



Dear Friends,

Cordial greetings from Don Bosco Mission Office, Bangalore!

It gives me great joy to come back to you with some more news about the happenings in our mission in the past year. As I recall with gratitude the staunch support that you have been giving us, I must admit that it gives us added incentive and motivation to move forward with total trust and confidence in God. That this provident God of ours will never abandon us is a joy that can never be sufficiently explained. This spirit of depending totally on God was a life-style lived by Don Bosco, and effectively transmitted to us by Rev. Fr Thomas Vailatt, the pioneer of our mission in Bangalore.

Fr Thomas Vailatt left for his heavenly reward on 13th March, 2023. Although the news of his death came as a surprise, it seemed all too sudden. It was a natural consequence of his age and fragility of health. He was 93. He was 70 years a Salesian and 60 years a Priest. It is, no doubt, a life-time achievement. His trust in God knew no limits. I would even term his trust in God as being 'crazy.'



The departure of Fr Thomas is a great loss to our mission and to all the beneficiaries of our mission. He



was a person who took the "Road Less Travelled." The path that he trod was not strewn with roses and diamonds, they rather had a lot of thorns. He endured them for the sake of the mission, because he had a sense of purpose – "ad maiorem dei gloriam (to the greater glory of God)!"

Those who knew Fr Thomas will vouch for it that he lived the life of a mendicant. Like Don Bosco, he was not ashamed to beg for a noble cause. He was not timid in asking any person of any rank, rich or middle class, to help for the needs of the poor. It was his conviction that those who generously donated were not only building a better future for the poor and abandoned, but were also securing a reward in heaven.

I recently came across a quote from Maya Angelou that was heart-warming: "I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver." May you all experience that liberation of the soul!

Fr Francis Joseph Vattukulam SDB

Proposed Project for the Displaced Youth of Manipur, India

Background of the Project

Manipur, located in the northeastern region of India, is a state known for its rich cultural diversity, geographical beauty, and history. The majority of Manipur's landmass comprises of hills inhabited by diverse tribal groups, constituting 90% of the state's geographical area. These tribal communities, categorized broadly as Nagas and Kukis, form a significant part of Manipur's population, with 43% belonging to these groups. These tribal populations are accorded Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, while the Meitei, the primary ethnic group of the valley, have been classified as Other Backward Class (OBC) with some in certain areas being categorized as Scheduled Castes (SC).

Manipur has been experiencing communal riots that have engulfed the state for four months. At least 180 people have been killed and 300 wounded in violence that began in May 2023. The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Manipur has divided the state like never before. The violence, arson, and killings in Manipur have led to a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in temporary shelters. Many of them run away from the state and are sheltered in other states like Karnataka (especially in Bangalore).

We have identified 35 such youths who are eligible for higher studies which they gave up due to this crisis. We decided to educate them and make them eligible for employment. Due to the high financial implications, it is necessary for us to seek external support to cater to their educational expenses.

Project Purpose, Goals, Direct Beneficiaries, Results and Success Indicators

The purpose of the project is to provide educational support to 35 youths, 26 girls and 9 boys, who are affected by the ethnic conflict/civil unrest in the state of Manipur in India.

Expected Results of the Project:

- **Access to Education:** 35 youth from Manipur who are currently facing difficulties in continuing their education within the state will be provided educational scholarships.
- **Holistic Support:** The selected youth will receive comprehensive assistance, including coverage of college and boarding fees for a period of three years.
- **Empowerment:** The project aims to empower the youth to become self-reliant and self-sufficient, breaking the cycle of dependency and contributing to their personal growth.
- **Employment Prospects:** The project is expected to increase their chances of securing employment, providing economic stability for them and their families.

By addressing the challenges faced by young people in the state, this project seeks to create a brighter and more hopeful future for both the individuals involved, their families and the overall socio-economic landscape of Manipur.

Planned Measures and Activities

The youths will be admitted in two of our Don Bosco Colleges to continue their higher studies (college education at the Graduation level).

The tuition fees, hostel fees, university fees, food and other expenses of these displaced students will be given by the Salesian Mission by way of Educational Scholarship.

26 of them will pursue their graduation course at Don Bosco College Chitradurga, and the other 9 at Don Bosco College Yadgir.

Along with college education, the students will also be provided with life skill training, personality development, sports, etc., to ensure a wholesome development.

Project Justification

Among the most affected in the ongoing ethnic conflict in Manipur are school-going children, college/university applicants, and young people seeking employment.

While the government asserts that normalcy will return soon, the emotional wounds and distrust

may prove challenging to heal, thus making it difficult for them to go back to their villages.

Given these challenging circumstances, this project aims to provide educational scholarships to 35 deserving youths from Manipur, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to become employable, thus offering a ray of hope in the midst of adversity.



ILLUSTRATIVE BUDGET

Budget item	Ud.	Ud. Price	Total amount in local currency	Total amount in Euros/US
Education Scholarship for 35 youth to pursue their 3-year degree courses				
Tuition Fees for three years	35	90000.00	3150000.00	35795.00
Boarding Fees (for three years)	35	147000.00	5145000.00	58466.00
Stationery and Education Materials	35	21600.00	756000.00	8591.00
Personal Expenses	35	15000.00	525000.00	5966.00
Textbooks and Notebooks	35	9000.00	315000.00	3580.00
University Registration Fees	35	19500.00	682500.00	7756.00
Study Tour (three years)	35	9000.00	315000.00	3580.00
Total			10888500.00	123734.00



The Great Harvest:
Deacons preparing to be ordained by the end of 2023.



Thanksgiving Eucharist: Our New Priests of the year.



Giving us Hope: The Newly Professed and the Perpetually Professed.



Never Lose Hope; Believe in Yourself

Durga, a young girl from a middle-class family in Kolkata faced tough challenges and difficulties after her father passed away due to cancer. Since her mother was unable to support the family of four, she sent her children to other members of the family. Durga was sent to stay with her paternal grandmother. Durga's grandmother worked as a housekeeper and she had limitations in taking care of her grandchild. When she moved to the city of Bengaluru, she was subjected to inhuman torture. She was rescued by CHILDLINE and the police, and was re-enrolled in a mainstream school in the 7th grade. She was then transferred to BOSCO Rainbow Home where she studied till 10th and then to BOSCO Vatsalya Bhavan to continue her education. She wanted to become a beautician and so joined the course at St Joseph's community college. She is now a certified beautician working with one of the leading salons in the city. Durga is extremely grateful to BOSCO for teaching her to be a human person again. She is now independent, successful in her chosen career and has plans to get married soon. Durga is no longer a victim but a strong advocate for other children who cannot speak for themselves.

You can always contact us:

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