2019

Annual Report 2018-19

SOCIAL INCLUSION
THROUGH DIGITAL INCLUSION
EMPOWERING THROUGH EDUCATION

Abheda Foundation

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Annual Report presented by the Trustees of Abheda Foundation at its 7th Annual General body Meeting at 3 pm on 23/06/2019 at the premises of Abheda Foundation, Kolkata.

1. Introduction

Trustees and Members,

It is with immense pleasure and proud privilege that I am presenting this **7th Annual Report** on the various activities of Abheda Foundation for the year 2018-19. I thank all the donors, sponsors, members, staff and well-wishers for taking this trust to a greater height. With the hope of more vigorous help and support in future, I conclude this brief introduction and would like to outline all the activities with facts and figures in the following sections for your consideration and approval.

2. Abheda Foundation – Basic Information

Abheda Foundation, a charitable Trust registered under West Bengal Registration Rules 1962 was established on 20th March, 2012 with an objective to offer all development of common people and minorities with respect to education, health, socio-economy and culture. Since then the Trust has been providing such services as improving the life of the underprivileged in terms of basic living and education.

Registration details of the Trust

Type of Registration	Authorizing Body	Registration No.	Valid for
Trust Registration	W B Registration Rules 1962	02853/2012	Permanently valid
PAN	Income Tax Department	AADTA4977H	Permanently valid
80G	Income Tax Department	NA	Permanently valid
12AA	Income Tax Department	NA	Permanently valid

The Trust has its registered office at **80A, Vivekananda Road, Kolkata – 700006**. It is located at the heart of Kolkata in the state of West Bengal.

Vision

Social Inclusion through Digital Inclusion

Mission

To impart quality education to underprivileged children using technology resources of the digital world, fostering guided and self-organised interactive learning processes.

Governance:

The governance of the Trust is entrusted upon two bodies, namely Board of Trustees and General Body. Its Board of Trustees comprises the individuals as follows:

Name	Professional Involvement	Position	Work
Biswajit Mitra	Retired	President	Administrator and visionary
Dr. Surojit Mookherjee	Professor, IIT Kharagpur	General Secretary	Administrator
Naresh Baid	Branch Manager, Kotak Bank	Trustee	Financial Advisor
Pushan Deb	Senior Information Technology Architect, IBM	Trustee	Administrator
Sudip Bej	Senior Information Technology Architect, IBM	Trustee	Administrator
Sujit Guha	Innovation Evangelist, TCS	Trustee	Administrator
Partha Roy	CEO, Zabingo Softwares	Trustee	Treasurer

3. Report on activities and Projects

Abheda eSchool, Jhargram opened

On 12th January, 2019, Abheda Foundation opened its second eSchool at Jhargram. The classes commenced on 5th March with students of class V-VIII and who recently appeared for the Madhyamik and Higher Secondary exams. **We teach English and Computer Operations** here in this completely digital school. As for English, we will train up the students both on written and verbal communications. Towards that, we are offering two courses here:

1. **Easy English** (Classroom model) – for school students of class V-VIII
2. **Communicative English** (Self-learning and classroom model combined) – for higher class students and professionals
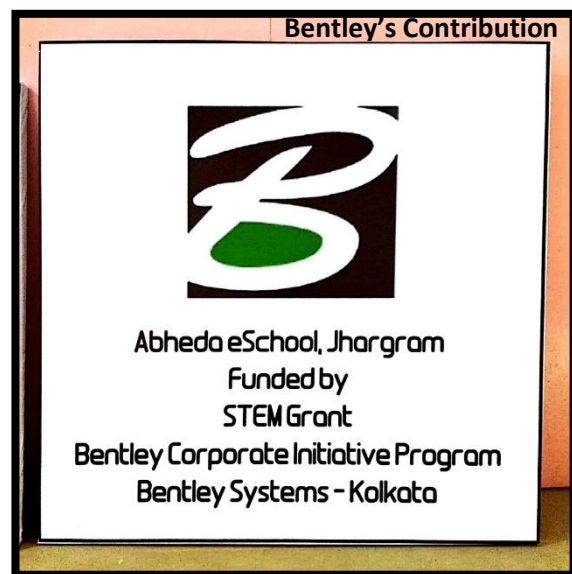
Both the courses take help of our indigenously developed apps **Abheda English** and **English CourseTutor**, designed for written and verbal communications respectively.

For computer operations, the basics of Windows OS and its applications are taught by an experienced trainer. Here too, we have resorted to a set of well-crafted contents to teach.

We experience very encouraging signs in this eSchool as the number of students taking a leap every week. The importance of learning English has caught the imagination of local students, and our local entrepreneur has been able to sensitize the school authorities enough so that they inspire their students to join our eSchool.

In this regard**, we would like to thank Bentley Systems, Kolkata** for funding the infrastructure of the eSchool under their CSR initiative. Our classrooms are now equipped with desktops, tablets, TV and Android box – courtesy Bentley Systems.

Inauguration

Bentley's Contribution

Abheda eSchool, Jhargram
Funded by
STEM Grant
Bentley Corporate Initiative Program
Bentley Systems – Kolkata

English class going on

Computer class going on

Abheda eSchool Jhargram

An Initiative of Abheda Foundation

www.abhedafoundation.org | Contact - 7479036117

Communicative English for Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) Commenced

In a major tie-up with two departments of NSOU, namely School of Vocational Studies (SVS) and School of Education, Abheda has signed two MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) with NSOU. Under these contracts, we are slated to impart a 6-month certificate course **Communicative English** to its diploma and B Ed students of first year. The course, which began in early April 2019, aims to train up the students in written and verbal communications in English. This completely digitally-instituted course has been designed with the following aspects covered:

1. Students register themselves through the Abheda website, and self-learn our apps Abheda English and English CourseTutor.
2. Some expert communicators from Abheda will enable the students to communicate verbally in English through WhatsApp sessions.
3. On successful completion of the course, students will receive a certificate signed by Abheda Foundation and NSOU.

All processes around the course are in place. The processes comprise registration procedure, sensitization of the communicators, communication mechanism with the students, and formative and summative assessment techniques. This project is treated as a pilot project, following which we may expect a greater execution for NSOU.

MOU signed with Hon'ble VC, NSOU

Flyer

Swami Vivekananda Scholarship Program Progressed

Presently, **we support 83 students, soon to be 105**. Following are highlights of the program:

- They are from Canning, Jalangi, Jhargram and Kolkata
- They belong to the age group 12-20 years and study in classes VII to XII, BA/BSc 1st. 2nd and 3rd years
- They have a financially challenged family background
- We select class VII students through a selection test followed by a scrutiny of their financial conditions and nurture them till they stand in life
- 5 Adivasi students of very poor family background are included without exam
- There are students whom we have been taking care of since 2012-13
- ONGC and individual sponsors give us the necessary financial assistance
- The scholarship amount varies, starts at ₹500 and there is no upper limit
- For some deserving students, we cover their entire educational expenses
- We give them digital tablets to improve on English (through self-learning of English CourseTutor and Abheda English)
- We teach them verbal communications in English and computer operations
- We appoint monitors to look after their education and well-being
- We maintain their right health conditions
- We lead them to appropriate career paths
- We engage with them in a family-like bonding
- We pledge to stand by them until they stand in life
- A greater objective is to make a number of socially aware citizens of India who will give back to the society

Significant financial assistance by ONGC in this program is hereby appreciated.

We lay special emphasis on English teaching, as English is still the best enabler in the society and job market. As the students self-study Abheda English and English CourseTutor for written and verbal communications respectively, monitors cum mentors call them thrice a week to mentor them over phone. This model has worked quite well as is observed below for the students of 2017-18:
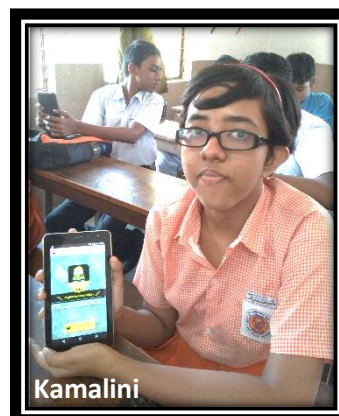
Location	Batch	No. of Students	Beginners	Intermediate	Advanced
Canning	2017	11		1	10
Jalangi	2017	16		16	
Canning	2018	29	2	27	
Jhargram	2018	13	9	4	
Kolkata	2018	39	21	17	1

Progress with Abheda English

Our next target is to make the students speak in English by the end of 2019.

The brightest spot of this year's scholarship program is that Mijanur Molla, a scholarship holder since 2012, had scored 78.5% in Computer Science in the 1st year exam of Calcutta University.

The reader may visit the Facebook page Extend Your Family for regular updates on the program.

All Jhargram students
04.06.2018 13:24

Students learning to use tabs

Exam going on in Kolkata

Tithi

Soumalya

Kamalini

Mijanur

Abheda English Version 2.0 Released

December 2018 saw this version effecting a better user experience.
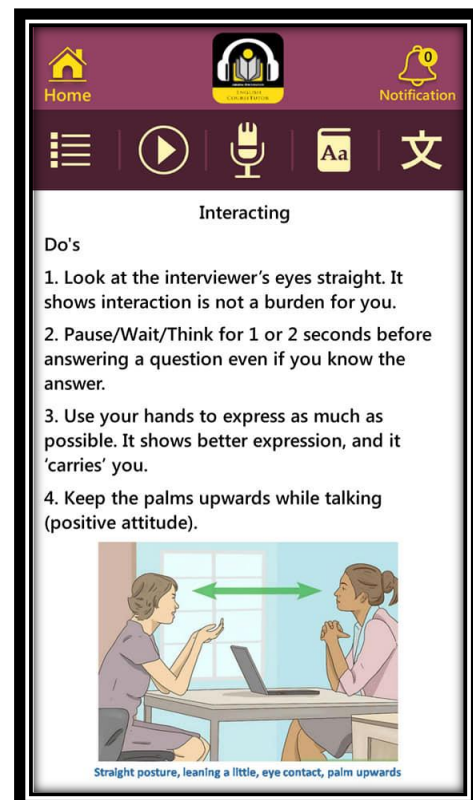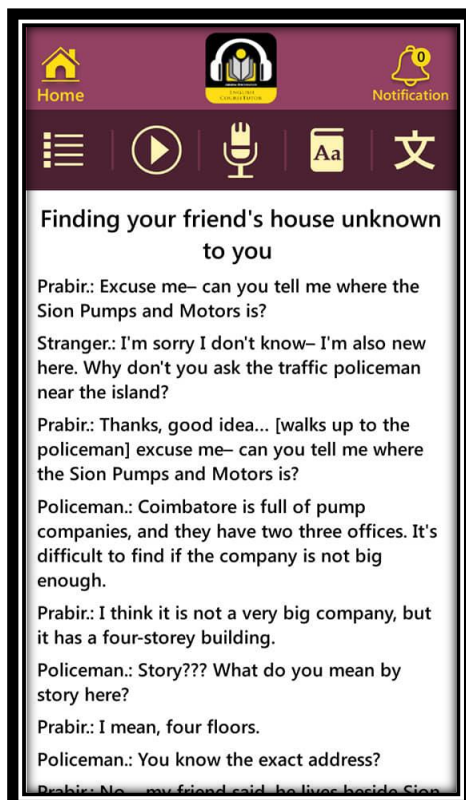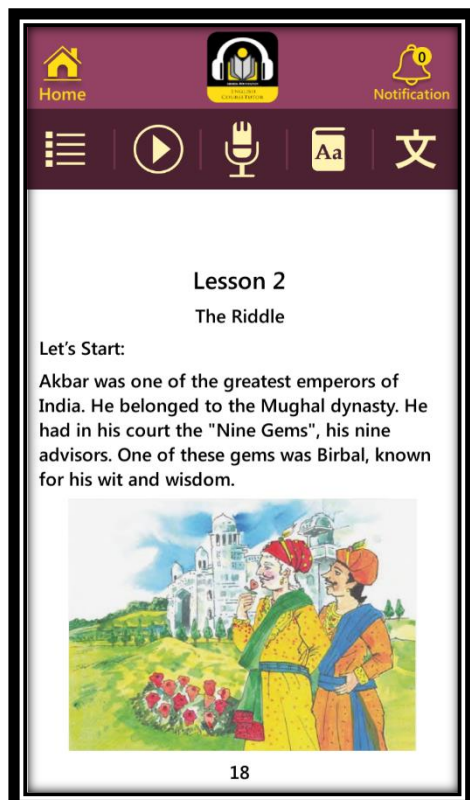
What's new -

- Level locking/unlocking (Contents divided into Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced levels)
- Indian accent incorporated
- Guest user implemented
- Forgot password feature included
- Engagement time for specific users calculated and stored on our server
- Advertisement of English CourseTutor
- Exit button inserted

Most of the features have been incorporated in view of the course Communicative English. This course is now tightly coupled with both the apps.

English CourseTutor Version 2.3 Released with Enhanced Contents

English CourseTutor now addresses the verbal communication aspect of the language adequately as we include **common conversations** and **interview questions/answers** in large numbers. This extends the category of users of the app from the West Bengal Board students, who can benefit from their syllabus contents in the app, to any other common users willing to learn spoken English. Because of NSOU teachers' training program in view, we inserted some special chapters on teacher-students and teacher-parents conversations. This will aid the aspiring teachers. Besides, in the new version we have implemented a **registration system** so that a user's usage time can be calculated and stored on our server.

A Web-based Course Registration System Released for Scale-up

Abheda Foundation's website now has a link to allow any student to register for any course offered by us. After registration, the student needs to log in to her profile to pay online the fees for the course through our online payment system. She is then sent necessary instructions and documents on how to go about the course, and the digitally-instituted course begins for her. Communicators are then assigned to students so that their verbal communications are taken care of. Verbal communications can happen either over WhatsApp chats or through face-to-face interaction at Abheda eSchools. Even the communicators can register themselves through this system.

Though the course registration system was originally meant for registration by NSOU students for the course Communicative English, we have opened it for any student willing to learn English as a scale-up exercise. **Once the pilot project for NSOU is successful, we can then approach schools, colleges, institutes and even coaching centres for their students to take up the course.** Institutional push is what will make us reach a greater base of students.

Support for Abheda eSchool at Jalangi, Murshidabad Continued

Abheda eSchool at Jalangi, being run by a franchise Raypara Milan Sangha, is now more than two years old. It has produced some **students proficient in English**. Computer operations and painting training along with tuitions on subjects in school syllabus are being carried out by local teachers. A nursery section has been introduced and it has gained importance and 60 students in short time.

Other Support

Abheda Foundation could give financial assistance to **Rubaiya Parvin** so that she could get into B Sc. (Nursing). After a Facebook campaign, it was made possible by the sympathizers of Abheda as we could muster her yearly fees in a short time. Rubaiya has been our scholarship holder since 2012. We are also supporting some others' preparation for NEET exam.

Aneeta with Jaya and Prity at her residence

For more than 5 years, Abheda has been supporting a very poor girl named **Aneeta** who comes from the mountains of Uttarakhand. She passed the class XII board exam satisfactorily. Now she is studying Bachelors at a college in Dwarahat. She is presented with a tablet recently. Abheda pledges to stand by her education as long as she continues to study.

For some very much deserving student members Abheda has been extending a **special service** by making them stay at Abheda premise and continue their education in Kolkata schools and colleges. Abheda thus inspires its sympathizers to adopt this social model effectively.

4. Human Resources

Abheda has two employees for office work, content development and content delivery. Apart from the involvement of the trustees Abheda Foundation has been fortunate to have received voluntary contributions in terms of effort and money from different sources. First, we acknowledge the support extended to us in the form of sponsorship and guidance by **Dr. Subha Sankar Sarkar, Hon'ble VC, Netaji Subhas Open University, Mr. Shivaji Sengupta, Head, CSR, ONGC, Mr. Amitava Das, Mr. Rudra Lahiri and Mr. Uday Bhattacharyya from Bentley Systems**. Special thanks are reserved on our behalf for **Ms Rokeya Begam**, Principal, Canning Dwarikanath Balika Vidyalaya and **Ms Samita Bhowmik**, Principal, Victoria Institution (School) for allowing us to use the premises of their schools for holding exams several times. We hereby admire **Mr. Sankar Das** as he put in unrelenting efforts towards making the Abheda eSchool at Jhargram a reality and supporting the cause of Abheda scholarship there. We hereby also thank **innumerable donors** for one time and regular contributions. Contribution from each of them had been acknowledged in the form of money receipts given to them. Among the prolific donors, the names of **Mr. Sujit Guha, Mr. Ashish Majumdar, Mr. Prabal Dutta, Mr. Probal Chatterjee, Dr. Jyotirmoy Dey, Mr. Angshuman Hajra, Ms Anukta Chattopadhyay, Mr. Dipankar Manna, Mr. Pushan Deb, Mr. Amit Biswas** and **Dr. Susanta Ghosh** need a special mention. **Ms Ruchira Ganguly** and **Mr. Amit Halder** have developed contents for English CourseTutor, so heartfelt thanks go to them. There have been significant contributions from **all monitors of the Scholarship Program** and **from all communicators of the course Communicative English**. Our sincerest thanks go to them. And lastly, no word of praise is enough for our trusted development partner **Zabingo Softwares** for continuous support on Abheda English, English CourseTutor and the website-related developments. We have been helped by many other people this year. We are sorry that not everybody's name could be mentioned here.

5. Success Story

We have been **able to teach English to our scholarship holders and the students of Abheda eSchool**. Under our guidance and mentoring, the students are now proficient in English, Here is a major success story. You may wish to watch [Sania Gazi, an Abheda scholarship holder, narrate a story extempore.](#)
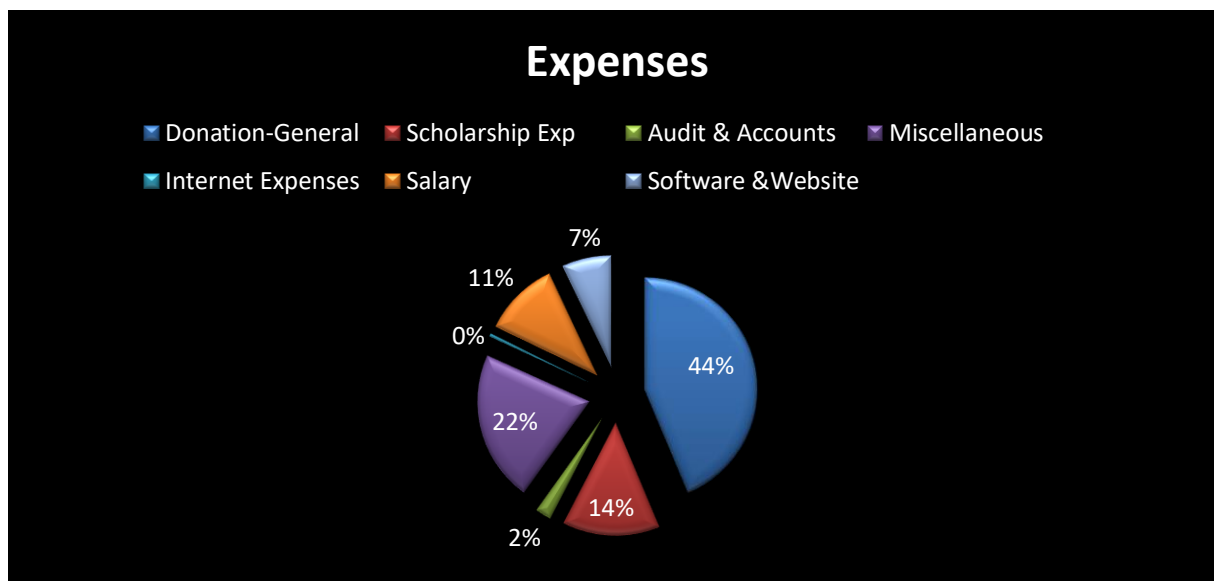
We have now **established a model around building an Abheda eSchool** by inspiring sponsors to fund, developing an entrepreneur to run the show and laying out the processes precisely. This model is giving rise to Abheda eSchools in the rural and semi-urban areas of West Bengal, Abheda eSchool Jhargram being one of them.

The **tie-up with a major University like NSOU** is considered to be a milestone for Abheda Foundation. This will pave a path for working with educational institutes in large numbers.

6. Financial Report

Financial stability is very important for an NGO with a fairly substantial number of activities. We are happy that we have been able to achieve and maintain this all through. The Financial report of the Treasurer for the FY 2018-19 is enclosed for perusal. In a nutshell, the Trust has received donation ₹**15,44,733** as income and disbursed ₹**18,92,256** as expenditure with a net Expenditure over Income ₹**3,24,144**. The surge in expenditure is largely due to the growing educational needs of the senior scholarship holders.

Activity based financial analysis of expenses in a graphical representation is as follows:

Abridged Income and Expenditure Statement

Income	Amount	Expenses	Amount
Donation	1544732.61	Donation-Computers,Tablets TV & Others	826860.00
Interest Received	23380.00	Scholarship Exp	263200.00
		Software & Website Development	131900.00
		Audit & Accounts	44000.00
		Miscellaneous	412705.26
		Internet Expenses	8091.00
		Salary	205500.00

Abridged Balance Sheet

Liabilities		as on 31-Mar-2017	Assets		as on 31-Mar-2017
Capital Account			**Fixed Assets**		**1441920.00**
As per Last Accounts	2186408.89		*Computer*	19209.00	
ONGC	193467.00		*Television*	31777.00	
Less: Net Deficit	324143.65	**2055732.24**	*Investment for School Building at Jalangi*	1377817.00	
			Projector	13117.00	
			Current Assets		**675812.24**
Current Liabilities		**62000.00**	Cash-in-hand	6798.50	
Outstanding Liabilities	62000.00		Bank Accounts	669013.74	
Total		**2117732.24**	**Total**		**2117732.24**

7. Future Plan

Establishing one or more Abheda eSchools

Abheda eSchools have been a lucrative proposition for entrepreneurs. Abheda nurtures and develops these entrepreneurs to run the eSchools commercially for the sake of smooth operations and quality imparting of education. Abheda does not claim any stake however, as it is a non-profit organisation. In regard to this, we hereby announce that *Abheda eSchool is making an entry into Canning*.

Enhancing Abheda eSchool, Jhargram

We will *enhance the infrastructure of Abheda eSchool Jhargram* before the next year. Another room will be digitally equipped so that we can accommodate larger number of students. We will also add new life-skill courses such as Diploma in Computer Operations, Communicative English for Professionals, Painting, and Music etc.

Augmentation of Students in Swami Vivekananda Scholarship Program

In our constant endeavour to support the financially challenged, from July 2019 we are including 20+ more students in our Abheda family. They will be sourced from Canning and Jhargram. The preparations are complete, and we have already roped in enough sponsors.

Reaching out students for the Course Communicative English

Now that we are ready with appropriate contents in Abheda English and English CourseTutor, we are in a position to *extend the user base by campaigning for the course Communicative English*. But first, we have to firm up the model and the processes concerning the course. For that, the NSOU pilot program will have to be made successful. Then we can solicit for the course by taking it to educational institutes, e.g. schools and colleges in Kolkata or coaching centres.

Developing a Web-based Assessment System for Communicative English

For a scale-up to happen in near future, we are developing an assessment system on the web so that a user registered for the course through our website can avail of that assessment at the end of the course. The question papers of an exam can be constructed from the back-end admin panel

and subjected to the registered students on an exam day. This is part of a summative assessment which would comprise regular quizzes as well as allow testing of verbal communications.

Making Abheda English (Santhali) a reality

In spite of our best efforts, we have not been able to make the Santhali version a reality. Many educated people from Santhal community were contacted and budget was discussed, but we could not initiate its development (translation process). More effort will be put in to find right people, who would make things happen.

8. Conclusion

Friends, I am fortunate to be able to present the report of a Trust which is rendering humanitarian service for the students who need the most. **Digital education** has been our main means to deliver this service as existing teachers and teaching learning materials are found wanting in terms of quality and effectiveness (more so for first generation learners) in most cases. This renders a wide discrimination in quality of education as received by different strata of the society. This inequality will turn even more skewed in not-so-distant future in view of hugely aggravated enrolment of students and scarcity of teachers. So digital education is possibly the only solution, we reckon.

English being the major pain area of the underprivileged, we have been able to deliver two software products for learning English for free. And we are in constant endeavour to upgrade the contents and enlarge the ambit of students by adding different Indian languages to learn English through. English CourseTutor, like Abheda English, will play an equally important role as a language is better learnt by listening. All the more, when the students find their syllabus contents being pronounced and discussed on, they will be even more interested.

Our equal focus would remain on content delivery as the underprivileged class is unlikely to access digital contents – although free – on their own. Building more Abheda eSchools, supporting the underprivileged students through the Swami Vivekananda Scholarship Program and executing the course Communicative English for a larger base of students will settle this issue, we reckon.

Finally let me thank each and every one for giving me this envious opportunity to present the 7th Annual Report of Abheda Foundation.

Biswajit Mitra
Managing Trustee
Abheda Foundation