

2014

8<sup>th</sup>  
National Skill Conference

Theme  
**SKILL INDIA**

**29-31, October, 2014**

Hotel Green Park, Chennai



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# NATIONAL PARTNERS' MEET

29 October, 2014

## Inauguration:

The meeting started with a prayer song invoking God's blessings. It was then followed by the lighting of the lamp by the Board Members. In order to pay homage to late Mr Albert Joseph, the former Executive Director of FVTRS, all the participants observed one-minute silence.

Dr Antony Kariyil, the President of FVTRS, said that Mr Albert Joseph's death on 30 December 2013 was untimely. He also said that Mr Albert Joseph helped in building strong relationship between FVTRS and partners and took FVTRS to a greater height. He appreciated his immense contributions to FVTRS.

Dr Antony Kariyil, then, introduced Mr PM Philip, the new Executive Director of FVTRS to the partners and welcomed him on behalf of FVTRS. He said that Mr PM Philip has come into FVTRS with a wide-range of experiences and he had served 29 long years in Caritas India and held various managerial positions for which he had received the 'Best Manager' award.

*"If partners succeed, then, FVTRS succeeds. Likewise if partners fail, then, FVTRS also will fail"* said Mr PM Philip as he began his welcome address. He also said that he was privileged to be welcomed as well as to welcome. He then welcomed all the partners and thanked them for their commitment to the cause of skill development and sought their cooperation for continued and meaningful partnership.

*"Relationship between FVTRS and partners enables them to work for the development of the rural underprivileged youth"* said Dr Antony Kariyil in his Presidential Address. He gave the example of the bond that existed in joint-family system. He said that the partners are the real pillars of FVTRS as the skill training activities are carried out through them. He also mentioned that FVTRS never had any big infrastructure and it was only recently a new office building was inaugurated. He appreciated the partners for their efforts in implementing the project, and thus helping FVTRS in realising the objective of making the rural marginalised youth become employable. He congratulated and thanked all the partners for their keen interest as well as active participation in the National Partners' Meet and the National Skill Conference. He wished that the partners learn many things during the Meet and the NSC.

Sr. Daphne Sequeira, Vice-President, said that FVTRS during the 20 years of its existence has trained more than 1 lakh youth and it was possible mainly due to the cooperation of the partners. Referring to the importance of skill training, she narrated a short story of a tourist going for a boat-ride with an illiterate boy. On knowing that the boy was illiterate, the tourist told the boy that he has lost half of his life since he never went to school. Little later there was a storm. When the boy learnt that the tourist did not know how to swim he told the tourist that he would lose his whole life. The lesson of the story was that only a skilled person can live or survive. Sr. Daphne mentioned about various government schemes and the partners need to gear up to utilise these opportunities.

Fr V M Thomas, General Body member, mentioned in his talk that skilling India is the main agenda of the present government and there are 500 million youth in the

country out of which 450 million are unskilled. There are 17 Ministries working towards implementing various skill development programmes. He also informed the participants that “Skill Development Ministry” has been recently set up. He exhorted FVTRS and the partners that they need to look for ways and means of scaling-up the work and achievements. In this context he said, *“Madness is doing the same thing and expecting different results.”* He also suggested that FVTRS and the partners could tap various government as well as CSR funds/schemes for skill development projects.

In his address Dr LS Ghandi Doss, Treasurer of FVTRS, said that FVTRS and the partners are having a ‘live-in- relationship’. The Board members and the partners keep changing and yet FVTRS remains constant. He appreciated that with the support of FVTRS many organisations have grown and they have trained youth to earn a living. He said that skill development sector has been undergoing tremendous change and FVTRS and the partners need to catch up with the changes taking place.

### **Session on Tracer Study:**

Dr Uma Vennam, Professor and Head of Department of Social Work at Sri Padmavathi Mahila Vishwa Vidyanilayam, Tirupathi (Seemandhra), made a presentation on Tracer Study. She mentioned that Tracer Study is gaining importance and has become the need of the hour and a buzz word at the Central, State and Regional levels of the government.

While explaining about the Tracer Study she said that it is a new methodology with a simple management tool designed to measure the relevance of vocational training, to document the changes happened in the lives of the former beneficiaries, to study how the interventions contributed to these changes, to gain an insight that will allow the organisations to improve their performance and better planning of projects and activities, to adopt changes in the training curricula, etc.

She said that the objective of the Tracer Study is to know whether the trainees find jobs, using the skills and knowledge acquired from the given training, what skills and competencies are required, saturation level of some of the trades etc. She further explained about the designing of a Tracer Study, steps involved, framing the questionnaire, qualitative and quantitative types of surveys, key areas of data collection, methods of research, stakeholders involved, internal and external study experts, learning and usages from the study and the possible obstacles involved and how to move forward. After her presentation she clarified all the queries raised by the participants.

### **Sharing by the partners:**

Ms Mallika, the representative from Development for Rural Oppressed Peoples Service Society (DROPS), Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu shared about the vision, mission, types of training programmes conducted with the support of FVTRS for both men and women of economically weaker sections, linkages, success stories etc.

Fr Sebastian from Karwar Diocesan Development Council (KDDC), Karwar, Karnataka, mentioned in his sharing that the organisation is working for development of a tribal community called ‘Siddis’ originated from Africa, brought by the Europeans to India as slaves, various training programmes conducted for them, results achieved and the success stories.

SrBindu Thomas from Preriton Ki Rani Community College shared about the organisation's vision and mission, objectives, their involvement in community health related training programmes, number of training programmes conducted and success studies etc.

### **Project Implementation:**

Mr Felix D'Souza, Programme Manager (Monitoring and Evaluation) and Mr Nicholas, Assistant Manager-Monitoring, made presentations on meaningful ways of implementing skill training projects, improved reporting procedure, activities conducted with the collaboration of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) etc.

### **Orientation on the Exposure Visit:**

Mr ML Satyan, Programme Manager (IEC), informed the participants that an Exposure Visit has been planned in tune with one of the selected themes (Person-appropriate Skilling) of the NSC. He explained the objectives of the Exposure Visit. There were brief presentations made by the representatives from five Institutes namely Pathway, Cheshire Home, VidyaSagar, BalaVihar and SevaSamajam Boys Home Industrial School in order to orient the partners about the organisations that they are going to visit. As a token of appreciation FVTRS' Memento was given to these representatives by SrDaphne. After this the partners were divided into 5 groups and each group visited one Institute.

### **Highlights of the Exposure Visit:**

- According to the inabilities of the persons, various skill training programmes such as leaf cup making, art and craft work are selected and taught.
- Without time frame they are trained until they are skilled. Once they are trained, they get placements.
- Follow-up with regard to the social protection of the persons with disabilities is done.
- The products produced by the persons with disabilities are sold by some of the selected students.
- More focus is given on placement – i.e. self-enterprise and employment.
- Importance is also given to documentation process and tracking of ex-trainees through Tracer Study.
- Innovative methods are tried out in skill training while keeping in mind the market-demand.
- All age groups are taken care of well and activities are designed according to each age group.
- Methods of teaching are very effective as students feel very easy to understand.
- They are taught how to control their emotions.
- Formal education and vocational training (mostly eco-friendly trades) go side-by-side.
- Teaching/Coaching is done upto diploma level. A number of trainees (persons with disabilities) have been awarded Gold Medal in all India level competitions.

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# **SKILL INDIA – 8<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL SKILL CONFERENCE**

**30-31 October 2014**

## **Inaugural Session**

The inaugural session began with a prayer song on the theme 'Universal Solidarity'. The prayer song scene showed that human being is the crown of all creation. FVTRS and its partners are committed to human development through skill promotion. Through skill training the lives of the underprivileged youth are illuminated. To symbolise this, the traditional lighting of the lamp was done by the dignitaries.

Mr PM Philip, Executive Director of FVTRS extended a very warm welcome to the dignitaries, Board members, partners, representatives of local NGOs, other stakeholders and media persons to the National Skill Conference, requesting their active participation to make the conference a great success and a learning experience for them. In brief he mentioned about the birth and growth of FVTRS, the objectives, collaborators like ILO and NIOS and the uninterrupted service for the past 20 years.

Dr J Alexander, IAS, FVTRS' Advisory Committee member, in his inspirational introductory talk, expressed that apart from providing training to the youth, the partners should also teach life skills and about the necessity of inculcating skills such as sharing, love, compassion, selflessness etc. He shared his personal experience on the occasion of his visit to the colony in Durban (Africa) that was built by Mahatma Gandhi from his earnings for the apartheid people (black slaves) of Africa. He further narrated two stories which were stressing the need for overcoming selfishness, anger and greed.

Dr RC Gandhi, IAS (Retd), Advisor and Consultant to Educational Institutions, Industries and a Social Human Rights Advocate, was the Guest of Honour. In his address he expressed his happiness to be among the people working for the development of the poor youth, as he himself is working for the cause and development of Dalit community.

Mr DilipChenoy, MD and CEO of National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), New Delhi was the Chief Guest of the conference. In his inaugural address he gave the statistics on the increasing demand for skilled labour and business opportunities available. He spoke about the four challenges faced by NSDC:

- making skill training aspirational
- environment enabling
- qualitative training
- student mobilisation

Further he spoke on setting up various skill training councils at state and regional levels, their operational/functional methods, Public Private Partnership (PPP) set up practised by the Ministry involving 10 confederations/associations/chambers with equity base of 10 crore (Govt of India 49% and private sector 51%), list of NSDC's funding partners, various schemes such as Udaan, STAR introduced by them, the list of 21 sectors identified, having scope/demand for various skill training programmes, mapping of human power requirement, qualification packs (QP) and National Occupation Standards (NOS) being set for adoption in

curriculum by states/ministries, board and universities etc. He further said that NSDC facilitates for skill development by

- Creating opportunities/scope
- Funding the opportunities
- Enabling the opportunities

He further said about the types of association NSDC has with government, state skill missions, corporate, non-profit organisations and academic institutions etc. and also about availability of relevant information on NSDC's website.

Dr Antony Kariyil, in his presidential address mentioned that FVTRS is committed to promote skill training among the school dropout and illiterate youth to make them employable. He was also proud to announce that FVTRS has trained more than one lakh youth in the past years with more than 70 per cent placement record.

Dr LS Ghandi Doss, Treasurer of FVTRS proposed the vote of thanks to the dignitaries who were given a memento as a token of gratitude and appreciation.

### **Presentation on FVTRS**

After the coffee break, Mr Felix D'Souza, Programme Manager (M & E), gave a brief introduction on FVTRS and its activities as many participants were attending the NSC for the first time.

## **THEMATIC SESSIONS**

### **Present skill scenario – Issues, Challenges and Opportunities**

In his keynote address on *Present skill scenario-Issues, Challenges and Opportunities* Dr RC Gandhi said that skill training programmes have to be introduced at school level, as all need to acquire skills. Introducing skill training is indeed a value addition. He further said that skill training should not be community based, it should be meant for all, relevant, not tailor-made, but designed keeping in mind the supply and demand. He stressed that the trainees should be trained in such a way that they become job givers and not job seekers. He further said that the members of the economically backward Dalit community in the country are facing many challenges, though they are capable of achieving any feat and reaching greater heights.

### **Rural poverty and agriculture as livelihood option**

Dr VR Haridas, Zonal Manager Caritas India, Ernakulam, Kerala made a presentation on '*Rural poverty and agriculture as livelihood option*'. He emphasised on the necessity of practicing sustainable agriculture as the livelihood option to address the rural poverty caused by various such as Degradation, Disasters, Diseases, Damage, Death, Dependency, Difficulties etc. The stress was on producing toxic-free food as the chemicals and fertilisers used in producing them are causing life-threatening diseases, to take necessary steps like reducing soil and water pollution. He said that agriculture system adopted should be such that they help farmers and not Corporate Companies. He showed many pictures of the poorest of the poor farmers in Indonesia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and in various parts of India, who are practicing simple innovative ideas to preserve water, to produce

organic manure, growth promoters and are producing various crops in the minimum land and with the least facilities. He further spoke on practising 'P-6 approach' which means Production, Productivity, Procurement, Preservations, Processing, Packing (which includes branding and marketing) for cultivator consumer connectivity, and to adopt integrated farming in order to reduce loss of income from one crop. His key message was that by practising the above simple innovative ideas how the poorest farmers can achieve sustainability and bring in the desired changes in the agricultural system with the minimum land and facilities they have.

### **Skilling youth in renewable energy sources**

Mr Alfred Vinod, Solar Photovoltaic Consultant from Coimbatore made presentation on '*skilling youth in renewable energy sources*'. He explained about the types of renewable and non-renewable energy resources and one of them being the most easily available throughout the year, free of cost and is the major source of renewable energy in India as solar energy, which produces both light and heat. He pointed out that by adopting simple technology how these two energies can be converted into electricity, how large-scale production of both domestic and commercial bio-gas can be produced and can be used for various other applications. He also spoke about the other energies such as thermal energy, wind energy and geo-thermal energy. These energies are very helpful to the rural mass as they can be produced by themselves for their various utilities – lighting for homes, streets, running various motors and machines etc. He pointed out that skill training to youth in solar energy is a short-term course and as the demand for the same in rural and urban areas is drastically increasing, it helps the rural youth in earning a sustainable livelihood. He said that though the cost involved in setting up the solar energy systems is high, the benefits accrued from them in the long run are many.

### **Promoting gainful enterprises**

Mr V Ramakrishnan, Deputy, Director, Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development Institute, Chennai made a presentation on '*Promoting gainful enterprises*'. While giving information on available schemes he mentioned that the government has various schemes to support the rural skilled and unskilled and urban educated youth. He said that the department helps in gaining value to the products produced by the rural youth and quoted the example of giving a brand for the hill-based products such as honey and medicines etc. produced by them. MSME conducts full-fledged entrepreneurial training programmes to these groups in order to help them to establish their own set-up and also to market their products. MSME also helps them financially and provides loans at low interest rate. For this the department has a single window clearance system for registration i.e. one needs to submit application in a district centre of MSME and they will forward the application to the respective department and clearance will be given at the centre where application was submitted within one month's time. Even if clearance is not received within one month's time, the applicant can go ahead with starting the programme.

Mr D Navaneetha Sivakumar, President, Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCI), Chennai also spoke on the same theme *promoting gainful enterprises*. He said that training the youth to become successful entrepreneurs is very challenging but efforts have to be put in to make them self sustainable. He mentioned that one of the major trades currently in demand is the media, where

training in both technical and non-technical trades can be provided to youth, on which the non-profit organisations are not concentrating. Regarding the scope for media trades he quoted the example of TV having numerous channels and each channel running various serials and other programmes throughout the day. He spoke about various financial schemes made available by the Government for the same. Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and DICCI are working together to provide entrepreneurial business opportunities for backward community youth, the opportunity may be utilised by non-profit organisations in their areas. He suggested that the non-profit organisations could come together and form consortium and approach various government departments in order to meet their various supply demands. He quoted the example of a consortium formed at Karur in Tamil Nadu which has obtained the order for supplying uniforms to all the Kendriya Vidyalaya schools throughout the country.

### **31 October 2014**

The day's proceedings started with a silent prayer.

#### **Recapitulation:**

Mr M L Satyan gave the recapitulation on the proceedings of the first day (30 October) of the NSC.

#### **Person appropriate for skilling**

Mr Prateep Chakraborty, Programme Manager-Major Partners, CBM and Mr Nirad Bag, Senior Programme Officer, CBM (ChristoffelBlinden Mission), Bangalore made presentations on the theme "*Person appropriate for skilling*". The highlights of the presentations are given below:

- CBM is an International Christian development organisation, initially set up only for the cause of the visually challenged persons, now works with persons with all kinds of disabilities, active in 80 countries, committed for the cause of improving the quality of life of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and allow them to enjoy their human rights and achieve success through their potential.
- CBM is running 740 projects in the poorest countries, involved in the livelihood activities and 1,05,73,480 PWDs have utilised the services of CBM.
- Recently CBM carried out 10 millionth cataract operations in Tanzania which is a milestone. The organisation has a donor-base of 6,50,000 people across the world.
- The statistics of PWDs in India is 21 million as per 2011 censuses, of which 50 per cent fall below 30 years age and 70 per cent live in rural areas, while their employment rate is only 1%. They are economically backward, deprived, subject to social stigmas.
- Presented case studies of PWDs doing exceptionally well in different sectors with the list of private organisations who have employed only PWDs. TCS and Infosys are the largest employers of PWDs. Point Tech, manufacturers of ball pens, have engaged PWDs in the manufacturing process and CBM is facilitating appropriate skill training and employment of PWDs.
- Urged the participants to include PWDs in the skill training programmes and treat them normally.

## **Soft skill support for livelihood**

Mr Akash Sethi, Executive Director of Quest Alliance, took a session on the theme “*Soft skill support for livelihood*”. He explained about the nature of Quest Alliance and the activities conducted by them with a focus on skill training. The main points highlighted were:

- ❖ Quest Alliance is engaged in research, innovation and advocacy to achieve scalable solutions in the field of education and vocational training using information and communication technology, meant for youth aged between 10 and 30 by providing them training in life skills and facilitate for training programmes in association with multi-stakeholders.
- ❖ Associated with hundreds of schools across India to demonstrate information and communication technology (ICT) models of training. Quest Alliance works with various educational institutions, identifies the trainers from these institutions, provides them the digital content, space etc. to train the youth.
- ❖ Creating factory environment is one of the elements of the training which enables the youth to take decisions at board and shop floor levels. Provide youth with career guidance, counselling, inform them about the appropriate employment opportunities available, provide placement, post placement support etc.
- ❖ Achieved 60% placement of the youth trained. They keep in touch with the alumni's through SMS service. They have created Helpline for the employed alumni's to share their problems faced at their work place within 45-60 days of their employment and help them with solutions. Quest Alliance has designed its Digital Life Skill Toolkit (DLST) meant for training the youth in partnering with Cap Foundation and Microsoft.

He screened a short film on the youth trained by Quest in soft skills and continuing their education/employed and earning a decent livelihood.

## **Skilling the urban poor**

The session on “*Skilling the urban poor*” had two resource persons namely Mr Shekhar Arora, Director-HR, Hinduja Foundries, Chennai and Mr Jayachandran Rajarethinam, CEO, Centre for Development Alternatives, Chennai.

According to Mr Arora urban poor youth are the most impoverished as their aspirations and requirements are more as compared to rural youth. He said that certificates issued by educational institutions do not fetch jobs. He referred to Ashok Leyland's 6th plant set up in Panthnagar in Uttarakhand with world class technology, where 10+2 students are appointed in the plant for on-job training and learning, with a pattern where they work for 5 days in a week and 1 day is dedicated for learning. The learning part is being provided by NTTF, Bangalore. After 4 years of this training and learning, they will be given a Diploma certificate that they are full-fledged skilled persons. During this period they are given the salary of a regular employee. However, continuity of job after 4 years is not ensured but they can find jobs anywhere.

Mr Arora appreciated FVTRS for having good visibility, popularity and doing excellent work among the underprivileged youth and that he is privileged to be associated with FVTRS. He said that FVTRS' work is very relevant, required to meet the huge demand for skilled labour. Hence he urged the participants to make

sincere efforts to provide technical and life skills to youth and prepare them for employment/self-employment.

Mr Jayachandran Rajarethinam in his address said that the urban poor are the migrated rural poor in search of livelihood. As migrants, they face many barriers like difficulty in psychological adjustment due to displacement, lack identity, unable to have a shelter to live, financial insecurity, and other exploitations. They are forced to compete with local population and end up in taking up informal jobs to earn their daily bread. He referred about the pathetic situation of labour class in Mumbai. The urban poor look forward for a secured employment/self employment but are unable to get a decent job as they lack employable-technical skills and life skills such as personal grooming, communication, time management, multi-tasking, latest marketing, deliverable-presentation skills. To illustrate the problems of the urban poor he narrated his own experience of facing various hardships in the city when he migrated from the rural area many years ago.

### **Group Discussion**

Mr GS Sethi, FVTRS' General Body member, was the Moderator for the group discussion. He referred to Mr DilipChenoy's speech where he mentioned that FVTRS should add one more 'zero' to the number of trainees being trained in various skills. He said that it is important for FVTRS and the partners to scale-up the skill training activities. He explained the following questions before the participants to share their views and thoughts.

1. What are the emerging challenges and issues as far as livelihood, unemployment and unskilled persons?
2. What are the opportunities that are coming up?
3. What are strengths of the interventions of FVTRS?
4. What are the areas of improvement that FVTRS has to be concerned about in the future?
5. What are your suggestions for better strategizing FVTRS to be more effective?

He invited the partners to place on record their views and suggestions to FVTRS in order to prepare a strategy paper which helps scaling up the activities, expand the network and the funding partners etc.

### **Plenary Session**

After lunch the plenary session was held which was moderated by Mr GS Sethi and Mr John Peter Nelson, member of FVTRS' Governing Board. Representatives of six groups presented their reports. Based on the reports Mr GS Sethi presented the draft strategy for FVTRS.

### **Valedictory Session**

The session began with "Tamil Thai Vazhthu" (a patriotic song saluting Mother Tamil). Dr LS Ghandi Doss, Treasurer-FVTRS, welcomed the Chief Guest, Mr R Natarajan, Project Director, Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC), the Guest of Honour Ms S Selvi Ravindran, Additional General Manager-Projects, BHEL-Chennai, FVTRS' board members and the participants to the Valedictory session of the Skill Conference.

Mr GS Sethi presented the summary of the conference with details of themes, resource persons, and the highlights of various sessions. He also mentioned certain limitations of FVTRS such as single donor, insufficient funds, few staff, limited network, etc.

In his presidential address Dr Antony Kariyil said, *“I am privileged to attend this conference and I have attended all the 8 conferences conducted in different parts of India. The conferences have provided lot of learning through input sessions by resource persons, deliberations by special guests, discussions, interactions among the partners etc”*. He thanked all the partners for their continued support and active participation to make these conferences a great success and also for their efforts in bringing the underprivileged youth to the mainstream.

The Guest of Honour Ms S Selvi Ravindran, Additional General Manager-Projects, BHEL, mentioned in her speech the issue of women who are not given importance in public sector and not allowed to reach the higher level, despite their competencies. She pointed out that the women representation in public sector is only 12 per cent whereas they constitute 50 per cent of the total population. To substantiate this she narrated her own personal experience in her school/college days. She was looked down upon by her classmates although she had achieved a distinction in her 10<sup>th</sup> class, in spite of hailing from a poor family. She said that it was her ‘Will power’ that enabled her to reach this stage.

She said that skill training and education alone do not help the youth to achieve success in their life. Proper guidance and motivation is very much required and gave the example of her nephew who dropped out of school and ran away from home who later became a trainer for IAS officers. She said that NGOs, parents, friends and people need to extend help to poor youth as they have lots of potential. Referring to the importance other countries give for skill training, she gave the statistics on the number of apprentices and the number of vocational skill training colleges those countries have.

She mentioned that as per the target for 2014-15, India needs to skill 103.42 lakh persons, whereas the progress made as on 31 July 2014 is 21.88 lakh persons. In such skill-deficit scenario FVTRS could play an important role and urged the partners to utilise various programmes of NSDC. She mentioned that there are 173 public sectors classified under power, manufacturing, mining and oil and altogether their allocation is about 100 crores for skill development. She suggested that FVTRS could tap CSR funds. While concluding her talk she appreciated the work done by FVTRS and said that business houses should realise the importance of skill training and adopt the policy of ‘precept to practice and walk the talk’.

Mr R Natarajan, Project Director of Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC), Chennai started his address with a line *“the man who knows he knows not knows what he knows”* and they are the youth. He said that the objective of TNSDC is to teach, train and transform the underprivileged youth as useful citizens and successful entrepreneurs. He stated currently the number of educational institutions in Tamil Nadu are outnumbering the number of students passing out and have reached saturation point and hence they are moving towards the green park called skill development. While speaking about TNSDC he highlighted the following:

- ❖ TNSDC was formed 3 years ago, now grown as an adult and registered as a company, running many technical, mechanical and heavy engineering training

programmes and quoted names of few training programmes and the achievements so far made is only a drop in the ocean.

- ❖ As a pioneering effort TNSDC has trained 25000 people in Security course with the support of Tamil Nadu Police Department and the Additional General of Police has been the nodal officer to train the youth for Security jobs. 17 engineering graduates have taken up security training and appointed in software companies to stand out and not to work inside.
- ❖ In collaboration with BHEL, TNSDC is running a training programme called 'Advanced Pipe Building' costing Rs.85000 per trainee totally borne by the government of Tamil Nadu and no other government is running any training at such a high cost. Many trainees are appointed in Middle-east countries and the remaining trainees are yet to be appointed.
- ❖ 10000 youth are being trained in retail sector management in collaboration with the Institute of Cooperative Management, 2000 youth in heavy motor vehicle in association with Ashok Leyland, appointed as lorry drivers with salary of Rs.45000 per month. Other sectors where trainees are being trained are health sector in association with Apollo Hospitals and two/three- wheeler mechanism in collaboration with TVS Motors.
- ❖ TNSDC has tied-up with British Council to teach the 500 post-graduate nursing youth in English to facilitate them in getting jobs outside India.

He said that the main challenge has been finding the youth and announced that if any non-profit organisation is having the youth and assures 80 per cent placement of the trained youth, TNSDC is ready to finance the entire project cost of training programmes in technical, mechanical and heavy engineering.

Mr PM Philip, Executive Director, in his vote of thanks, thanked the special guests, Board members, partners, media, Asha Nivas, DBICA, Travel agent, Green Park hotel staff and all the FVTRS staff for their efforts in making the conference a success. The NSC concluded with the National Anthem.

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## MEMORIAL LECTURE

Every year FVTRS organises Memorial Lecture in remembrance of Bro Jose Vetticattil, the first President of FVTRS. This year the Memorial Lecture was included in the NSC. The programme started with lighting of lamp by the dignitaries. The participants observed one minute silence to pay homage to late Bro Jose Vetticattil. It was then followed by 'Floral Tribute' by dignitaries and participants.

Written Homage on Bro Jose Vetticattil was read. A documentary film titled "The Man-His Mission" on Bro Jose was screened. After this the Guest Speaker and Moderator were invited to the dais.

Mr PM Philip welcomed the Guest Speaker, the Board members and all participants. He said, "This occasion is very important as we are remembering the person who had taken up initiatives for the cause providing skill training to youth about twenty years ago when nobody thought about this".

Mr ML Satyan, Programme Manager (IEC), introduced the Guest Speaker of the Memorial Lecture, Mr GnaniSankaran, Writer-Journalist from Chennai. He narrated his personal experience and observations during his two visits to Mr GnaniSankaran's house.

Since the theme of the Memorial Lecture was "*Social obstacles in skill development of our youth*", Mr GnaniSankaran, in his lecture highlighted the following macro-level social obstacles:

- **Family:** The family influences hugely on the future of the children as parents have lot of expectations from their children and decide about the field which their children should enter rather than giving them the liberty of choosing their paths, thus leading them to enter a field not-interesting which results in failures. Moreover, the youth are caught in the power structure in the family which is mostly undemocratic. He gave an example of his only son who was unable to study.
- **Gender:** The issues in the family are related to gender. Boy child and girl child get different treatment in the family. When it comes to skill training there are certain trades that are male-dominated. Women do not get an opportunity to learn such trades. Trans-gender persons are excluded everywhere.
- **Caste:** The gender issue leads to caste system that exists in the society. Caste also determines the job one has to do and there is social resistance to change once occupation. In both gender and caste the occupation is decided by stereotypes and not by aptitudes and talents. Reservation and minority quota are due to the caste system.

- **Media:** today media is not challenging. It is supporting the status quo or compromising with the reality. In Tamil Nadu media and alcohol are the two intoxicants that are affecting the skills of people. 40,000 crore worth liquor is being sold every year and the tax revenue earned by the Government is about 30,000 crore. Alcoholism leads to sickness and deaths in the family and the family maintenance burden is passed on to women and children, resulting in school dropout etc.
- **Government:** Biased government systems perpetuate the caste system and non-inclusion of women in government jobs etc. The government also fails to curb media and alcoholism. They are not able to prevent the drop outs. The educational system is child friendly. Today's education has a disconnect with the day to day life.

He added that job is only a tool for happy life. However this is not sufficient for a happy life. The speaker emphasised the need for life skills while skilling the youth. The ability to think and take decisions for themselves is what is gained by life skill trainings. He also said that more vocational streams in the educational system must be available to all children irrespective of caste, colour and religion. While pointing out to gender issue he said that we need to make skill available to women as per their aptitudes.

Dr J Alexander, the Moderator of the session, thanked the speaker for sharing his personal life experiences and knowledge that were inspiring. He quoted a dialogue of a teacher and student, where teacher clarifies to the student that darkness is the absence of light and evil is the absence of love and compassion. He too emphasised the need for incorporating life skills into the skill training module.

The Memorial Lecture concluded with the formal vote of thanks proposed by Sr.Suman.

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