From the Director’s Desk....

The rescue of more than 250 children from the bangle industries of Hyderabad just two days before the Republic day has really shocked the whole nation especially all the child right activists across the globe. It is all the more shocking to realize that there are more than hundreds of children still working in these industries almost like bonded labourers.

It has brought lot of media attention. All the child rights activists and the forums for children spoke openly against this heinous crime. It was interesting to note that all these children rescued by the police were brought to one of our Young at Risk centers in Ramanthapur in Hyderabad. They were kept there for more than two weeks before they were sent back to their respective states.

Don Bosco is working for the children at risk under the brand of Don Bosco Nava Jeevan centers in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana since 25 years. We are working through 29 centers for the children at risk spread over 8 districts. We are reaching out to more than 15000 children at risk every year through all these centers. We have more than 1500 children resident with us. This makes us the biggest NGO reaching out to many young at risk through its various activities for prevention and rehabilitation. This has borne fruit over the years through rescue and rehabilitation of thousands of young at risk, giving them new life. That is why our center for children is called NAVA JEEVAN (NEW LIFE).

We are glad to go ahead in reaching out to thousands of children every year through the support and collaboration of like minded NGOs and benefactors and well wishers. The feast of Don Bosco that we celebrated on the 31st of January during the bicentenary year of his birth is an invitation and a motivating force to recommit ourselves for the development and welfare of young at risk.

Fr. Thomas Santiagu sdb
Executive Director

DHISHA – spreading self-confidence among the future workforce

DHISHA conducted job orientation program for students of Don Bosco Tech courses at Gagilapuram (08.01.2015) and Bandlaguda (09.01.2015). The program covered topics on interview techniques, personality development skills and communication skills.

On 24 Jan 2015, job orientation program was held for 73 youth at Dharmasagar, Warangal.

Students were happy to learn from Mr. Mohan about techniques to be employed while attending an interview. The ways to groom, seat, present and introduce oneself, were all useful inputs that the candidates found to be highly relevant for them at this juncture where they will be entering the job market after completion of the training.

The team is now preparing to conduct a series of Campus recruitments in various technical and professional colleges bringing recruiters to the potential candidates.

Republic Day @ DBNJ, Warangal

On 26 January, 2015, India’s 66th Republic Day was celebrated at the Navajeevan Shelter Home for Children, Warangal with support of the Rotary Club Hanamkonda. Mr. Indrasena Reddy – President Rotary Club Hanamkonda and Ms. Chaithanya – Sr. Manager Nagarjuna Honda Showroom Warangal joined the children in celebrating the national festival with lot of good cheers and some gifts. The children were given gifts for their excellence in studies and sports.
Children born in 2000 are 15 years old this year – the tenure of their lives coincide with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals set for the same period. Signifying this aspect, Global Action 2015 Telangana Coordination Team lead by Mr. Leslie Martin of DBSU, Dr.Mazher Hussain of COVA Mr. Ambedkar of BSK, Mr. Nagesh of Save the Children, Ms.Jyothi from World Vision and children who were born on year 2000 i.e when the Millenium Development Goals were declared. Madhu, Fakrudhin, Mahesh, U mamheswara Rao, Ramachandar, Mallesh, N.Raviteja, N.Rajesh, N.Mahesh, K.Nihar Ranjan, S.Rishe, Manasa, Mamatha from various slums of Hyderabad and Secunderabad city met Sri Md.Mohamood Ali, Deputy Chief Minister of Telangana and requested him to endorse the Sustainable Development Goals in the Coming UN General Body meeting in September 2015 for the Governments of different countries to be accountable and transparent in implementing these goals. The following are the goals for 2030

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

The Dy CM responded positively and also assured the Delegation that he will help the children to get the Endorsement of the Chief Minister of Telangana State on SDG's.

Apart from this state-level initiative, groups of 15 children aged 15 each were part of district-level initiatives as follows:

1. Hyderabad children had interaction with Dr.Rajaiah, Dy CM
2. Warangal children had interaction for over an hour with Dr.Rajaiah Dy. CM at Don Bosco Karunapuram. They also later met with district authorities.
3. 1500 young people witnessed the launch of action-2015 in the presence of Dy CM and the Bishop of Warangal and other political and religious leaders.
4. Hyderabad District took part in a seminar on action 2015.
5. Rangareddy children took part in a seminar on action 2015.
6. Adilabad children met district authorities
7. Karimnagar children met with district authorities
Hundreds of children were rescued from exploitative situations in the infamous bangle industry of Old City, Hyderabad in a massive search and rescue operation carried out by the Department of Labor and the City Police. About 250 of these children were referred to the Don Bosco Rehabilitation Centre at Ramanthapur on 24th of January 2015 without any prior notice.

The children, mainly from the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, were all in a daze when they entered the home en masse. DBRC inmates were at their best, empathizing with these boys and made them feel welcome and at home in no time. By the end of the day, the boys were much more comfortable and engaged in conversations and activities at the shelter.

These disadvantaged children were the special guests for this year’s celebration of the feast of Don Bosco at the shelter. They were welcomed with a Band piece and Navajeevan theme dance by our children. In true spirit of Don Bosco, every child felt each one was loved more than the other. The ground in front of outdoor stage was packed with the presence of 300-odd children.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director of Don Bosco Navajeevan Homes Fr Bellamkonda Sudhakar, called upon the gathering to be alert to protect the children, in this year 2015, let us spread Child Line No. 1098, which is a toll free number and helps to save children in difficult who are in need of care and protection. As part of the raising funds towards education of the children we organized a Lucky dip and draw taken during this function. Ms Gloria from ISB and Fr. Kondaveeti Anthaiah, Administrator, St. John’s Seminary, Ramanthapur were guests for the draw of the winners. Inmates of DBRC put up colourful dances for the visiting children. They were happy and enjoyed every bit of the programme.

Parent Teachers Meet @ Vizag

The Don Bosco Beach Blossom School organised a Parent-Teacher meeting on Saturday, 12th Jan 2015. The main purpose of meet was to create a common platform, where teacher and parents come together to enrich the student’s educational experiences and discuss variety of issues, regarding all round development of students.

The meeting was organised under guidance and presidentship of Fr. T.V.Thomas Sdb, Director-Don Bosco Navajeevan, Vizag. Getting parents to attend the conference is only half the battle, once they arrive, it has to be emphasised that their involvement is vital to their child’s success. Parents were invited to share their thoughts and suggestions about the students and encourage them to ask additional questions about their child’s progress.

MACS Women Learn to take Calculated Risks in Business

Mattena Rajani, a resident of Mutyala-padu town, Vijayawada, Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh. She is married and has two children aged 3 and 6. Her husband, Babu Rao is a private employee and though she is educated upto Intermediate, she is not allowed to go out to seek employment. Making two ends meet with just a single income was becoming highly frustrating for Rajani. Her husband had taken an autorickshaw through finance, and let it out to someone to drive and pay daily returns.

That is when she heard of Swashakti MACS. Women representatives of the MACS had come to mobilize women in her colony and Rajani was highly impressed by the scheme of loans and savings. She discussed this with her husband and when he approved, she immediately enrolled herself in a group and formed ‘Sushmita SHG’.

With the first loan of Rs.5,000/- which she got in the seventh month of membership, she carried out repairs and modifications on the autorickshaw to increase seating capacity. This helped increase the daily income on the vehicle. With increased income and subsequent loans from Swashakti MACS which she was eligible for in consideration of her regular repayment pattern, she was able to procure a second vehicle under finance scheme.

M Rajani is now highly satisfied with the way her household is running along with the multiple enterprises she has set up. Income from the two autorickshaws, and a small cloth trading business that she started from home are supplementing her husband’s salary. The overall household income is affording them a comfortable lifestyle. Above all, she feels much more secure about the future of her children. Their education is her priority.
Volunteer Experience at DBNJ Vizag

My name is Poly George (21). I am from Idukki district of Kerala. I am a volunteer in Visakhapatnam Don Bosco Navajeevan for the past 4 months. After completing my degree, I wanted to involve myself into social activities for the society.

“I start my day at Beach Blossom School, teaching the 4th class students. Post lunch I teach the Computer Class students in DB Tech. I spend the evenings with the shelter boys, playing outdoor games. Sometimes I also help the shelter boys with their home work.

“What I experience here is entirely different. The children's naughtiness, cuteness and energy of youth are always cherishing. The duty of a volunteer is to motivate and channelize the youth with their energy for a better tomorrow. The feeling I get here in this community is like being a member of one big family with lots of siblings. Moreover I have two Austrian co-volunteers with me along with a lot of sisters, brothers, friends and staff members. The coming-together for a noble cause really causes in me a great feeling. I feel, that the past 4 months passed as fast as 4 days because of my enthusiasm to help and change.

“This home for young at risk has been built on the pillars of love. In Don Bosco, mostly Europeans are volunteering. The only thing that hurts me is that there are only very few Indian people, who use this great opportunity of doing something good and improving the quality of life for young at risk in their own country. The power of the nation depends only upon the energy of youth. For a better future of our nation more socially conscious Indians have to come forward and support youth at risk who are struggling in difficulties. We must share something with them, like some of our time, money, energy or knowledge. These things should be contributed by us for a betterment of the future of struggling youth. It is easy to provide money but it is not easy to love and care all of them. I am trying my best to fulfill this. From here, I am getting much more than what I expected.”

Children's Parliament in Rajiv Nagar Safeguards School from Miscreants

Parliament meetings held by in Rajiv Nagar had one common problem surfacing each time – the poor upkeep of their Government School. Issues like lack of drinking water, absenteeism of teachers, garbage in classrooms were taken up and sorted by addressing them to the Principal. The children themselves took up the responsibility of cleaning the classrooms and school premises collectively.

One problem that was beyond their reach was the broken beer bottles they would find in their classrooms often. This they found out was the mischief of drunkards who used the school as their joint. It was discussed in the meeting that the issue had to be taken to appropriate authorities and that they should involve elders in the matter.

A written representation was made and given to the local Corporator. It was taken up immediately. It was noted that the government school there did not have a gate. It was old and broken, making it easy for miscreants to enter and spoil the premises at will. The Corporator sanctioned the installation of a strong gate for the school compound and the problem was thus solved. Initiative of Members of the Children’s Parliament was greatly appreciated.

56 youth prepare for career at DBTECH Nalgonda

Two new training programs of Don Bosco Tech started in January, 2015 at Don Bosco Academy, Nalgonda. 30 members enrolled for the Electrical Fittings course and 26 for the Hospitality course.

In a formal inaugural on 1 Jan, the trainees presented a welcome dance followed by a speech by Fr. Balashowry Reddy Principal of Don Bosco Academy. He briefed about the DBTech Program how it had started in Nalgonda and how it has extended up to now. He also explained that up to now nearly there are 4000 students trained and being placed approximately and he also extended that it would be extended to more of the unemployed youth to empower them in Nalgonda district. He also gave a statistics that compared to other districts there are more number of unemployed youth in this district.

We wish the new batch of eager learners, a happy learning experience and all the best.