

Province School Coordinators and Education and Culture Commission Heads Meet in Bangalore.

The three-day meeting of Province School Coordinators and Education and Culture Dimension Heads Meet of South Asia was held at Christ University Kengri Campus, Bangalore from 21-23 October 2024. The Salesians province of Bangalore hosted it. This meeting aimed to foster collaboration and innovation among Salesian educators. Rev. Fr. P. D. Johny opened the meeting with a warm welcome, expressing enthusiasm for the themes to be explored. The gathering began with a prayer service and a choral performance by Don Bosco College students, setting a reflective tone.

Rev. Fr. Jose Koyickal, the local Provincial and head of the Education and Culture dimension, welcomed the delegates and delivered the introductory address. The assembly viewed recorded messages from Rev. Fr. Miguel Angel Garcia and Rev. Fr. Biju Michael, who emphasized the importance of being present for youth and outlined key objectives for educational endeavors. Rev. Fr. Patrick Lepcha, Director of DBYA, presented on the Education and Culture Dimension, referencing Pope Francis' document on the identity of Catholic schools. He highlighted ten objectives and five lines of action for coordinators to consider. Following this, Rev. Fr. Sebastian Kurricheal introduced the statutes of the Don Bosco Schools Association of India, inviting feedback from delegates for SPCSA Council approval.

The second day featured presentations from representatives of all provinces, beginning with the host province of Bangalore. Highlights included:

Bangalore Province: Rev. Fr. Varghese showcased a video presentation with statistics emphasizing a child-centered holistic approach and a commitment to sports.

Mumbai Province: Rev. Fr. Flovi discussed notable alumni, including film stars and politicians.

Kolkata Province: Rev. Fr. Noby George focused on the collaboration between urban and rural schools.

Dimapur Province: Rev. Fr. Neljen Anthony highlighted the missionary focus on rural education.

Guwahati Province: Rev. Fr. Jogesh Sangma presented statistical insights through a video.

Hyderabad Province: Rev. Fr. Gopu Peter addressed the province's service to semi-urban and rural areas.

Chennai Province: Rev. Fr. John Britto outlined the establishment of a dedicated office for education.

New Delhi Province: Rev. Fr. Augustine Toppo discussed efforts to support tribal communities.

Panjim Province: Rev. Fr. Tamatur Cardozo presented on school ministry initiatives.
Shillong Province: Rev. Fr. Babu Stephen shared successful practices, including the Bosco Olympics.

Tiruchy Province: Rev. Fr. Vincent Arokia Xavier emphasized comprehensive care for students. Each presentation provided valuable insights into the educational landscape across South Asia.

Rev. Fr. Thaddeus Singarayan introduced EDUSTAR, an assessment tool aimed at enhancing the quality of Salesian education. Additionally, a session on new technologies in education featured insights from six prestigious companies, inspiring innovative approaches.

Rev. Fr. Peter Gonzalves delivered an engaging presentation on the Salesian Educative System, focusing on its relevance to peacebuilding. Dr. Vinay from Christ University led a hands-on learning session on social media's role in education, stimulating lively discussions.

The meeting concluded with resolutions outlining future actions to strengthen the Salesian educational mission. Closing messages from Fr. Jose Koyickal and Fr. Sebastian Kurricheal emphasized collaboration and commitment to excellence in education. Fr. Augustine Toppo proposed the vote of thanks, recognizing the contributions of all participants. This meeting not only provided a platform for sharing best practices but also strengthened the bonds among Salesian educators committed to serving youth across South Asia.

Fr. Babu Stephen SDB

