, and keep in touch with them. Now we are inviting them for different occasions organized at the centre. Besides that now our alumni are helping us in every step of our process (Starting from mobilization to placement). Few of our alumni are interested to bear certain cost for the training of the students.



Rising Star: Rudesh Masane

Skills bring silver lining

Rudesh hails from Shelu, a quiet village in Raigad District of Maharashtra. He is calm and shy by nature, and it was a bit difficult to get him to talk about himself. "We are six in our family – my father, mother, three sisters and me", he began softly, "and we are extremely poor. My father earns less than Rs 1500 a month, which is used to make two light meals a day a big luxury for us." His father, Sripad Masane is working as a laborer in a ball point pen manufacturing company. Most of his earning is utilized for purchasing the tools, seeds, and pesticides to cultivate the land that he has been doing share-cropping for a decade. "At the end of the season, I have to give half of the production to the land owner. By share-cropping I managed to get the food grain for almost six months for my family," says his father, Sripad Masane. His mother, a housewife, along with his sisters makes some money by embellishing stones in the ladies hair-clips. Everyone of his family contributes in their little way to provide sound living and education for kids. But the labor exploitation by the small industries compels them to live in extreme poverty. Life became an endless toil for the family for obtaining even the most basic necessities.

One day, as he was casting about for some employment avenue, Rudesh came upon a mobilization drive at Shelu by the trainers' team from the BASE center at Karjat. Eager to know more about the program, he made enquiries with Mr Sandeep Gayakwad (Electrical Trainer, BASE-Karjat) about the criteria and benefits of the skill development program. He went up tentatively to Mr Sandeep and asked if he too could join the program and receive some training that would give him a

decent job. Spurred by hope and optimism, very next day Rudesh reached the centre with all the credentials required for enrolling the course. After interest inventory test, the trainers asked him to enrol in the Electrical course. He began his course in earnest, attending classes every day and carefully absorbing every training input. Within a few weeks, his confidence returned and he knew that if he continued to work hard he would certainly be able to get a good opening in the Electrical sector. Apart from technical training and life skills, he also learnt several useful skills like budgeting, capacity building, personality development, group living, sharing responsibilities, etc.

At the end of the three-month course, his trainers arranged a job interview for him in Mumbai based company Samrat Electricals in which he was selected as electrician with a starting salary of Rs 4000 per month. Speaking appreciatively of Rudesh's technical competence and commitment to the job, his supervisor Mr Sunil says, "The skills provided by DB Tech are appropriate for the entry level positions. When we are recruiting students from BASE, we provide them specific training related to our industry requirements. Rudesh's dedication to his job is commendable. Although he is just a few months old with us, he has shown himself to be worthy of assembling the circuits. If he continues to work with zeal like this, he has a very bright future ahead." Recently Rudesh got an opportunity in another Electrical Company, Kohli Industries located in Ambarnath which is hardly five kms from his village with a salary 5000 plus other benefits. Regarding the job opportunities, Rudesh said, "Most of my friends completed graduation degree and still they were sitting idle due to lack of skills to join any organisation." Now every month end, Rudesh gives the salary to his mother to fulfill the sisters' study related requirements and also saves a portion of it for their marriages. He says, "Every cloud has a silver lining. The skills I learned in DB Tech bring this silver lining in our life."



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