



A report on the Annual Conference and General Body Meeting of the DBHEI, on 24th and 25th November, 2017 at Don Bosco Centre for Learning , Kurla, Mumbai.

The annual conference was primarily called for, reading, reflecting and evolving, Province level plans, based on the two IUS documents namely: 1. Policy Document for the Period 2016-21 and 2. Salesian University Ministry-2017.

The two days meeting began with the arrival of the participants on 23rd Novmeber, 2017, to the Don Bosco Provincial House, Matunga, the venue of accommodation. The day's program was held at the Don Bosco Centre for Learning, Kurla. On both the days, the participants were shifted by bus to the venue of the meeting.

The first day program began with the Eucharist at 6.45 am, at the crypt of the Shrine of Mary Help Christians, Matunga, presided over by the Vice Provincial of Mumbai, Rev Fr. Savio Sylveira, homily preached by Fr. Maria Soosai, the Secretary. It was fitting that the mass was held on the 24th of the month, at the Shrine of Our Lady Help of Christians. After breakfast, the participants boarded the bus and moved to the Kurla campus. The inaugural session began with prayer moments conducted by Fr. Maria Vaz, of the Don Bosco Institute of Management, Kurla. After the prayers, the dignitaries were called up to the dias. They were, Rev. Fr. Godfrey D'Souza, the Provincial of Mumbai, Fr. Colbert Da Silva, the Rector & Secretary of the Kurla campus Colleges, Dr. Ponnudiraj, the Senior Deputy Advisor (NAAC), the resource person of the day, Fr. Maria Soosai, the DBHEI Secretary, and Fr. Joy Ullattil, the Hr. Edu. Delegate from the Bangalore Province. There were 32 delegates from 10 Provinces participating in the conference. Fr. Colbert welcomed the gathering, Rev.Fr. Godfrey D'Souza addressed the gathering on behalf of the Province and welcomed the participants to the commercial Head Quarters of the country. He demonstrated with a video clipping from Sashi Tharoor, on the importance of education and skill development for India at this juncture.

Two messages, one from the Regional, Rev. Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga, on proposing a theme for programmes for the National Networks, namely: **Nation's Progress: the Constitutional way** and another from the General Coordinator of the IUS, Rev. Fr. Marcelo Farfan. The messages were read by the Delegate for INM Province and Executive. Member Fr. Thaddeus.

Fr. Maria Soosai, introduced the purpose of the meeting and its dynamics for the two days. Fr. Joy Ullattil made a presentation of the two documents and said that, we are reading, reflecting and evolving our plans for the period. At 10.10 am, we began the Province level presentation of their plans, coordinated by Fr. James Bernard, the Principal of Don Bosco Polytechnic College, Basin Bridge, INM Province.

Fr. Casimirraj Motcham from INT Province, Fr. Maria Antonyraj from INM Province, Fr. Joy Ullattil from INK Province, Fr. Benny Mathew from INH Province, Fr. Mathew

Pulingathil from INC Province, Fr. Innocent Suresh from IND Province, Fr. P.D. Johny from ING Province, Fr. K.J. Antony from INS Province, Fr. Wilfred Fernandez from INP Province, Fr. Maria Vaz from INB Province, made their presentations and shared about the steps taken to understand the two documents.

They stressed the need for including into the plan, **some elements of the Indian Youth Policy 2014, training and evolving a campus culture for our staff, evolving a plan for each of the institutions, publications, creating a Hr. Education desk, online journals with impact factor, research and consultancy, meaningful preparation of SEPP, facing Govt and University demands, limited Salesian personnel in Hr. Edu. sector, becoming member of National and International Associations, National Institute of Ranking Framework (NIRF), various policies framed at the Province level for the first time basing on the two documents, creating more and more scholarships for the poorer students, Earn while you learn schemes, etc** were some of the highlights of their presentation. A spontaneous response from the audience was that the two Provinces of Dimapur and Trichy have done well in preparing their Provincial level plan. We appreciate their hard work. All the presentations were made available for the participants through the website, for their reference.

After tea break, Fr. Sebastian K.O. Principal of Maram College, IND Province, introduced the resource person Dr. Ponmudiraj.

He dealt with the Higher Education scenario in the country, giving some statistics. In order to understand the Higher Education sector, we need to understand the school education in our country. There are 13,20,890 schools in India, age group 17+ are completing the schooling. The National GER for Higher Education in the country is between 19-20 %, school dropouts are 40 % in India, there are 39 boards for school education in the country, there are different types of Universities, Too many Universities doing very little job! Hence, Higher Education is a complex reality, said the resource person.

He invited the delegates to follow simple and direct administrative principles, which are time tested. For any just cause, we should be able to write and challenge the Govt and Universities. He spoke of Best Practices of identification, implementation, institutionalization, internalization and dissemination. Your institutional website is your face! He said. He invited us to become members of AISHE (a National Body), and to become online for anything possible. He mentioned about the modifications made in the guidelines and parameters of NAAC accreditation. After his sharing, the participants left for lunch. During lunch break, all the participants went around the buildings, guided by Fr. Colbert. After lunch Dr. Ponmudiraj continued his session. A questionnaire on the status of implementation of the documents was distributed and data collected.

After tea, an interactive session was held with Dr. Ponmudiraj. He responded to the presentation made from the Provinces. He said that **some of our presentations were of very poor quality, in some Colleges the two documents were not reflected, in student strength, girls students were not mentioned, unit cost of education was not worked out by any College. No College gave information about fee structure, we should become as transparent as possible, the problems faced were not shared by any institution, subscription for membership to IUS and DBHEI were not paid,** it was said that we are in

the process of evolving a plan, which is good enough, there seem to be lack of communication among you, Province delegates must own up the Planning at the Province level, a vision document or a target document must evolve in your Planning, Journals published by member institutions are not shared, it could be done online, self financing Colleges must start PG Courses after completion of one or two batches of UG. In the evening, the Kurla community hosted a dinner for us. It was delicious!

On November, 25th, at 7.00 am mass was presided over by Fr. George Plathottam, the Rector of Tura Colleges, Province of Guwahati and preached the homily. After breakfast we moved to the conference venue. Fr. K.J. Antony animated the prayer moments. The first session was handled by Fr. Thaddeus, on ICT Trends and Higher Education. He said in his presentation, that we should not make any student or parent wait, for lack of information. All information of a student must be made online.

Followed by Fr. Thaddeus presentation, Fr. C.M. Varghese introduced and conducted an interactive session on Networking. Many individuals came forward to share ideas on the topic. Fr. P.D. Johnny helped Fr. Varghese for collating all suggestions. The tea break was at 11.00 am.

At 11.30 after the tea break, Mr. Conrad Saldhana, Advisor to DBCL, Kurla, handled a session on the topic: Salesian Strategies for Hr. Edu 2025 in India, evaluation of the functioning of the SPCSA and the report of the Team visit of the Rector Major and Gen. Councillors to the SPCSAS region, in February, 2017.

He quoted lot of points on the paradigm shift of Salesian Youth Ministry from school education to College and University education.

We dispersed for lunch at 1.15 pm and came back to meet in groups of Provinces at 2.15 pm, and spent about an hour, dwelling on Province level issues. It was found to be useful.

At 3.00 pm we began the Annual General Body Meeting, presided over by the Secretary, since both the President and the Vice President were away. The attendance was taken and the secretary once again reminded about the purpose of the meeting. Fr. Bastin Nellisery, of Don Bosco College, Mannuthy, INK Province, read the report of the previous AGM.

In the absence of the treasurer, Fr. Joby Joseph, it was suggested to add one more executive member, in the person of Fr. K.O. Sebastian, Principal of Maram College, to coordinate the programmes for the region. He agreed to function as an executive member. Then he was called to the dias.

Some discussion was held on the verification of the decisions taken in the previous AGM. On Campus Ministry Survey, it was suggested to post it on the website, with an invitation to the participants, to look at the survey results. Database to be collected online, filled in by individual institutions. Institutional mail ids to be used for official communication, as the Rector, Principal and delegates are changing every year. Once again, it was suggested to have the Galilean Trail program for the Catholic students of the Southern Provinces during the Pongal holidays or any other convenient dates, in the campsite at Yelagiri Hills. The cooperation of the Southern Province delegates was sought for conducting this program. Fr.

George Palamattam of Siloam Centre to be contacted well in advance to help us to conduct this program.

The DBHEI subscription paid details were not available. It should be made available at the earliest. All pending subscription to be paid soon. In the same way, IUS subscription is reasonable enough for the time period. And it should be worked out by the Province delegate and payment should be made by the individual house in US dollars, to the Economer, who in turn will send it to the Youth Pastoral department. Dec 2017 is the last date for payment of IUS subscription.

The distribution of Books from the USA, could be linked to the subscription payment of the above, namely, DBHEI and IUS and the payment for transporting the books to the respective Colleges.

We have collected texts of the best practices earlier. It could be reworked and got ready for publication. Fr. Suresh Innocent and Fr. K.O. Sebastian to work together to prepare the text.

All the journals and online journals and book publications of individual institutions must be published, through the website.

All the earlier documents and files and presentations could be put on the Google Drive for the members to use.

Before the next General Body Meeting, the Province level commission for Higher Education must meet and prepare for the AGM.

There was some discussion on, whether to have every year the AGM. Finally it was agreed upon, that there is lot of meaning in coming together and sharing, as we are far away, from each other. Definitely there are ideas to benefit, only the dynamics of conducting, and preparing for it, must be better planned.

Next year's theme will be, as the SPCSA wants it, The Nation's Progress: The Constitutional way. Next year conference could include presentation of papers on the theme. At the end, a certificate of participation / paper presentation could be given to the participants.

The next DBHEI meeting could be in Dimapur, from 30th November to 1, 2, December, 2018, to coincide with the Nagaland State Festival.

At the end, Fr. Wilfred Frenandez, the Joint Secretary proposed the vote of thanks and the meeting concluded with a Hymn to Don Bosco.

In the evening, the Matunga Don Bosco School Community hosted a dinner for the participants. We thank Fr. Chrispino, the Rector and the community for their gesture. After the dinner, we went for a ride to Mumbai by Night, arranged by the Kurla community.

We thank sincerely the energetic and enthusiastic Rector Rev. Fr. Colbert Da Silva, the Rector and Secretary, the community members, Fr. Maria Vaz, Fr. Leon, the administrator, Fr. Cyril D'Souza and Fr. Thomas Braganza for their whole hearted support to conduct this meet in their premises. It was a rich experience of learning by seeing and learning by being, in an ideal centre of learning.

Thank you.

27th November, 2017
Sagayathottam

Fr. Maria Soosai,
DBHEI- Secretary