

Report of the

Seventeenth Annual North Eastern Economic Association (NEEA) Conference 30-31 October, 2015

The Seventeenth Annual Conference of North Eastern Economic Association (NEEA) was held at Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills during 30th and 31st October, 2015. The Conference was organised by the Department of Economics, Rajiv Gandhi (Arunachal) University. The major themes of deliberations were: *Labour Market Issues with special reference to the northeast India* and *Issues in Health Economics in the North eastern region of India*. A total of 90 abstracts were received from various parts of the country for the conference. It was attended by 78 registered participants apart from some non-registered participants, including students from the department of Economics, Rajiv Gandhi University and faculty members from other departments of the university. Delegates mostly from University and Colleges of the North Eastern States and a few scholars from the rest of the country were the participants in the conference.

Sri Nabam Tuki, the hon'ble **Chief Minister**, of Arunachal Pradesh graced the inaugural function as the chief guest. In his inaugural address the Chief Minister highlighted a good number of policy measures especially on Health and Infrastructure initiated by his Government. Most notable one was the health insurance, a policy measure that had attracted attention throughout the country. Not least were the different policy measures taken for infrastructural development by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The Chief Minister expressed his best wishes for the success of the Conference.


The Conference provided an opportunity to young researchers and teachers from this remote part of the country to get exposure to good discourse and lectures by reputed economists and policy makers of the country. Noted developmental economists and an expert on Indian Society and Economy, **Prof Barbara Harriss-White**, from the **University of Oxford**, UK delivered the inaugural address on '**Questioning Work And Wellbeing In The Informal Economy**' and highlighted the problems of the informal labour market.

In his address **Prof. Tamo Mibang, Vice-Chancellor** of Rajiv Gandhi University, highlighted the different economic problems of North East India and exhorted the delegates to ponder over these issues, especially those related to unemployment and inadequacy of health care facilities. He hoped that the learned participants would find out ways and means of improving health care and identify the measures for solution to the problems of unemployment. The conference President and Chairman of the session **Prof. Saundarjya Borbora** from **IIT, Guwahati**, delivered his presidential address on Governance and institutional reforms. He pointed out that for improving governance, one needed to bring together the issues of accountability, transparency, information, empowerment and inclusive development.

At the outset, Dr. Vandana Upadhyay, head, Department of Economics welcomed the participants. The vote of thanks was extended by Prof. S K Nayak, Dean School of Social Sciences, Rajiv Gandhi University. The **key note speakers** Prof. Rajarshi Majumder from the University of Burdwan spoke on Labour Issues which was chaired by Prof. Amitava Mitra and Prof. Dibyojyoti Bhattacharjee from Assam University spoke on health economics, which was chaired by Prof. N.C. Roy.

The conference included 12 technical sessions, one panel discussion and one special lecture. Prof Atul Sarma, former Vice Chancellor of RGU and member of the thirteenth Finance Commission chaired a panel discussion on Cooperative Federalism. Prof. E B K Singh, Prof. S K Nayak, Prof. Gautam Mazumdar, and Dr. Ashish Nath were the speakers in the panel discussion. Prof. Barbara Hariss White also delivered another special lecture titled '**Comparisons Are Odious! On The Problems of Comparing China and India**', which was chaired by **Prof. Atul Sarma**. The conference came to an end with the valedictory lecture by Prof. Atul Sarma.

It may be recalled that Rajiv Gandhi University was hosting the North Eastern Economic Association Conference for the second time after ten years. The 7th NEEA conference was held at RGU during October 2005 and the then Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Sri Gegong Apang ji had inaugurated the conference.


(Prof. Vandana Upadhyay)

Head Department of Economics &
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