

Call for Papers

National Seminar on Hill Economies and Sustainable Development: The Challenges and Prospects 5th – 6th February, 2018

Organized by

**Centre for Development Studies, Department of Economics, Rajiv Gandhi University
Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh**

With technical support from

**Institute for Human Development
New Delhi**

Background

The Indian hill region covers 11 states, namely, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar districts of Assam. In spite of diversities among hill states in respect of resource base, potentialities and socio-cultural differentiations, they are characterized by certain common features or specificities.

The development trajectories of the hill regions have generally been viewed from the perspective of subsistence nature of the economy, wherein a large majority of people are engaged in agriculture based activities for sustenance. Mountains play pivotal roles in the delivery of ecosystem services for sustaining the well-being of people living in the mountains systems and in the plains in the form of provisioning services (food, water, wood, fibre and fuel); regulating services (climate regulation, flood regulation and drought control, regulation of water and air quality, and crop pollination); cultural services (benefits arising from tourism, recreation, religious/spiritual experience, etc); and supporting services which are necessary for the production of all ecosystem services, e.g., primary production (photosynthesis), nutrient cycling and soil formation. However, industrial base is generally weak, and services sector largely represents amorphous government aided activities. Too much dependence on Central Government for grants and weak financial base for internal resource mobilization have generally put these economies in a vulnerable position. The development is largely support-based driven by the exogenous factors rather than generating indigenous momentum of growth. The dilemma is that, though these economies possess good amount of natural resources and also have comparative advantages in certain products and services, yet many of these hill states have not been able to harness their niche resources.

The three north hill states have somewhat different development patterns than the north-east ones. Himachal Pradesh provides a notable example of the transformation process from a traditional cereal crop producing region to one of the leading horticulture producing region with high human development indicators and a low level of poverty (8%). its horticulture is highly impressive in the country and even in abroad. Its road communication system has emerged as the best in mountain areas of India and has ample availability of electricity. Its forest resources are being augmented and increasing attention is paid towards harnessing hydro power for bright

future. In several aspects, the state has become the role model for the other hill states of the country. However, there are certain challenges which are being faced by the State such as poor mineral resources, means of dependable transport and poor accessibility, shortage of capital and lack of modern skills for industrial development. Jammu & Kashmir has one of the lowest poverty ratios after Himachal Pradesh (10%) and relatively better natural resource base, but it lags in industrial development and is afflicted by cross border terrorism which has adversely affected the development of the state. Uttarakhand has recorded an impressive literacy rate with relatively lower gender gap, and low poverty ratio (11%), yet disparities in terms of development indicators between hill and plain districts are clearly discernible leading to high out-migration. The resource here has not been harnessed due to lack of economic infrastructure and institutional support.

North East Region has remained industrially the most backward region. Decadal population is still high in majority of the states (Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur) as compared to all-India average. Per capita income is lower than the national average in most of the NE States. North East Region continues to be the net importer of food grains. Poverty ratio is high in the NE hill states barring Sikkim (8.19%), Meghalaya (11.87%). In other NE States poverty ratio varies from 14.05 % in Tripura to Manipur (37%). Bulk of labour force is engaged in agriculture and allied activities with high unemployment rates, particularly among youth. The main constraints of development in the NE hill States are inadequate social and economic infrastructures, high cost of building up infrastructure facilities, remote locations from the mainland India, lack of skilled manpower, land tenure system, insurgency and ethnic conflicts, poor governance, environmental concerns etc. However, the region has high prospects of development such as agro-forestry and horticulture, plantation crops, organic farming, animal husbandry, recreation and tourism, hydro power, mining and quarrying, cottage and small scale industries, agro and forest based industries. The NE hill States need to learn lesson from success of north hill States and incorporate their ideas for promoting sustainable development.

Given the constraints and opportunities of development in the hill States, there is a need to design region specific policy to overcome those constraints and reap the benefits from comparative advantages.

Aims and Objectives

The seminar is expected to discuss and debate some of the pressing challenges being faced by the hill economies with the following aims and objectives.

- Expanding the economic base of the hill economies within the hill development framework
- Diversifying the subsistence based agriculture into horticulture and other niche based activities.
- Strengthening social and economic infrastructure to provide better livelihood opportunities
- Integrating environmental issues with development agenda
- Providing productive employment and livelihood opportunities
- Providing an agenda for sustainable development of the hill economies

- Learning and sharing knowledge of diversity in development experiences across hill economies so as to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Seminar Themes

Some tentative themes of the seminar would be:

1. Diversities in development
2. Subsistence agriculture and sustainable livelihoods
3. Agriculture and livelihood diversification
4. Environmental concerns and development
5. Employment challenges and opportunities
6. Prospects and challenges of industrial development
7. Prospects and Problems of tourism development in hill economies
8. Challenges of migration
9. Gender equality and development
10. Governance and financial resources
11. Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The above sub-themes are suggestive in nature, rather than exhaustive. Research paper on any topic related to issues and challenges of development of any hill economy may be accepted for presentation in the seminar, provided the paper has a good measure of originality.

About Rajiv Gandhi University

Rajiv Gandhi University, formerly Arunachal University, is the premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The campus is located on a panoramic table land locally known as Rono-Hills in the outskirts of Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh. It is connected to the national highway No. 415 leading to Itanagar. The distance from the national highway (Bage Tinali) to the campus is 7 kms. Itanagar is well connected to the rest of the country through roadways. The nearest city is Guwahati (Assam) which has a railway station and airport. Itanagar is about 420 K.M. from Guwahati & Day and night bus services are available from Guwahati to Itanagar on a daily basis. There are also train services (Dony-Polo Express and Satabdi Express) between Guwahati and Naharlagun. The nearest railway station to the University is the Gumto station. Itanagar also has its own regular chopper service from Guwahati. Shared/Reserved taxi is also available from Guwahati to Itanagar (8 hours journey). Arunachal Pradesh has a pleasant weather during October-November.

About the Department of Economics, Rajiv Gandhi University

The Department of Economics made its beginning in July 1991. The main objective of the Department has been to impart socially relevant education at the Post Graduate level by judicious mix of theory and empiricism. The Department of Economics has the distinction of acting as the nodal Department for the preparation of first *Human Development Report (HDR) of Arunachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh State Development Report*. The 17th annual Conference of NEEA was organised by the department. Recognising the contributions of the Department, the

Ministry of Finance, Government of India in 2012 sanctioned grant-in-aid for establishing the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) attached to the department.

Submission of Abstract: Abstract of the paper (within 300 words) may be submitted through email on seminar.eco2017@gmail.com.

Submission of Full Paper: Full paper (within 4000 words) should be in MS Word, font Times Roman, 12 font size, 1.5 line spacing, EPW style of referencing. The full paper must be submitted through email on seminar.eco2017@gmail.com. *Only those scholars who submit full paper will be invited to present their paper in the seminar.*

Important Dates:

Last date for submission of abstract (300 words): 20th **December, 2017**

Last date for submission of full paper (4000-5000 words): 15th **January, 2018**

Accommodation: Accommodation and Travelling Allowances (Road/3AC railway journey) will be provided to those invited as Resource Persons and Paper Presenters.

Registration: *Registration fee for each participant is Rs. 500/- for academicians and Rs. 200/- for Research scholars and Students*

Contact:

Coordinator, CDS

Department of Economics

Rajiv Gandhi University

Rono Hills, Doimukh, Itanagar

Arunachal Pradesh, PIN-791112

Email: seminar.eco2017@gmail.com

Organising Committee

Coordinator : Prof. S. K. Nayak, HoD, Department of Economics

Dy. Coordinator : Dr. Maila Lama (9436896121)

Dy. Coordinator : Dr. Lijum Nochi (9436632333)

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On

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Registration Form

1. Full Name [Capital Letters] Dr/ Mr/ Ms _____

2. Designation _____

3. Affiliation _____

4. Address _____

Fax _____ email _____

Ph _____

5. Title of the paper to be presented _____

6. Registration fee (to be paid on the spot): Rs. _____

7. Accommodation: _____

(Please tick) (a) Required

(b) Not required

Signature

[Please e-mail this Registration Form to: seminar.eco2017@gmail.com]