

STAND celebrating Silver Jubilee

Are you the batch of students of 1990's of St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu? You are one of the luckiest, and you know why? You had the opportunity what your previous batch of students did not get. Dear Alumni I am taking about the experience of STAND the wonderful social immersion programme available only in St. Xavier's Palayamkottai. Started in the year 1993 the unique experience and experiment of St. Xavier's is now celebrating its Silver Jubilee this academic year 2018-19. At the request of Fr. Antonysamy, S.J., the Secretary and the Director of Alumni Association I feel honoured and privileged to write about STAND (Students Training and Action for Neighbourhood Development).

Being the founder director of STAND I am extremely happy to greet all of you on this occasion of the Silver Jubilee Year for STAND. I recall the days when we began this outreach programme in our college on 13th August, 1993. They were the moments of joy and consolation for all of us. It was a joyous and happy moment that for the first time in the history of St. Xavier's a dream has come true. The dream of taking the fruits of university education to the villages; the dream of reaching out to the neighbours in and around the college so that the poor of the villages find their way to the college be part of rest of the students that they too can access the knowledge which was once forbidden to them due to many reasons. It was also a dream for the Jesuit management to expose our students to the realities of the villages and sensitise our students to grow as a responsible citizens of the country; make them men and women of quality, men and women for others by involving them in the service of the villages around them; and thus was the birth of STAND (Students Training and Action for Neighbourhood Development).

In the history of nearing 100 years of our college, this outreach unit has completed 25 years; one quarter of the life of the college. It is a proud moment for all of us Xaverian's as well as our adopted villagers around our neighbourhood. Thousands of our students who went through this unique experience who are making tremendous impact as Xaverian's all over the world can feel happy that this unit which once helped you to be close to the simple people is now celebrating its 25th year of its success filled journey. The present batch of students, staff and Management want to thank the Lord Almighty for the growth of STAND. Number of activities have been planned to celebrate the Jubilee meaningfully well taking into consideration the participation of the village community, students (present and past) and all of its stakeholders.

The Silver Jubilee has been planned in three different levels; first, an inaugural function; second at the level of the present set of students; third, at the level of the people from our villages; fourth, at the level of academic interest by organising a National Seminar and fifth, a Civic function in February 28, 2019 to mark the valediction of the Silver Jubilee.

1. At the level of organising inaugural functions:

On 17th December 2018, the inaugural function to mark the Jubilee was held. Mr. Jhon Peter from Trichy who earlier the co-ordinator of SHEPHERD Programme in St. Joseph College, Trichy was the special invitee to share his experience in this kind of experiment in our Jesuit colleges. Rev. Dr. Jerold Ravi the Madha TV south zone co-ordinator was the chief guest. He was the one who was very helpful in the earlier times inviting us to Chinthamani Village where he was the Pastor. A grand inaugural function was

held in this village to mark the beginning of STAND in 1993. Three things need to be highlighted during silver jubilee celebration on December 17th. First time a great effort has gone in to document STAND activities by releasing a book. To make the document in the visual form a DVD has been released with the interview of our people, students, staff and administration along with breathe taking visual impact. It was a long time dream to have a website for STAND and that is materialised during the inauguration. Now for the first time we have a website----- We will update you with all the news and views and the new development in STAND through our website.

2. At the level of current batch of students:

Village camps have been reorganised into three days hands on experience in the villages learning the art of making handicraft items like paper cutting products, artificial jewellery making and small tailoring works etc., with the help of micro finance units from EQUITAS organisation. The entire UG second year student and the PG first year students underwent this unique and useful programme. Their products have been displayed in the College for sale. Orders came and the students and staff of our college appreciated this initiative.

3. At the level of people of our villages:

Inter Village Competition "INVICO" comprised of sports, literary and other cultural competition at the village level has been completed and the final show is going to be held at the college premises on 20th January 2019. Selected fourteen competitions have been held in all the 25 villages. Our students conducted this events successfully with the help of their contact staff. The list of three winners of each of the fourteen competitions has been taken and they will be the participants for the January 20th INVICO programme. We expect around 1000 people on that day. The events are well planned for the day. Twenty five vans will bring the people from the 25 villages. There will be competitions again on the same fourteen events in the morning hours the 3 winners of each of the events will be honoured during our final day celebration on February 28th 2019. Lunch has been organised at the Xavier Hostel for all the villagers along with all the teaching and non teaching staff of our college and the student volunteers who help on that day. In the afternoon around 2 pm function has been in Loyola Hall where there will be felicitation, cultural programme by the people and our students. At the end of the function there will be photo sessions with our people and each one will be gifted with a bed sheet worth Rs. 150. I welcome the Alumni whoever is available on that day kindly join us for the celebration and lunch.

4. At the level of academic interest:

One day National Seminar is organised on the theme of 'The Role of Higher Education in Rural Development: Innovations and Best Practices' on 30th January 2019. The proceedings of the seminar will be published in a book form with ISBN number. Intellectually sound papers have been reaching us and it is going to be an intellectually enriching and stimulating experience. The Alumni are invited to this programme too. The seminar details are put up in our website both college and STAND.

5. At the level of public level functions:

On 27th February 2019 Self Help women from our neighbourhood will come and exhibit their handicraft products for sale. Natural food items will be served in the campus so as to promote natural way of life. Alumni with their family members are invited to visit the stalls of the village women and are encouraged to purchase products from them so as to enrich the village women livelihood.

Grand Finale is organised on 28th February 2019. There will be a grand civic function will be conducted to conclude the Silver Jubilee Celebrations. Prize distribution and cultural performances of our students will be displayed in the presence of many important dignitaries, former Directors, Principals, Rectors along with village people and students in our campus. Apart from honouring the prize winners of the competitions, we are going to give 25 beneficiaries a goat each worth Rs. 3000. A souvenir will be released on that day with the creative works of our students and people.

I thank the management, staff and students, Alumni, parents, past directors who have contributed to the growth and the development of STAND. May it continue to grow and help many more students in the days to come. I like to appeal to the Alumni to write to us your memories and the experiences gained in the villages and how those moments help you in your present day work and life which will be published in the Souvenir on 28th February 2019. Dear Alumni, do join us in these various activities during this Silver Jubilee year those who can afford to join others can show your interests and participation by helping us in many different ways especially through financial support. The whole celebration is budgeted for Rs. 15 lacks. Your contributions in the form of cheque, DD shall be send in favour of **The Principal, St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai.**

Rev. Dr. Sahayaraj, S.J.,

Founder Director, STAND