

Annual General Body Meeting of September 29th 2022

The annual general body meeting of Alliance Française de Trivandrum for the year 2022 was conducted on September 9th in the premises of Alliance Française, in the physical mode after a gap of two years. The previous two AGMs were conducted online because of the pandemic.

After welcoming the members present President gave a brief introduction of the activities, functions and status of AFT in the year 2021-22. A lot of changes took place in AFT as functioning was affected by COVID. For three months operations came to a standstill, but we adapted very well. Till September 2022 classes were conducted online and enrolment of students, for both group courses and private one on one coaching, was seen to improve. New types of classes called Hyflex classes conducted in hybrid mode were also introduced. Two classrooms were equipped for this purpose. The library was renovated, and a backyard was constructed.

Despite the difficulties posed by COVID, AFT was still able to generate surplus income last year. Salary revision, renovation of library, and revival of cultural activities which had come to a complete stop during the pandemic could be done with a part of finance from AFT. Earlier organisation of cultural programs was totally dependant on funds from the Embassy. For several years we could not get the subvention because approval of FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) was still pending.

Amendments to the by-laws were expected to be done by December 2022 and this work was entrusted to the chartered accountants.

The 2022 AGM was the first physical AGM attended by Director Eva Martin. Being an expert in pedagogy and management she could effectively implement the functioning of the software HANAF to manage the pedagogical data.

Agenda

A brief self-introduction was done by new members.

Minutes of the previous AGM was read and approved.

The auditor's report was read, and accounts for the year 2021-22 were passed. Excess of income over expenditure was noted even though subvention was not received last year. C M A Nayar observed that to be called effective AFT should be able to sustain without subvention from the Embassy. President pointed out that with the help of online classes which has a wider outreach and which can spread to even remote areas, this goal can be achieved. C M A Nayar also remarked that a lot of time was spent on managing finances. President replied that the Finance Committee was meeting regularly for the past three years and that it was overseeing finances.

Zulfiqar Marikkar enquired about the status of membership in AFT and remarked that younger members were needed for AFT to sustain. Kalyani Vallath suggested that the interest of English literature students could be tapped for this. Small programs introducing AFT to the students highlighting French courses and long-term objectives of learning French could be organised. President replied that AFT was already working on programs with universities and schools like TRINS, St. Thomas and St. Therasas and also the ASAP (Additional Skill Acquisition Program) implemented in schools.

The budget for the year 2022-23 was presented and formally approved by the members.

Director's Report

The Director's report was presented by Director Eva Martin.

In 2021-22 the main functioning of AFT was adjusting to the new normal in the form of diversification with new timings and new types of courses, renovation of facilities and teacher's training. This effort produced better results than previous years with a greater number of students coming from online courses.

Two cultural programs, Bonjour India and French Rendez-vous were conducted. An increase in fees collected was observed in the year 2021-22 compared to the previous year. In the place of one DELF exam in the year 2021, three DELF exams were held in 2022. Income was generated mainly from course fees, exam fees, sale of books, translation and Campus France.

Group courses including external courses in schools and universities in both Trivandrum and Cochin showed 20% increase in registrations.

Registrations for DELF certification was lower than the pre-pandemic situation, but this trend was observed in all the Alliances in India and was not particular to Trivandrum. A survey was being conducted in order to understand the reason.

A discussion on how to improve the ambience of Alliance and the promotion of its activities took place. Zulfiquar Marikar proposed sorties and trips to attract younger people to AFT. Philomena asked how such activities were communicated to members. President replied that invitations were regularly sent through social media and the electronic monthly brochure. Kalyani Vallath remarked that reviews on social media such as Google and repeated follow-ups would be helpful.

After the discussion President officially closed the Annual General Body Meeting 2022.