

**ACADEMIC CUM CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME**  
**SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF DELHI AND SHERUBTSE COLLEGE, ROYAL**  
**UNIVERSITY OF BHUTAN, KANGLUNG, BHUTAN**  
**SEPTEMBER 26- OCTOBER 3 2010**

**REPORT**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The academic- cum- cultural exchange activities between Departments of Economics, Sri Venkateswara College, University of Delhi and Sherubtse College, Royal University of Bhutan, Kanglung, were initiated in October 2009 when with the gracious help of the Indo- Bhutan Foundation, students and faculty members of Department of Economics, Sherubtse College visited our college to participate in the first ever International Undergraduate Economics Students Meet, Blisspoint 2009. Thereafter Sherubtse College honoured Sri Venkateswara College by inviting students and faculty members from Department of Economics of Sri Venkateswara College for an academic and cultural exchange programme. With financial help from the Indo- Bhutan Foundation, Sri Venkateswara College accepted the invitation and a team of two faculty members and six students was formed to visit Kanglung, Bhutan from 26th September to 3rd October, 2010.

**II. TEAM MEMBERS**

Mrs. Shailaja S. Thakur (Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, SVC)

Mr. D. Brahma Reddy (Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, SVC)

Ms. Cheistha Kochhar (III yr. Economics)

Mr. Kartik Agarwal (III yr. Economics)

Mr. Ankush Aggarwal (III yr. Economics)

Ms. Bhoomika Arora (II yr. Economics)

Ms. Sakshi Agarwal (II yr. Economics)

Mr. Sameer Gupta (II yr. Economics)

The programme was financially supported by Indo-Bhutan foundation to enhance Indo-Bhutan relations through interaction among the youth both on the academic as well as on cultural platforms.

### **III. SHERUBTSE COLLEGE**

Sherubtse (Peak of Knowledge) college is located in the beautiful landscape of Himalayan ranges in a town called Kanglung in South-East Bhutan. Kanglung is 280 km. away from Guwahati, Assam. The distinguishing feature of the college is its location in a hilly terrain and its peaceful and pristine campus. The Sherubtse College is a very reputed college of Royal University of Bhutan with over 1000 students. The college offers various courses in Arts and Sciences. The college is well equipped with lecture halls, science and computer labs, auditorium and sporting arenas. In addition the college has a number of residential halls for faculty members and students.

### **IV. THE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME**

#### **IV. 1 FEATURES**

The Exchange Programme was organized from 27th September to 1st October. On reaching Sherubtse College on the evening of September 26, the team was given a warm welcome by officiating Director who is also the Dean of Students' Welfare, Faculty members of Department of Economics of Sherubtse College and the SHEECOS (Economics Society of Sherubtse College) executives. The Head of Department and other faculty and staff members, addressed the team and made them aware of various aspects of functioning of the institution. Students of the team were made to understand the teaching- learning process of the college. The SHEECOS executives gave the team an orientation of the college campus for their exposure to college facilities, library, class rooms, IT facilities and sports areas.

The programme had components of academics and culture through various events meticulously designed over the five days. Formal and informal interactions between the team from Sri Venkateswara College and Sherubtse College were very helpful in giving either side a first hand experience. Throughout the whole programme of 5 days, tea sessions and dinner were arranged for the team, with the faculty and students of the college. The team was accompanied by Mr.

Karma Drukpa, Professor of Economics of Sherubtse College and members of SHEECOS for the whole programme.

#### **IV. 2 ACADEMIC COMPONENT**

A number of presentations were made by the students and faculty members of both Sherubtse College (SC) and Sri Venkateswara College (SVC). The presentations were followed by very active discussions. As a whole, the students and faculty members alike benefited from this academic exchange. The presentations were made on the following:

##### **Sherubtse College:**

*Bhutan Economy* by Mr. Anil Singh Dogra (Faculty member and SHEECOS Staff Moderator)

*Democracy in Bhutan* by Mr. Nidup (5th Semester student of B.A. Economics of SC)

*GNH (Gross National Happiness)* by SHEECOS Executives

##### **Sri Venkateswara College:**

*Indian Economy: Past, Present and Future* by Mrs. Shailaja S. Thakur, Assistant Professor

*Union Budget of India - 2010-11* by Mr. D. Brahma Reddy, Assistant Professor

*Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India* by Ms. Cheistha Kochhar, Ms. Bhoomika Arora and Ms. Sakshi Agarwal

*Turnaround in the Indian Economy* by Mr. Kartik Agarwal, Mr. Ankush Aggarwal and Mr. Sameer Gupta

#### **IV. 3 CULTURAL COMPONENT**

A *cultural evening* was organized by Sherubtse College to showcase the traditions and practices of Bhutanese culture. A large number of students and staff members took part in the cultural show. This was coordinated by students and faculty of Sri Venkateswara College who gave a very colourful peep into the Indian culture. The cultural evening included singing, musical acts and dance performances. In addition to these, videos were played showcasing religion, culture and food habits of Indian people. A presentation on Indian cultural review (Research done by Mr. Sandeep Chugh, student of SVC) was also put forward by all the six students of Sri Venkateswara College.

Students from Sherubtse College took us on a mesmerizing trip of the various cultural traditions of Bhutan, including influences of Nepal as well as of Bollywood.

#### **IV. 4 EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

A number of different extra-curricular activities were organized to have more interaction between students and staff of both colleges. A *basketball match* was arranged in which students and staff members participated. An *individual essay writing competition* was held for all students on the topic “Has the transnational companies increased the global inequality across the world”. A *debate* between two teams, one from Sherubtse College and the other from Sri Venkateswara College was organized on the topic “Bhutan should join the World Trade Organization”. On a similar division basis, a general quiz was organized with questions from fields of history, economics, science, sports etc.

#### **V. SIGHTSEEING TRIP**

The team enjoyed the beautiful scenery on way to Kanglung, and we were especially enchanted by the quaint and colourful buildings that we came across. The team drove through the paddy fields and tea plantations of Assam to the border of Bhutan. From there on, the team went through the mountains of Bhutan to reach Kanglung.

Important spots visited by the team:

**Monastery in Kanglung:** The gate of the monastery depicts the eight lucky symbols of Buddhism and the monastery has 30 white coloured chortens. The monastery has 12 big prayer wheels.

**Chorten Kora:** This is one of the biggest stupa in Bhutan which was built to honour Lord Buddha. It is on the bank side of a very famous river of Bhutan called Kulong Chu.

**Institute Of Traditional Arts And Crafts:** This is an institute in Trashi Yangste and is a centre for Bhutanese Art education. It provides 4–6 years of training in Bhutanese traditional art forms. The curricula cover a comprehensive course of drawing, painting, wood carving, embroidery, and carving of statues. Images and carvings of Buddha are a popular painting done here. This red-roofed institute was opened in June 1997 to provide opportunities in vocational training. The school strives to produce technically proficient craftspeople, while providing them with a basic educational foundation. There is a collection of craft work which is for sale.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

The programme has been beneficial to the students of Sri Venkateswara College in many different ways. This has been a completely new educational experience for them in the areas of academics, culture and extra-curricular activities. It gave us a wonderful experience of culture, habits, interests and a greater understanding of the Bhutanese people. Additionally, the programme gave the students of Sri Venkateswara College the opportunity to acquaint the students of another country with academic and cultural aspects of India. The students of both the countries were easily able to blend with each other's cultures. All this has surely strengthened the friendship relations between youth of both these countries. Not only this but the programme has even transformed the personalities of the students by making them more confident, livelier, and friendlier and well aware individuals. The team members are glad that the SHEECOS members have enjoyed the whole programme as much as they have.

In the end, the team was happy as the whole programme had been a success and a very enlightening one. The team appreciated and thanked SHEECOS and faculty members of Sherubtse College for putting lot of hard work in making the programme a success. Additionally, the team is grateful to the Principal, Administrators and Economics Department of Sri Venkateswara College for initiating the programme and also to the Indo-Bhutan Foundation for making the whole programme possible.

The team would like to give a special note of thanks to Mr. Karma Drukpa for accompanying the team all the way from Guwahati to Kanglung and back from Kanglung to Guwahati. It is through his generosity and hardwork that this trip ended with a grand success.

A group of photographs of the programme has been put up on the Photo Gallery link of the Economics Department on the Sri Venkateswara College, Delhi website.