From the Director’s Desk....

The aim of Don Bosco institution all over the world is to make the young people and the children good and honest citizens. Towards this end we at BSK have started Children's Parliament in five districts of our project area. We have more than 400 children's parliament in the province where more than 12,000 children are members of the parliament. The aim and goal of the children's parliament is to make them good, honest and responsible citizens. We have over nine years of experience in working with children's parliament and we have a good resource team who trained many NGOs and individuals all over India on this concept. Our experience in working with the children's parliament convinces us that this is a sure way of bringing about lasting change in society. We are sowing seeds of change hoping to harvest a society where every member takes active part and responsibility in it's development.

Fr. Thomas Santiagu sdb
Executive Director

BSK finds a common ground with Corporates in HYDERABAD

Bosco Seva Kendra in collaboration with BoscoNet organized a Corporate Meet on 27 March, 2015 to explore the scope and possibilities of partnership through CSR route. Though only 80% of those who had confirmed their participation eventually turned up, the response from the Corporate was quite encouraging. Some of the existing corporate partners were invited to share their experience with Don Bosco. The program started with a welcome note from Ms. Pascal explaining the objective of the event, followed by self introduction of the participants. The next session was introduction of CSR and its legalities, conducted by Mr. Debangshu Ganguly, HOD – Strategic Partnership. The session explained the CSR rules, overview of section 135 of the Companies Act and the Schedule VII. The session was very interactive, with questions raised on the practical difficulties that the corporates were facing while implementing the CSR. All the questions were answered satisfactorily.

Director of BSK, Fr. Thomas Santiagu took up the next session with the elaborate presentation on the work of Don Bosco in AP and Telangana. The presentation was kept in the theme of 5 Es, Education, Enable, Empowerment, Employability and Engagement. The communication strategy was kept on these thematic areas, including the promotional display at the venue. During the session Fr. Santiagu invited few of our existing partners to share their experience. Their views supplemented the core competency of Don Bosco and the core value areas of DB Philosophy. To show the live example of our impact, a young boy from Navajeevan, Michael narrated his story of his personal struggle and how Navajeevan and Salesians of DB changed his life. He is presently working with Dell, and has plans to go to Rome for further studies. The participants were spellbound to hear from him how Salesians of DB had practically transformed his life.

The event succeeded in achieving its objective. Representatives from the participating companies were eager to join hands. Three of them expressed keenness to partner with us and one of the existing partners confirmed continued support for the next two years with 10% - 20% increase. Networking over high tea lasted for over an hour as participants were interested to know about our work in detail.
International Women's Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm in all the BSK programs across the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. While some had a solemn celebration recognizing the contribution of women and honouring them, some had a day to themselves, celebrating being women and enjoying a day of fun and games.

Women's Day Celebrated

On 12th March, 2015 students of MSW joined the staff of DBNJ Sharadha and Ullasa (Warangal) to conduct a survey on roadside beggars at Underbridge, Post office, Warangal Chowrastha, Battle Bazar, Andhra Balika College, Pinnavari St, Radhika Theater, CKM hospital and nearby bus and railway station. The main aim of the survey was to identify those in need of medical assistance. 16 cases were identified.

Children's Parliaments take Civic Initiatives

Issues raised by Children's Parliament were addressed and separate memorandums were submitted to respective authorities during the second fortnight of March, 2015. On 19.3.2015 members gave a memorandum to local Corporator, 15th division on problems in Aganwadi School and Vijayawada Municipal Corporation School related to mid-day meals and toilets. On 20.3.2015 letter was submitted to local Corporator, 24th division on the issue of Street lamps and got an aganwadi center sanctioned for the area. On 23rd March the 56th division Corporator was given a memorandum on ST Area road problem. On 27th March a letter was submitted to Village president at the Poranki Panchayat Office on Sanitation system in the village and open drainage problem. Children's Parliament members, having raised these issues in their meetings, were actively involved in each of these civic right initiatives under the able guidance of the team at Navajeevan Bala Bhavan, Vijayawada.

Transforming Households

Kondamudi Bharati Devi, R/o Khajapalem (V), PV Palem (M), Guntur Dist. "My husband is a carpenter. We have two children and he is the sole breadwinner of our family. It pained me to see him working day and night to make two ends meet. So when I came to know about some women in my neighborhood joining a thrift and credit group initiated by Chaitanya MACS, I saw an opportunity. From the money my husband gave for monthly household expenses, I started saving small amount of ₹150/- to deposit into the group account.

"When got my first loan I gave it to my husband. He was very happy and improve his carpentry in monthly instalments. When I got my second loan, I bought a calf. I then got the third loan of ₹15,000/- I sold the calf and bought a milch cow. I am now able to earn ₹5,000/- per month.

"This has improved our life to a great extent. I am regular in repayment of instalments and my children now go to an English Medium School. I am very grateful to Chaitanya MACS and BSK for giving us such wonderful support and opportunity to grow. I pray that they continue to help more and more people like me."

MSW Students Volunteer for Medical Survey

On 12th March, 2015 students of MSW joined the staff of DBNJ Sharadha and Ullasa (Warangal) to conduct a survey on road side beggars at Underbridge, Post office, Warangal Chowrastha, Battle Bazar, Andhra Balika College, Pinnavari St, Radhika Theater, CKM hospital and nearby bus and railway station. The main aim of the survey was to identify those in need of medical assistance. 16 cases were identified.
Navajeevan organized a very special day in Beach Blossom School, a Bridge School for school dropouts. All the students together with trainees from Bosco Tech, the Skill Training Centres and some of the mainstreamed students, gathered in Beach Blossom, on March 14, 2015 for a Science Exhibition and a Talent Search in Music and Singing.

In the exhibition the students proudly presented different objects, they made in scientific and aesthetic fields under the direction of Fr. Ratna Kumar and the guidance of volunteers and teachers, especially of Mr. Raja Rao, a very gifted teacher in many fields. The glow on the faces of the children, so far considered not fit enough to study and a burden to the society, as they explained their exhibits to the visitors, cannot be described in words.

The students of Tailoring Centre presented a number of creative styles, under the leadership of Ms. Hemalatha, a quality trainer. She is instrumental in getting these young, unemployed ladies tap their latent creativity and talent.

In the singing competition students from Bosco Tech and Skill Training Centers sang their favorite melodies, and won great applause.

Fr. Thomas Thottiyil, speaking on the occasion appreciated the creativity and hard work of the Staff, volunteers, and children and encouraged them to become the best that they are capable of without comparing themselves with others and wished them lot of happiness even when they do not have lot of money!

The day concluded on a very happy note, with singing and dancing even when the notes did not perfectly match and the right leg did not know what the left was doing!

### 171 women trained on Child Rights by CSN

Child Safety Net, Krishna District conducted 5 different programs between 18th and 20th March, 2015 for Mahila Samakhya members in Kaikaluru, Nuzvid, Kundur, Koduru, Mandavalli and A Kodur clusters.

The programs were aimed at creating awareness and promoting vigilance among women against violation of child rights like child marriage, child labour, female foeticide, etc. Information was given to the women on who to contact in the event of any such instances that they might encounter in their areas.

### 458 students made aware of Career options

Dhisha team provided career guidance to 458 students during March, 2015. They were invited by the principal of Fathima High School, Timmapur, Mahbubnagar Dist. to conduct a Career Guidance Seminar for their students. Team members - Mr.Mohan and Mr.Solomon - conducted the seminar in two separate sessions for different grades.

Mr. Mohan conducted a session for the middle school students covering topics like Preparation for Exams, Learning Styles, Self-discipline, Planning and following a study schedule, etc.

Mr. Solomon took the session for high school students, speaking about Time management, Goal-setting, Choosing the right career path, Positive thinking and self-confidence, Focus, etc.

A total of 370 students attended the seminar alongwith their teachers who also took keen interest in the topics the Dhisha team dealt with.

In a similar program held by the team at Govt. High School, Bodhan, 88 students participated.
Maria Georgiadas is all of nineteen. She was 18 when she decided to volunteer with Don Bosco Navajeevan, Vijayawada. Inspired by her friend Elina Gruber who had earlier been a volunteer at DBNJ, she came to India right after high school, with a lot of excitement and skepticism all at once.

She was with the shelter home for six months teaching English, art & craft at the shelter for street children, the children at Residential Vocational Training Centre and at Mogga.

Excerpts of an interview with her at the close of her 6-month volunteer work.

**What did you study? What got you interested in Don Bosco’s activities in India?**

I just completed my high school. My favourite subject is Biology. I used to enjoy working with younger children – I would baby-sit and tutor back home. I also enjoy music – and can play the Saxophone.

I got interested in Don Bosco’s work when I heard my friend sharing her experiences of volunteering at DBNJ, Vijayawada.

**What are some of the challenges you faced while volunteering?**

The biggest challenge for me was to be a friend AND teacher to the children. I would teach them English during the day and by evening, I would be playing with the same children. Language was a barrier initially that I enjoyed overcoming. I learnt a few words in Telugu like ‘Baagunnaara?’, ‘Nee peremi?’.

I also found that working with Indian kids is different from working with Austrian kids. I learnt and found new ways of teaching and relating to local contexts.

There was a lot of difference between the groups of children I worked with in Vijayawada. While I had to use a lot of motivation with the street children at the shelter, with the children at Mogga I had to use all my energy to calm them down.

**What are the most memorable moments that you will carry with you?**

I would wake up each morning with a lot of motivation and enthusiasm. I had never thought it was possible. I would look forward to see the happiness in the children’s faces every single day. The children taught me that one could share even when you don’t have much. I was surprised to see children sharing even when they had just one biscuit. I feel like it was a family. It is great how you all connect and want to work together for the children. I have a feeling that I can always come back here and be welcomed anytime.

I was a better tourist after the stint at DBNJ Vijayawada. I found that I could relate and identify with the people and systems and culture so much better than the average tourist I encountered. I have learnt that the best way to understand a place and people is to live with the people and experience it all.