

**MINUTES OF THE**  
**The SIGNIS INDIA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**New Media for New Generation**  
**Carnival Club, Yapral, Secunderabad**  
**16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Secunderabad** Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>:SIGNIS India organized SIGNIS National Assembly in association with SIGNIS A.P. from 16<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> February, 2013. The theme of the convention was “New Media for New Generation”. This convention had around 130 delegates across India.

The Assembly started with an opening prayer by Sr. Teresa Kamsuan (FMA) leading the Assembly into a prayerful mood with the prayer of “Gratitude, Blessings and intercession”.

Mr. Sunil Lucas, SIGNIS India President and Fr. Norbert Herman SVD, SIGNIS India Secretary welcomed Mr. Augustine Loorthusamy, the SIGNIS World President; Mr. Alvito D’Souza, SIGNIS World Secretary; Most Rev. Bp. Chacko Thottumarickal SVD, Chairperson of CBCI Office of Social Communications and Fr. Faustine Lobo, Director of Pontifical Mission Society Bangalore.

Mr. Sunil Lucas explained the reason for the special session before the formal inauguration of the Assembly. He said that all the secretaries of CBCI-OSC are present after their regional meeting in Hyderabad.

SIGNIS World President Mr. Augustine Loorthusamy gave a word of appreciation to all gathered and expressed a sense of pride in being present in the SIGNIS National Assembly.

Fr. Faustine Lobo Director, Pontifical Mission Society Bangalore started his presentation by defining Evangelization: “Communicate the experience of the Risen Lord Jesus with others; the One I have seen, heard and touched. We must have an encounter with the Risen Jesus as the Disciples encountered Jesus.” He encouraged the participants to focus their attention on the media gadgets for the sake of communication of faith. And thus SIGNIS India should be at the disposal of evangelization.

Mr. Sunil Lucas, President SIGNIS India, thanked Fr. Faustine for his excellent presentation and Fr. Norbert Herman SVD presented him with a memento as a token of appreciation.

## **Presentation by Mr. Alvito D' Souza, SIGNIS World Secretary**

Mr. Alvito D' Souza appreciated the presentation of Fr. Faustine and spoke about the SIGNIS criteria for evaluation. He gave an example on the SIGNIS World's areas of intervention through cinema, radio, internet, advocacy, media education, arts, spirituality, health education, religious freedom, conflict resolution, life enrichment, combat consumerism, Empowerment of Children, Human Trafficking, Training Workshops, Drama for Life and Music for Life.

The topic of his presentation was SIGNIS PROJECT EVALUATION GUIDELINES.

Mr. Alvito appealed to the gathering to involve teams at different levels to engage to discourse, share, discover and plan priorities at the local as well as national level. Through our reports and communicating results of evaluations to all, we engage open discussion, providing the checks and balances that lead to transparency and accountability. According to him the SIGNIS evaluation process is more than a simple screening process. It is an exercise in community building. The Focus is not on control but rather on responsible growth.

**George Plathottam SDB Secretary, CBC - OSC** presented SIGNIS Project Guidelines and Comments. He stressed to follow the project guidelines as indicated in the form Applications are divided into three, Equipment, Training and Production.

**Dr. Magimai Pragasam** also gave certain guidelines for the screening of the projects.

The day began with Holy Mass presided over by Fr. Bernard, Vicar General; Fr. Norbert Herman SVD and Fr. Mariadas SDB. Fr. BalaShowry, Director Amruthavani(Chairperson, AP SIGNIS) welcomed the gathering on the occasion. Fr. T. Mariadas invited the performers for a welcome dance.

Fr. T. Mariadas SDB , President SIGNIS AP called upon the chief guest Rev. Mons. Bernard, the Vicar General to the Bishop, to light the lamp, hence formally inaugurating the assembly. Among the dignitaries were Mr. Augustine Loorthusamy, SIGNIS World President, Mr. Alvito D' Souza , SIGNIS General Secretary; Mr. Sunil Lucas, President

SIGNIS India; Fr. John Edappilly CMI, Vice President SIGNIS India; Fr. Norbert Herman SVD, Secretary, SIGNIS India; Fr. George Plathottam SDB, Director NISCORT who added to the flame of SIGNIS national Assembly

2013. Fr. Bernard V.G., the chief guest for the day, congratulated the gathering for its initiatives towards dealing with the technological challenges in the present time.

### **New Media New Generation: Keynote address by Mr. Dony Peter C.**

Using Ad films, web ads and web info, the new generation presenter - Mr. Dony Peter C., enlightened the assembly on market brands and benefits, media building trust, Power of Media in connecting the people with facts, Jesus and Religion etc. He threw light on the usefulness of Face book in order to show how the audience is in control of the media. He used several visuals to show how the media made an impact on young people.

**Mr Augustine Loorthusami** addressed the SIGNIS members regarding the vision and mission and priorities of SIGNIS

### **He highlighted the SIGNIS Priorities in Asia and the World**

- SIGNIS uses culture and cinema to dialogue with other faiths
- An increase in Inter-faith juries in Teheran and Bangladesh
- Film awards in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Hong Kong, and Indonesia
- We are challenging SIGNIS India to move in this direction too, since we have Bollywood as part of the culture.
- Partnership activities with WACC, CAMECO, Deutsche Welle and Global Media Forums

### **Business Session**

The session began with the approval of the Time Table proposed by Fr. Balashowry and seconded by Fr. Gilbert. After this the voters from various regions were identified in order to make it easier for voting and counting. The number of voters is as follows: there were 53 voting members.

Minutes of the National Assembly were presented by Fr. Norbert Herman SVD, National Secretary SIGNIS INDIA followed by Acceptance of the minutes. CM Paul proposed the acceptance and Fr. Ashok Vaghela SJ seconded the same. This was unanimously passed.

The session began with Fr. Norbert Herman SVD giving the financial reports: Receipts and Payments 2012 - 13, Proposed Income and Expenditure for the year 2013 – 14. With minor corrections and clarifications like - some needed headings to be changed / regularized, Accounts to be mentioned clearly,

contribution from membership and projects be mentioned separately, etc. the financial reports were voted for and accepted. Mr. Dilip Rosario proposed, seconded by Fr. Gilbert. The Motion was passed unanimously.

### **Regional Activity Reports**

Under the chairmanship of Fr. John Edappilly, the secretaries of various regions, presented their regional activities through audio visuals. Fr. Norbert Herman SVD presented the National Activities, followed by Agra, Andhra, Bengal, BIJHAN, Karnataka, North East, Orissa, Tamil Nadu Western Regions and NISCORT. Congrats to all the secretaries for preparing short activity reports!

### **STUDY DAY 18th February 2013**

Fr Mariadas SDB greeted everyone and invited Fr. Balashowry, Organizing committee Chairman to give an introductory session on the theme “New media for New Generation.”

Fr. Balashowry used a power point presentation to highlight the theme. He concluded that the focus of the study would be the use of the mobile media and using the internet.

Fr Mariadas then invited Fr. Vincent B. Wilson to chair the session. He requested Fr. Sebastian to introduce the speaker. Fr Sebastian invited the speaker, Mr. Sumanta Banerjee, Head of CMC, Limited. Mr. Sumanta showed a video presentation to initiate his session. Mr. Sumanta explained how all devices today could now be controlled through hand held devices like mobiles or I-pads.

### **Afternoon session:**

During the second session, Fr. Mariadas invited Sr. Joeyanna to moderate the session. Fr. Sebastian then invited the speaker, Mr. Michael Peria, Secretary, SIGNIS AP, to take up the next study session.

Mr. Michael Peria spoke of static and dynamic websites. Timely websites are those which are constantly updated. He enumerated how a good website should be.

After the session, the moderator called forth questions from the assembly.

## **Feb. 19**

The participants assembled in the hall at 7. 00 am, for the Holy Mass. It was creatively animated by MP and BIJHAN Regions. Fr. Jomon James SVD, Fr. John Wakhla SVD and Fr. Cyprian Kulu were the main celebrants, concelebrated by other priest participants.

The first session of the day Fr. V. Sebastian, President, Varanasi Region then introduced Mr. V. Lakshmikant, a speaker of the session who has many feathers on his cap.

He dealt with the topic ‘Social Media’ where he took the listeners back to the Industrial Revolution era – the advent of print technology. Commenting on Social Media he said “We use facebook to schedule the products, twitter to coordinate and you tube to tell the world”. Technology has changed the way we communicate to a great extend he added. He also said that the convergence of technology is beyond one’s imagination and that it is all integrated through the mobile phone.

## **Felicitation and Awarding Ceremony**

At 6.00 pm, the assembly gathered for the solemn Awarding ceremony in the lawn, Carnival Club, Tulsi Gardens. A prayer Dance by Kristu Bharati set the right atmosphere to the solemn moment followed by a welcome note by Fr. Balashowry, Chairman Organizing Committee and Director of Amruthvani, Regional Communication Centre. Shri Dhama Kishore, IAS, Govt. of AP, Chief Guest, Bishop M.D Prakasam, Bishop of Nellore, the Vice Chairman, APBC, Guest of honor, Mr. Augustine Lourthusamy, President, SIGNIS World and Mr. Sunil Lucas, President, SIGNIS India, Fr. John Edappilly CMI, Vice president, SIGNIS India and Fr. Maria Doss SDB, President, AP Region were felicitated.

## **Study Tour:**

The climax of the SIGNIS National Assembly in Hyderabad 2013, was the Study Tour to the Film City. The participants left the venue at 7.30 am in two buses with great excitement and curiosity to discover the unknown world for all of us. Then a Fascinating Journey Began in RAMOJI FILM CITY, the World’s Largest Film Studio Complex; with experience larger-than-life entertainment, thrills, shows, fun rides, food, shopping and other excitements. Some of the most fascinating experiences were: Ramoji Movie Magic, Ramoji Tower,

Fundustan, Borasura and the like. The Opening and the Closing ceremonies were yet wonderful moments too.

**Evaluation:**

- The atmosphere and the food were good.
- Key note address was really good
- There is lot of improvement in the SIGNIS India Assembly
- Speakers for the study days could have been better
- Timing of the session could have been outside the lent
- Should be more practical for the pastoral ministry
- Need to organize better

Thank you for SIGNIS AP for hoisting the assembly 2013.

Fr. Norbert Herman SVD

Secretary SIGNIS India