

IUS INTERCONTINENTAL SEMINAR

on

Education and Social Inclusion: Challenges of Diversity

(Phase III) 14 – 17 FEBRUARY 2014

The third phase of the IUS Inter-Continental Seminar on "Education and Social Inclusion: Challenges of Diversity" was held at the Salesian College, Sonada Campus, Darjeeling from 14-17th February 2014 as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebration of the College. The IUS (Salesian University Institution) is an Association of Don Bosco Universities and Colleges across the world. They comprise of 11 Universities and 65 Colleges spread across 15 countries. The first and second phases were held in Madrid, Spain (February 2013) and Sao Paulo, Brazil (September 2013) respectively. It was decided that the next and the concluding phase will be held in Venice, Italy in November 2014. This Intercontinental Seminar Series, sponsored by the Salesian Higher Education Network, is an attempt to bring together the scholars, academicians and educationists to deliberate on the challenges and responses from different cultural contexts addressing the issue of education and social inclusion. The seminars deliberated in detail on the question of social inclusion from the diverse regional, linguistic, religious and cultural perspectives so as to get a full picture of how society can be better imagined and organized and where immediate action is required. The current edition of the seminar was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Thomas Ellicherail sdb, Provincial, Salesian of Don Bosco, Kolkatta, India. The Presidential address was delivered by Dr. Br. Mario Olmos sdb, IUS General Coordinator, Rome. He elucidated on the positive role of education in building peace in Guatemala and El Salvador through his paper "*Social Exclusion and Violence in Guatemala and El Salvador: Some Contribution from Education for a Culture of Peace*". The Keynote address was by Padma Bhushan recipient Dr. T.K. Oommen, Professor Emeritus, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Prof. Oommen, while delineating the various levels of social exclusion, argued that even as diversity needs to be promoted, what is lethal and to be squarely addressed is a combination of diversity and inequality.

There were papers presented by national as well international participants on sub-themes such as: *Social Inclusion & Exclusion among Various Tribes; Role of Institutions towards Social Inclusion; Education & Culture; : Social Inclusion and Youth; Towards Inclusive Education; Social Exclusion and its Impact; Social Inclusion and Diversity in Education; and Inclusion/Exclusion: Challenges of Diversity.* Fr. Prof. Stephen Mavelly, Vice Chancellor, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati gave the Valedictory address. Mr. Punit Yadav IAS and District Magistrate, Darjeeling was the Chief Guest for the occasion. Prof. Aditya Mukherjee, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University addressed the plenary session on the topic "*Communalism and Casteism in the Indian Education System: From the Colonial to the Post-Colonial*", wherein he emphasized the need for a universal, inclusive and secular education.

The Principals of Eight Colleges of Darjeeling region were felicitated during the seminar. Fr. Prof. George Thadathil, Principal, Salesian College, Sonada-Siliguri; Dr. Carlos Nanni, Vice Chancellor, Pontifical University, Rome; Romane Fortes Santos, Vice Rector, UNISAL and Fr. Dr. Juan Sabino sdb, Coordinator, IUS, Spain led different sessions. The IUS Business Meet was also held as part of the gathering. The seminar came to a close with an enchanting cultural programme performed by the students of the College and the brothers of the Seminary







