

Development of Teacher Education in Meghalaya

Bashan D.M. Diengdoh



Teacher Education Institutions were established in a gradual manner to cater to the needs of teachers in the state. The first Teacher Education Institution under the Theological College was started by the Welsh Mission at Cherrapunjee for training of teachers at the primary level. In 1861, the Government decided to amalgamate the Training School section of the Cherrapunjee Normal School from Nongsawlia to Shillong and attached to the Welsh Mission High School at Mawkhar Shillong. By 1946, the Training School functioned in the same building. In 1947, after Independence, the then Government of India requested the Welsh Mission to extend the facility in giving training to the Lower Primary School teachers. The training school later came to be known as Cherra Teachers' Training Centre under the management of the Presbyterian Church.

Long before the establishments of BTCs, the Government in 1906 started the Guru Training School (GTS) at Tura with an intake capacity of 30 trainees. It catered to the training needs of primary teachers in Garo Hills, however, due to administrative problem, it ceased to function few years back after nine decades of its existence.

St. Edmund's B.T. College, Shillong which was established in the year 1934 was closed down in the year 1942 as per verbal information obtained from St. Edmund's College, Shillong.

St. Mary's B.T. College now St. Mary's College of Teacher Education was established in 1937 in response to a request and dire need of women's B. T. College. It was affiliated to Calcutta University in 1938, then to Gauhati University in 1948 and subsequently to North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong in 1973. This College till 1998 conducted part-time course with the help of teachers from the Degree College. It was the first B.T. College for women in the North Eastern States and has been rendering yeoman service in the field of Teacher Education at Secondary level for the past 60 years and is considered to be one of the best B.Ed. Colleges. With the implementation of the National

Council of Teacher Education Norms (under NCTE Act 1993), the College has been functioning as a full-fledged College of Teacher Education conducting a one year B.Ed. programme with an approved intake capacity of 100 student teachers.

Then, the Basic Training Centre (BTC) was first established at Malki, Shillong in 1940 by Ms Margaret Barr, a social worker and an educationist from England under Basic Scheme of Education propagated by Mahatma Gandhi. Then later BTCs were established at Rongkhon, West Garo Hills in 1955, Thadlaskein, Jaintia Hills in 1967 and at Resubelpara, East Garo Hills in 1974.

The Post Graduate Training College, Shillong, now, College of Teacher Education (PGT), Shillong was established in the year 1964 to provide degree level training to graduate teachers teaching secondary schools. Initially, the College conducted a full time and a part time course of the one year duration to meet the training needs of the teachers. The intake capacity of the college in both the programmes came to approximate 300 per year. With the implementation of the National Council of Teacher Education Norms (under NCTE Act 1993), the college is now functioning as a full-fledged College of Teacher Education and is conducting a full time one year B.Ed. programme with an approved intake capacity of 100 student teachers.

For the middle or Upper Primary stage, the two Normal Training Schools, one at Cherrapunjee, East Khasi Hills and the other at Tura, West Garo Hills, were established by the Government in the year 1968 with the aim to train the in-service teachers at the upper primary level.

Kiang Nangbah B.T. College, Jowai was established in the year 1981 in Jowai with the objective to train the teachers at the Secondary level in the district. With the introduction of the NCTE norms, the College had closed down its operations, due to inability to comply with the norms.

The Government College of Teacher Education, Tura, in West Garo Hills came into existence in

the year 1993 to cater to the needs of teacher at Secondary level in the three districts of Garo Hills of the State. The College, at present, conducts the one-year B.Ed. programme with an approved intake capacity of 100 student teachers.

The Don Bosco College of Teacher Education, Tura, a Don Bosco Institution established in the year 2005 started the one-year B.Ed. programmes with recognition and permission from NCTE with an annual intake capacity of 100 student teachers.

In addition, there were private non-Government Elementary Teacher Education Institutions, namely, St. Mary's Mazzarello, Jaintia Hills, which was started in 1962, and Lum Jingshai Training Centre, Marbisu, East Khasi hills, in 1977. These institutions functioned to serve the training needs of the primary school teachers in the State. But with the implementation of NCTE norms, these two institutions ceased to function in the year 1996 and

2000 respectively, due to the denial of recognition by the NCTE.

The District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) conceived in the NPE (1986) were established in the State first in the three districts in the year 2000. These are located at Thadlaskein, Jaintia Hills, Cherrapunjee, East Khasi Hills, and Resubelpara, East Garo Hills Districts. Later, the other four DIETs were also established and started functioning from the academic year 2005-06 and these are located at Saiden, Ri-Bhoi, Baghmara, South Garo Hills, Tura, West Garo Hills and Nongstoin, West Khasi Hills Districts. The main purpose of the DIETs are to cater to the needs of Elementary Education by way of imparting Pre-service and In-service Teacher Education programme for the elementary school teachers and also to train the Adult and Non-formal personnel for the proper functioning of the Adult and Non-formal education programmes.

Dr. Bashan is a senior faculty member of DERT, Shillong with more than 15 years of experience working in the field of teacher education and social science. During this period, he has been involved in the centrally sponsored scheme of teacher education, research activities, in-service training programmes for teachers and teacher educators, educational technology, planning and administration, etc. At present, he is working on case studies of a few schools in the state and looking at how transformation of non-performing schools in the state can be improvised through the concept of School Improvement Planning. He may be contacted at bashandesmond@gmail.com