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The Bharat Scouts and Guides

Introduction

Hello and welcome to yet another module on physical education. Today we are talking about Bharat Scouts and Guides and their contribution and achievements.

The Bharat Scouts and Guides is the national Scouting and Guiding association of India. The national headquarters of BSG is recognised by the Government of India.

Scouting was founded in India in 1909 as an overseas branch of the Scout Association and became a member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement in 1938. Guiding in India started in 1911 and was amongst the founder members of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 1928, also covering present-day Bangladesh and Pakistan at that time. The BSG serves 2,886,460 Scouts (as of 2011) and 1,286,161 Guides (as of 2005).

Early History

Scouting was officially founded in British India in 1909, first starting at the Bishop Cotton Boys' School in Bangalore. Scouting for native Indians was started by Justice Vivian Bose, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru, Girija Shankar Bajpai, Annie Besant and George Arundale, in 1913. Prior to this date, Scouting was open only for British and foreign Scouts. In 1916, a Cub section was started, followed by the Rover section in 1918.

In 1916, Calcutta's Senior Deputy Commissioner of Police J. S. Wilson introduced Scouting for Boys as a textbook in the Calcutta Police Training School. Colonel Wilson volunteered his services to the District Scout Commissioner, Alfred Pickford, and in 1917 became Assistant Scoutmaster of the Old Mission Church Troop. Together the two struggled for the admission of Indian boys into the Boy Scouts Association, which had not been admitted due to a Government of India order against it because "Scouting might train them to become revolutionaries". Shortly Wilson was acting as Cubmaster and Scoutmaster, and succeeded Pickford as District

Commissioner in May 1919 when Pickford was promoted to Chief Scout Commissioner for India.

As a way of getting around the Government Order, the Boy Scouts of Bengal was founded, with identical aims and methods. Many separate Scout organizations began to spring up, the Indian Boy Scouts Association, founded in 1916, based in Madras and headed by Annie Besant and George Arundale; Boy Scouts of Mysore; Boy Scouts of Baroda; Nizam's Scouts in Hyderabad; Seva Samiti Scout Association founded in 1917 by Madan Mohan Malaviya and Hridayanath Kunzru and based in Allahabad; the aforementioned Boy Scouts of Bengal and likely others. A conference was held in Calcutta in August 1920 in which Wilson staged a Scout Rally, and as a result the Viceroy of India sent an invitation to Lord Baden-Powell, by then Chief Scout of the World, to visit India. Lord and Lady Baden-Powell arrived in Bombay in late January 1921 for a short tour of the subcontinent before leaving Calcutta for Rangoon. Alfred Pickford accompanied them and became one of their closest friends.

Girl Guides

The first Girl Guides company was founded in Jabalpur in 1911. The movement immediately grew: In 1915, more than fifty companies existed with a membership of over 1,200, all of them directly registered with the Girl Guide Association and all restricted to girls of European descent. These companies formed the All India Girl Guide Association in 1916. In the same year the organisation opened for Indian girls.

J. S. Wilson provided transportation for Girl Guide rallies.

The girls themselves were never quite sure whether they preferred to ride in police vans or in the riot truck. The former concealed them from public view, but were very hot; the latter, being cages of expanded metal, were cooler, but reminiscent of the Calcutta Zoo!

In 1928, the All India Girl Guides Association joined the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts as one of its founder members. This membership was renewed in 1948 after the independence of India and its partition.

Bharat Scouts and Guides consolidation

In the first years after India's independence leading politicians, including Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Mangal Das Pakvasa, as well as Scout leaders tried to unify India's Scouts and Guides. A first success was the merger of the The Boy Scouts Association in India and the Hindustan Scout Association forming the Bharat Scouts and Guides on 7 November 1950. About a year later, on 15 August 1951, the All India Girl Guides Association joined this new organisation.

In 1959, the 17th World Scout Conference in New Delhi was hosted by the BSG. The Sangam World Girl Guide/Girl Scout Center in Pune, Maharashtra, India, opened in 1966. The idea for this fourth world centre dates back to 1956 when it was developed during a WAGGGS International commissioners' meeting in New Delhi.

The United Nations selected the Bharat Scouts and Guides as honorary "Peace Messengers" for their significant and concrete contributions to the International Year of Peace in 1986.

Notable members

Vivian Bose was a member of the World Scout Committee of the World Organization of the Scout Movement from 1947 until 1949.

In 1969, Mrs. Lakhshmi Mazumdar was awarded the Bronze Wolf, the only distinction of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, awarded by the World Scout Committee for exceptional services to world Scouting.

The association describes its aims in its mission:

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in the society.

Scout and Guide units are separate although they have some coeducational activities such as Jamborees, rallies, and conferences. Handicapped boys and girls also participate in the Scouting program.

The Scout emblem incorporates a wheel with twenty-four spokes, known as the Ashoka Chakra, taken from the Ashoka pillar at Sarnath, in the green-and-saffron colors of the flag of India.

The name of the organization was evolved and agreed upon after many deliberations. The Constitution of India has accepted the name "Bharat" as an alternative name of India. It was, therefore, agreed that the merged organization would be registered under the name "Bharat Scouts & Guides" to form a singly National Scouts and Guides Movement. The merger had the blessings of the late Chief Guides Lady Baden Powell. The merged organization's new name came to be registered and incorporated under the name and style of Bharat Scouts and Guides on 6th November, 1950 under the Societies Registration Act.

4. The Bharat Scouts & Guides is the largest voluntary, non-political, uniformed Youth Organization and educational Movement in the Country working in the field of character building of the young boys and girls, without any distinction of caste, creed and religion. While, there were several Scout Organizations and a separate Girl Guide Association functioning in India during the pre-independence era. The Bharat Scouts & Guides came into existence on November 7, 1950 as a single joint Organization of Scouts as well as Guides.

7. The Movement of Scouting and Guiding is internationally recognized. The movement has the universal Motto "Do your Best" for Cubs & Bulbuls ranging from the age group 05-09 years, "Be Prepared" for Scouts & Guides ranging from the age group 10-16 Years and "Service" for Rovers & Rangers ranging at the age group 16-25 years. In India, almost 46 State Associations including Union Territories, 9 Indian Railway Zones, Scout/Guides Associations of the Kendriya Vidhyalaya Sangathan and those of the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti are all affiliated and members of the Bharat Scouts & Guides. The Bharat Scouts & Guides has district units in different countries where Indian Schools are functioning including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Sultanate of Oman. The Central Tibetan Administration Schools are also having Scout/Guide Unit which are affiliated to the Bharat Scouts & Guides.

8. The Bharat Scouts & Guides is engaged in the task of developing the personality of the youth and canalizing their energies into the task of National resurgence. The Scouts and Guides are seen working with dedication and commitment to serve the community. The membership of the Bharat Scouts & Guides today touches all time record of over 50 lakhs Scouts & Guides. Right now they are the third largest in the world in the number of Scouts and second largest in the number of Guides.

9. The representatives of the Bharat Scouts and Guides have represented and have attended various World events and Conferences and have earned laurels for the Country. The Bharat Scouts and Guides has been honoured with “PEACE MESSENGER AWARD” by the UNO in 1987, “HABITAT AWARD” in 1990 and “INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL INTEGRATION AWARD” in 1987. The stalwarts like late Mrs. Lakshmi Mazumdar the then National Commissioner and Sardar Lakshman Singh have been the recipients of “PADMA SHREE” and “PADMA VIVHUSHAN” respectively.

Contribution towards Society

The Bharat Scouts & Guides Movement provides youth programme, Adult Leader Training, Adventure activities and International level programmes etc. to our young people.

YOUTH PROGRAMME: Movement is providing different level activities in different sections like Cub/Bulbul, Scout/Guide and Rover/Ranger. They organize many National Level Programmes in a year where about one lakh young people are getting training in different aspects. Besides these, the young people are trained at unit level, group level, district level and State level.

ADULT TRAINING: The Scouts & Guides provide training for Adults, Unit Leaders, Leaders of Adults (Commissioners, Secretaries, Organizers etc at National Level in our well established Training Centres. Their National Training Centre is situated at Pachmarhi (M.P), National Youth Complex at Gadpuri, Dist-Palwal, Haryana and National Training Cum Camping Complex at New Ashok Nagar, Delhi. About 15,000 Adult Leaders are trained in a year in these training centres. Besides these, Adult Leaders are trained in different States in their established training centers by the States also.

ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES: The Scouts & Guides have a well-established National Adventure Institute at Pachmarhi (M.P) where good infrastructure is available for adventure programmes. They conduct 10 days and 07 days adventure programmes for all categories of young people. In addition to this, they conduct one International Adventure Programme every year. More than 5000 young people are undergoing their Adventure Programme every year from all parts of the Country.

NATIONAL JAMBOREES: They conduct National Jamborees once in every 04 (Four) years. About 25000 Scouts and Guides with their leaders are attending the Jamboree. Till date 16th National Jamboree, 01 SAARC Jamboree and 03 Special National Jamborees have been conducted.

NATIONAL INTEGRATION CAMPS: organize National Integration Camp all over the country regularly to bring Scouts and Guides of different States and Regions to be closer at each other and know each other's culture and tradition and inculcate a feeling of oneness and promote a feeling of National Integration among the young people. The Special National Integration Camp under the theme "Messenger of Peace" was conducted at our National Youth Complex, Gadpuri during 2011 where a large contingent of Scouts & Guides from Pakistan Boy Scout Association participated with the contingent from Bharat Scouts & Guides from all over the Country and similarly, in 2012 a Contingent from Bharat Scouts & Guides participated in the Integration Camp under the same theme at Islamabad, Pakistan.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES: They depute many Scouts, Guides, Rovers, Rangers and Adult Leaders to various International Events, Conferences, Workshops, Seminar etc. They organized the prestigious 20th ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL SCOUT CONFERENCE in Delhi 2001, which was a grand success. They have conducted SAF CAMP at our National Youth Complex during 2010 in which participants from all the SAARC Countries participated. They also conducted the ASIA PACIFIC LEADER TRAINERS COURSE at our National Training Centre, Pachmarhi in M.P. Besides these, they have been conducting MANAGEMENT COURSES in India. Recently, they have conducted ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL COMMUNITY BASED SCOUTING at New Delhi in September 2012.

AWARD AND RECOGNITION: The Rashtrapati Scout/Guide/Rover/Ranger which is the highest National Award being awarded to the outstanding Scouts, Guides, Rover and Rangers and presented by His Excellency the President of India every year in Rashtrapati Scout/Guide/Rover/Ranger Rally held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan since 1961. This has been continuously done till 2011. President of India has been the Chief Patron of the Bharat Scouts & Guides from 1950 from the period of the then first President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasadji.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Scouts & Guides have Community-oriented competitions like Prime Ministers' Shield and Upa-Rashtrapati Award Competition for Scouts/Guides/Rovers/Rangers respectively. These competitions help us to encourage the young people to do the community service projects, which bring the Scout & Guide Movement closer to the community, and fulfill the Scout/Guide promise of helping others.

RECOGNITION TO BHARAT SCOUTS AND GUIDES: Scouts and Guides is well known and recognized at the National Level and International Level for promoting peace, harmony, Sadbhavana and National Integration. As the third largest organization in Scouting and second largest in Guiding in the World, the Bharat Scouts and Guides was the proud recipients of "UNITED NATIONS PEACE MESSENGER AWARD" in the year 1987 and "INDIRA GANDHI AWARD FOR PEACE AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION" in the year 1998.

Conclusion

Let us summarize the whole module.

Scouting was founded in India in 1909 as an overseas branch of the Scout Association and became a member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement in 1938. Guiding in India started in 1911 and was amongst the founder members of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 1928, also covering present-day Bangladesh and Pakistan at that time. The BSG serves 2,886,460 Scouts (as of 2011) and 1,286,161 Guides (as of 2005).

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The movement is providing different level activities in different sections like Cub/Bulbul, Scout/Guide and Rover/Ranger. They organize many National Level Programmes in a year where about one lakh young people are getting training in different aspects. Besides these, the young people are trained at unit level, group level, district level and State level.

So from these interactions we have learnt a lot about structure and achievement of Bharat Scout and Guides. I hope this information will be very useful for all of you. Thank you so much for watching.