

DON BOSCO UNIVERSITY
Strategic Developmental Plan of the University
PHASES I TO V (2008-2028)

Preamble

Don Bosco University Project was planned over a period of 18 months, beginning in January 2006. A series of committees were set up by the Salesians of Don Bosco (Province of Guwahati) to make an in-depth study of the need for a university in North-East India, its vision and mission, its location, its financial implications and viability, its strategic and developmental trajectory, its distinctiveness as an institution, the profile of a Don Bosco University Graduate and many other aspects that go into planning for establishing a University in India.

The task of coordinating this project was entrusted to Fr (Dr) Stephen Mavelly, a Salesian well known for his expertise and experience in higher education and appreciated nationally and internationally for his contributions to the field of higher education over a period of forty years.

A Concept Paper was prepared, approved by the Provincial Council of the Salesian Province of Guwahati, forwarded to, studied and approved by the General Council of the Salesians of Don Bosco at Rome on 10th December 2007. The University obtained a Letter of Intent from the Government of Assam on 29th March 2008 and was formally established through an Act of the Government of Assam, Assam Don Bosco University Act, on 12th February 2009.

Development of the University Project: Phase – I: 2008 to 2013

During Phase-I, initiated in 2008, the University concentrated on securing adequate land for the University campuses and the establishment of its campus at Azara (Guwahati) to house its temporary Headquarters and the School of Engineering, and introduced self-sustainable courses – Engineering (B Tech and M Tech in the Departments of Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Electronics Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering) and Management (MBA).

- i. The University acquired 292 acres (roughly 118 hectares) of land for setting up the University (274 acres at Tapesia near Guwahati, 1 acre at Kharguli in the city, 12 acres at Maligaon in the city and 5 acres at Azara in the city).
- ii. The University set up the following infrastructure at its **Campus at Azara (Guwahati)**:
 - School of Technology for 2000 students.
 - Hostels for 500 students (300 men and 200 women).
 - 24 Staff Quarters (12 family quarters and 12 bachelor accommodations).

The total built up area came to 28,164 Square Meters

- iii. The University set up the following infrastructure at its **Campus at Kharguli (Guwahati)** with a total built-up area of 3,815 Square Meters
 - School of Commerce & Management for 240 students
 - Hostels for 200 students (100 men and 100 women)
- iv. The University started its Centre for Online and Distance Education (DBU Global), currently catering to over 5000 students from 112 countries



Development of the University Project: Phase – II: 2013-2016

During Phase-II, the University started to develop its permanent Headquarters at Tapesia to house the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and started the Departments of Social Work, Psychology, Education, and Mass Communication.

In keeping with the vision of the University, these four departments were selected as they met the criteria laid out in the concept paper that every programme of study in the University should:

- a) Help to form dependable human beings;
- b) Ensure the employability of the graduates; and,
- c) Have the maximum potential to bring about social change.

Simultaneously, it also started the following Courses of study at the Azara Campus: BCA, MCA, B Com.

The University set up the following infrastructure during Phase - II

- Academic Block – I (with a capacity for 1500 students) to house the Science Departments having also a 330 seater AC Auditorium and another 200 seater Conference Hall
- Life Sciences Block (with labs and classrooms for 120 students)
- Men's Hostel-I (with a capacity for 180 students)
- Women's Hostel-I (with a capacity for 180 students)
- Food Court (with a capacity to seat 300 students and 100 faculty)
- 54 Staff Quarters (30 Bachelor Quarters and 24 Family Quarters)
- Salesian House cum Guest House (22 Rooms)
- 4 Fresh Water bodies covering 4 acres all of which also serve as fisheries
- Three Bore Wells were made to help with the construction as well as to ensure drinking water for the campus
- A permanent Electrical Connection for 280 Kilowatts was set up with the adequate Transformer for the same
- 3.5 Kilometres of paved roads
- Sports facilities (Volleyball Courts, 1 Basketball Court, 5 Badminton Courts)
- Plantations (700 Coconut trees, 2000 Rubber plants, 2000 Cocoa Plants, 200 lemon trees, One Tonne each of Ginger and Turmeric)

The total built up area comes to 44,584 Square Meters

In 2014, the University achieved the rare distinction of being awarded 12B Certification by the University Grants Commission.

Development of the University Project: Phase – III: 2016-2018

During Phase – III of its development, the University established the School of Life Sciences and started the Departments of Microbiology, Biotechnology, Biochemistry, Zoology at the Tapesia Campus. At the Azara Campus, a Masters Course in Commerce (M Com) was also started.

Apart from being viable courses, these Departments were chosen as the University signed MoUs with various plantation boards in India to start Rubber, Coconut, Cocoa, Cashew and



Spices plantations at Tapesia Campus. The University envisaged these plantation projects as a vital link between agriculture and academics, for extensive reaching out to the villages around the campus with model plantations, research and the formation of Farmers' Cooperatives. The research in this area focuses on crops development, inter-cropping, food processing, pest resistance, mass multiplication, and development of marketing strategies and value addition to the existing products.

During this phase, the University embarked on a massive infrastructure development plan with the following infrastructure put in place at the Tapesia Campus during the period 2014 to 2016:

- i. Academic Block-II to accommodate 2000 students with an Atrium with 3000 seating capacity and three Conference Halls (300, 150 and 150 capacities)
- ii. Women's Hostel – 3 (with a capacity for 232 students)
- iii. A new Men's Hostel was constructed and the students were shifted from the existing Men's Hostel-1 to this hostel.
- iv. The vacated Men's Hostel was converted to Women's Hostel-2
- v. A multi-cuisine Food Court-2 (with a capacity to accommodate 360 students)
- vi. A University Service Centre was constructed to house the medical services of the University, a Security Room, a Crèche and a Community Centre for the Counselling and skill development programmes for the villages around the University
- vii. Additional Plantations (400 Cashew trees, 1500 Agar plants, 1000 neem trees, 220 sandalwood trees, 800 ficus trees)
- viii. A Green House to train local women in commercial production of flowers and seedlings (Orchids and Gerbera)
- ix. An artificial fresh water lake covering 10 acres was created by building a dam across a permanent small stream flowing through the campus and tapping several perennial springs in the adjacent creeks.
- x. Two more Bore Wells were made to help with the construction as well as to ensure drinking water for the campus
- xi. An additional 3 Kilometres of paved roads
- xii. Sports facilities (1 Football Pitch, 2 Volleyball Courts, 2 Basketball Court, 7 Badminton Courts)

In August 2018, the University was granted a B+ Grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, the first private University in the State of Assam to be accredited to date.

Development of the University Project: Phase – IV: 2018-2022

The University started the fourth phase in its strategic development in 2018. In this phase, the University planned to Introduce Masters in Commerce, Mathematics, Chemistry and Zoology, Bachelors' Degree Courses in Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Mathematics, Economics, Psychology, Mass Communication and English from the academic session starting in August 2018-2019, and an integrated 4-year Professional Teacher Education Programme (BA-BEd, BSc-BEd) and MEd, with courses in Special Education and MDP Programmes in Education to follow in quick succession as well as introduction of 1-year B Ed for Postgraduates and 2-Year B Ed for Undergraduates envisaged in the New Educational Policy (NEP 2020)...



During this Phase, the University substantially augmented the Academic Programmes offered through the Distance Education mode through DBU Global in a phased manner. Approvals were obtained from the Distance Education Bureau of the University Grants Commission for the following Courses of Study: BA (Philosophy), BBA (Business Administration), BCA (Computer Applications), B COM (Commerce), MA (Education), MA (Human Rights), MA (philosophy), MA (Mass Communication), MS (Information Technology), MCOM (Commerce) and MSW (Social Work) in addition to the two Courses approved earlier: MBA (Business Administration) and MCA (Computer Applications).

The University envisaged these courses to be self-sustainable in the years to come with an increase in the student population.

While starting these Courses of Study in existing academic buildings, the University planned to put in place the following infrastructure and facilities to cater to this growth:

1. **Initiating the Department of Public Administration...** both at UG and PG Levels 2021-2022
2. **Starting B Pharm and D Pharm at Tapesia Campus...** 2022-2023
3. **Construction of Hostels:** 2 hostels to be ready by July 2019 and 2 more to be ready by July 2020, and possibly 3 more hostels within 2021-24
4. **Construction of Academic Block-IV (Labs for Basic Sciences)** to accommodate 17 new labs for Chemistry, Botany and Zoology.
5. **Construction of Academic Block - V** with a view to accommodate about 1000 students. To be completed by 2021, to accommodate the following: a) The School of Education to initiate new programmes in Education; b) The 'Centre of Excellence in Nanotechnology' and, c) The 'Centre for Developmental Studies and Initiatives' ... 2019-2021
6. **Construction of an additional Food Court** to cater to the 4 new hostels... 2021
7. **Construction of 27 additional Staff Quarters** consisting of 9 Two-Bedroom Family apartments, 9 Single- Bedroom Apartments and 9 Bachelor Apartments – in 2021-2022.
8. **Construction of an additional 2.5 Kilometres of Roads**
9. **Installation of a 360 KW roof-mounted Solar Power Plant** (180 Kilowatts at the Azara Campus and 180 Kilowatts at the Tapesia Campus) to promote use of clean energy and to save on energy consumption... 2018-2019
10. **Provision of Four additional Bore Wells** to ensure water supply to the new hostels and Food Court and eventually a **Water Bottling Plant** for internal supply of potable water... 2019
11. **Augmenting the Plantations** (1000 Agar Tress, 500 Fruit Trees, 500 Mahogany Trees, 1000 Exotic Bamboos and others)... 2018-2022
12. **Creating a new Water Reservoir** by water harvesting from the adjacent hills in order to augment water supply on campus, replenishment of ground water tables. This additional Reservoir can also provide added fisheries and water sports.

In November 2021, the University was granted an 'A' Grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, the first private University in the State of Assam to be accredited to date.

In Summary

As mentioned in the preamble, the establishment and development of the University was elaborately discussed among the stakeholders, the needs of the North-Eastern Region of India was debated at length, and a Concept Paper was finalized in 2006-07 indicating the vision, mission and objectives of the



University as well as a trajectory for its establishment and development in the areas of academics, infrastructure, facilities and services.

In 2009, after the establishment of the Schools of Technology and Commerce and Management, the Concept Paper was reviewed at a Strategic Planning Retreat which further fine-tuned the developmental plan encompassing all these vital areas to ensure the health of the University.

Since 2009, at every meeting of the Board of Management and Governing Body, developmental plans of the University were discussed elaborately with setting of goals and fine-tuning the broad vision in the Strategic Development Plan of the University.

Towards the end of Phase-II, in 2012, a comprehensive review of the Developmental Plans were undertaken at Governing Body and Board of Management meetings. The suggestions were incorporated into the plans for the period 2013-2018.

Towards the end of Phase-III, in 2017, a further study of the developmental phases of the University was undertaken, and fresh plans were designed for the next Phase (Phase-IV for the period 2018-2022)

With the onset of Covid-19 pandemic that paralysed the functioning of the University for much of 2020 and 2021, some of the planned projects for 2020 and 2021 had to be held in abeyance as all institutions were closed down. However, this period provided a golden opportunity for the University to fine-tune its online teaching and testing platform in collaboration with U18 (New Delhi). The University won laurels for a very successful roll-out of On-line Teaching and Testing for all its students so that they did not lose precious academic year. Subsequently, the University has adopted a dual mode of teaching, learning and testing in all departments after the pandemic period ended and the Campuses re-opened in March 2022.

In mid-2022, a further review was undertaken to roll over some of the unfinished plans of the earlier period as well as to plan for Phase-V for the period 2023-2028 in the development of academic programmes offered by the University and to augment the physical infrastructure of the University.

Development of the University Project: Phase – V: 2023-2028

1. **Starting of Para-Medical Courses...** As the University has in place teaching Departments and Labs in Life Sciences, Pharmaceutical Studies and Fundamental Sciences, a variety of para-medical Courses (Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees) to be introduced in a phased manner – 2023-2026
2. **Initiating 4-year UG Programmes in line with NEP...** 2023-2027
3. **Starting an Integrated BA-LLB Course of Studies...** 2023-2026
4. **Construction of Hostels:** possibly 2 more hostels within 2023-2025
5. **Construction of an additional Food Court** to cater to the additional students in hostels and new courses of study using the facilities available in Academic Block-V...
6. **Construction of 27 additional Staff Quarters** consisting of 9 Two-Bedroom Family apartments, 9 Single- Bedroom Apartments and 9 Bachelor Apartments – in 2022-2023 and an additional 36 Quarters in 2024-2025
7. **Construction of an additional 1.5 Kilometres of Roads...** 2023-2024
8. **Setting up an Astro-Physics Observatory** for Astro-Physics and Nuclear Physics...
9. **Setting up a Water Bottling Plant** for internal water supply... 2023-2024
10. **Setting up a Waste Water Treatment Plant** for processing of effluents...2023-2024



11. **Start the process of Converting the Tea Plantation into an Organic one** to ensure value addition to the existing Tea Garden, to introduce Tea Tourism, and to provide research facilities in Tea Technology – 2023-2026
12. **Start the process of Converting Ginger and Turmeric Plantations into Eco-Certified and financially viable** sources of income as well as avenues for research and development into export-oriented products – 2023-2025
13. **Augmenting the Plantations** (500 Agar Tress, 500 Fruit Trees, 500 Mahogany Trees 2023-2025

In conclusion...

Here are a few of the core strengths that are considered unique features of the University as pointed out by successive UGC and NAAC Peer Team Visits:

1. The University has in place a detailed concept paper that pretty much captures the vision of the university and lays out the trajectory of its growth plan... Several universities have taken our concept paper as a working document to inspire their own visioning process.
2. The University has a governance structure that ensures checks and balances and speedy implementation of all decisions... The autonomy that the Government of Assam has blessed us with has been a key factor in ensuring a speedy decision making process with a scrupulous adherence to norms.
3. The University has a well-oiled financial administration mechanism in place to ensure accountability and transparency with steady growth... The struggle remains, however, to find adequate resources to ensure growth with sustainability.
4. The University has in place a draft 'sustainability plan' for the university that takes seriously issues of financial stability and viability of the university for years to come. It is also a handy tool when scouting for funds for the university.
5. The University has put in place a Human Resource Management system as a tool to ensure 'a shared vision, a cohesive team and an engaging work culture'... The word is out there today that Don Bosco University is a good place to study, to work and to grow. There are several institutions that have evinced keen interest in following this model.
6. The University meticulously plans and implements personal and professional development programmes for its faculty and students. Personal and professional growth are a given in Don Bosco University.
7. The University grooms leaders with a human face, dependable persons, leaders with a vision who leave significant footprints wherever they find themselves, leaders passionate about making a change in the lives of the less privileged.

Taken together, these strengths have contributed in ample measure towards the creation of a culture in the University that is uniquely its own, that energises everyone in all that they do, and knits the entire University family together into one educative community... THAT is Don Bosco University's strength and its hallmark!

Fr Stephen Mavely SDB

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