

Report of the Seminar on “Issues in the Sustainable Development of Meghalaya”

Organized by: William Carey University, Shillong
Sponsored by: ICSSR-NERC, NEHU Campus, Shillong
From 5-7 March 2012 at Don Bosco Youth Centre, Laitumkhrah, Shillong

Inaugural Function

The William Carey University organized a seminar on the “**Issues in the Sustainable Development of Meghalaya**” from 5-7 March at the Don Bosco Youth Centre, Laitumkhrah, Shillong. The Seminar began with a welcome song and dance by the students of William Carey University.



Students Singing the Welcome Song



Students performing the Harvest Dance



Participants registering at the Seminar



Students presenting a Khasi song

Prof. Paul Mohan Raj, the Acting Vice Chancellor of the University, felicitated the special guests, which included the Chancellor Prof. Ken Ganankan, The Chief Guest Shri. Bindo M.



Lanong, the Deputy Chief Minister, Government of Meghalaya, Shri. W. Khylllep IAS, Director Higher and Technical Education, Government of Meghalaya Prof. B.B.Jana, International Centre for Ecological Engineering, University of Kalyani, Mr. Utpal Bhattacharya, The Registrar, the University of Kalyani and Mr. Zulfi Ali, Director Grace City and welcomed them on the dais.



Prof Paul Mohan Raj delivered the opening address highlighting the meaning and implications of sustainable development. He hoped that the seminar will address several issues listed in the programme and the findings and recommendations would have a bearing on the community, the Government and the education fraternity. Dr. Soma Bhowmick, Coordinator of the Seminar introduced the schedule of the seminar. Mr. Bhattacharya brought greetings and good wishes from the University of Kalayani and expressed the hope that both Universities will build collaborative programmes for mutual benefit.



At the inaugural function : Dignitaries on the dias



At the inaugural function : Dignitaries on the dias

The Keynote address was delivered by Prof. Ken Gnanakan, the Chancellor of the University.



The Chief Guest of the Seminar, Shri. Bindo M. Lanong, the Deputy Chief Minister, Government of Meghalaya, congratulated the William Care University, for organizing the seminar. Shri. Lanong was of the opinion that for sustainable development, identifying the areas development was essential before it could be implemented. He further said that in every plan for sustainable development the planners should be judicious and pragmatic and engage in people oriented development. Shri. Lanong encouraged people to set up small scale industries rather than large scale industries, which he felt, was not the right time for Meghalaya.



The Chancellor Prof. Ken Ganankan, flanked by the Chief Guest Shri. Bindo M. Lanong, the Deputy Chief Minister, Government of Meghalaya, on the right and Shri. W. Khyllap IAS, Director Higher and Technical Education, Government of Meghalaya on the left

Shri. Lanong appreciated the special status women enjoyed in Meghalaya. At the same time, he expressed importance of youth, and said that youth should not be neglected. It was necessary for the youth to get involved in the sustainable development as they would be playing a major role in the sustainable development of the State.



Concluding his remarks, Shri. Lanong suggested that the findings and recommendation of the seminar should be forwarded to the Government and to all concerned departments.

Shri. W. Khylllep IAS Director, Higher and Technical Education, Government of Meghalaya who was the Guest of Honour, praised the University for organizing the seminar and said that Meghalaya had lots of resources for sustainable development. Shri. W. Khylllep shared about his experience in Malaysia when he was there for a course in Asian Institute of Management. He said that in Malaysia they had a chain system of management where several villages were co-benefiters by contributing to one aspect of the collective developing process. Based on what he experienced from Malaysia he felt there should be a chain system of management for sustainable development even in Meghalaya. Shri. Khylllep hoped that Meghalaya will be a vibrant state for education and for the sustainable economic development. He felt the sustainable development would also solve the unemployment problems of youth. People should be more creative and innovative and generate more entrepreneurs. In his concluding remark, Shri. Khylllep emphasized that there should be no wastage of human capital and people should work hard to achieve it.



The Technical Sessions of the Seminar was spread over three and a half days consisting of seven Technical Sessions and Ten Paper presenters and Speakers of eminence along with Panel and Group Discussions.

5th March 2012: Technical Sessions Session –I Dr. Mayonmi Shimray chaired the session.

Prof. P.K. Gupta, Dean, School of Education, NEHU, Shillong presented a paper on Lifelong Education for Sustainable Development. He explained how lifelong education can be related to sustainable development. Prof. Gupta said that education and development are the key issues which are debated in different forums. According to him, the earlier concept of education which was education for the sake of education is no more applicable in the society and has been replaced by education in all walks of life which is a lifelong process. Prof. Gupta stressed on the need for lifelong education which should be based on environmental education, moral education, social education and citizen education. In the conclusion Prof. Gupta suggest that education should be lifelong and should not only confine to schools, colleges and university but should be in all walks of life.



Sri. Subhasis Chakrawarty



Shri. Carmo deBrito Noronha

The second paper was presented by Sri. Subhasis Chakrawarty, Advocate on “Law and Sustainable Development”. Sri. Chakrawarty is of the opinion that law is relevant to the concept of development. According to him law is an instrument of social change. He discussed how law plays a vital role in sustainable development by citing examples. He also stressed on the need to make more laws for sustainable development.



Vice Chancellor, Prof. Paul Mohan Raj with Some faculty and staff



Prof. P.K. Gupta

The session ended with discussion and suggestions.

Session- II Moderator: Dr. Bulu Mahanta

Shri. Carmo deBrito Noronha, Secretary, Bethany Society, Shillong presented a paper on the “Challenges of Recycling Waste Matter”. According to Noronha, sustainable development refers to security of food, cash, social and culture. He said we kill animals, pollute water and cut the trees in order to make money. But human beings cannot eat money. We have distorted priorities. He discussed how burning, dumping, burying of waste matter affects human beings and the environment. He further highlighted many ways by

which zero waste can be used to solve the problem of sustainable development. In concluding, Noronha felt strongly that the participation of the community was essential in solving the problems of society and encouraged participants of the seminar to use locally made products which were eco-friendly and could be easily recycled. A lively discussion followed the presentation.

6th March 2012: Technical Sessions

On 6 March, the first session was chaired by Shri. Archie Kharpuri. Prof. B.B. Jana, International Centre for Ecological Engineering, University of Kalyani, West Bengal presented a paper on “Turning Waste into Wealth: A Strategy Towards Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Aquaculture”. Before he spoke on aquaculture, Prof. Jana presented his views on ecological restoration which could lead to sustainable development. He also said that sustainability can also be achieved through ecological engineering.



Prof. B.B. Jana, Kalyani University, West Bengal

Prof. Jana discussed the difference between conventional engineering and ecological engineering which provided service to the society. He emphasized that we should promote Ecological Engineering as a tool for sustainable development. Prof. Jana also discussed how waste water can be used for aquaculture. In conclusion, Prof. Jana discussed the methods of sewage treatment and suggested the ways and means by which to convert waste into wealth through aquaculture that would benefit the farmers in Meghalaya. This was followed by discussion.

Sri. Utpal Bhattacharjee, Registrar, University of Kalyani spoke on the “Sustainable Development: Ways and Means”. In his presentation Sri. Bhattacharya stressed that development and growth should be balanced for an all-round development. He also said production process cannot sustain without surplus.



Sri. Utpal Bhattacharjee, Registrar, Kalyani University

Group Discussions preceded the second session that was chaired by Dr. Maitreyee Roy. Prof. O. P. Singh, Department of Environmental Sciences, NEHU presented a paper on the “Management and Control of Air and Soil Pollution for Sustainable Development”.



Prof. O. P. Singh & Dr. Maitreyee Roy



Smt. Kabita Dhar

Prof. Singh is of the opinion that there are three pillars for sustainable development. They are social, environmental and economic pillars. According to him, to have a sustainable future, firstly, the people must have equal and equitable access to their basic needs. Secondly, the generation of wealth through economic activity was necessary to attain a high standard of living. Thirdly, sustainable human activities must strive to protect the earth's environment to make sure it was not damaged for future generations. He also discussed the causes and consequences of soil and land pollution. In conclusion Prof. Singh discussed the management and control of air and soil pollution at the individual, community and government levels. The session ended with discussion and suggestions.

The third session was chaired by Dr. Soma Bhowmick. Smt. Kabita Dhar, Lecturer, Department of Management, Sikkim Manipal University, presented a paper on the “Challenges Women Face for Sustenance & Development” In her discussion Smt. Dhar begin by highlighting the scenario of women in North East India. Dhar also discussed the social, political and educational challenges women face in Meghalaya. Smt. Dhar suggested some measures to solve the challenges women face. Discussion followed the presentation.

The second paper in the session was presented by Dr. B. Panda, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, NEHU. Dr. Panda elaborated on the Community Participation for Sustainable Development where he defined the concept of community and stressed that community participation was the key to achieving development at grassroots (Bottom-Up Approach). Creativity and innovation ensured cordial relations with the Government authorities and strengthened the civil society and societal values. Dr. Panda further said that indigenous knowledge coupled with scientific technology can bring positive results in the long run, by promoting culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable adaptations acceptable to people. Local resources should be utilized judiciously and economically in a viable manner. He also discussed on the implication of community participation. In conclusion he discussed the various approaches to community participation for sustainable development.



Dr. Biswamber Panda

The fourth session was chaired by Prof. Paul Mohan Raj, the Acting Vice Chancellor of the University. Dr. Biswajit Mohapatra presented his paper on: the “Globalization, Environment and Development: Aspect of Political will and policies”. According Dr. Mohapatra in the process of sustainable development, both the people and the government were equally responsible. He said that legislation alone should not be considered as sufficient for ensuring sustainable development. He stressed the importance of committing ourselves as global citizens to build a humane, equitable and caring global society ever responsive to the need of human beings that strictly ensured and promoted policies for sound and sustainable economic growth for all. Dr. Mohapatra concluded by saying that in the context of our dismal record of environmental conservation, we must strive to bring synergy between the planning process and policy implementation in the respective national and local contexts.

7th March 2012: Technical Sessions

The last session of the seminar was chaired by Shri. Zulf Ali, Director, Grace City. Shri. Augustus S. Suting, Manager Technical Services, Meghalaya Rural Development Society Presented a paper on the “Issues Regarding Water” in which he said the next war will be for water between farming families and urban dwellers, environmentalist etc. He discussed the types of soil erosion and its consequences. Shri. Suting discussed the need for water harvesting and suggested measures for water harvesting. This was followed by discussion.



Dr. Biswajit Mohapatra



Shri. Augustus S. Suting

Valedictory:

The seminar concluded with the valedictory where Smt. Ampareen Lyngdoh, Urban Affairs Minister, Government of Meghalaya was the Chief Guest. Prof Ken Gnanakan felicitated and welcomed the chief guest.



Smt. Ampareen Lyngdoh,
in an animated discussion



Smt. Ampareen Lyngdoh,
Urban Affairs Minister, Govt of Meghalaya

Dr. Roshmi Das, Assistant Professor, WCU, presented the recommendations of the seminar which was prepared by the Findings Committee consisting of Dr. Mayonmi Shimray [Convenor], Dr. Maitreyee Roy, Dr. Roshmi Das, Shri. Zulfi Ali, Dr. Bulu Mohanta, and Shri. Danny Sawkmie [Ex. Officio: Seminar Director and Coordinator]



Dr. Roshmi Das presenting the recommendations



Smt. Ampareen Lyngdoh



Prof. Ken Gnanakan

Mrs. Ampareen Lyngdoh, in her valedictory speech said that there was a need to work on the recommendations of the seminar by both the educational institutions and the government to ensure a

sustainable future. She stressed on the need to carry forward the idea of sustainable development by various stakeholders, scientist, and educational institutions to bring about sustainable growth in the State. The concluding remarks were made by Prof. Ken Gnanakan, Chancellor and Prof. Paul Mohan Raj, Acting Vice Chancellor of the University.



Prof. Paul making the concluding remarks



A section of the seminar Participants

Vote of Thanks: Dr. Soma Bhowmick, the Seminar Coordinator, proposed a vote of thanks, thanking all the guests, paper presenters and all those who worked hard to make the seminar a success. Thanks were also expressed to ICSSR-NERC, NEHU Campus, Shillong for sponsoring the event. A special vote of thanks was given to the authorities of the Don Bosco Youth Centre for the use of their facilities for the seminar.



Dr. Soma Bhowmick, proposing a vote of thanks



The William Carey University

RECOMMENDATIONS

We, the participants of the Integrated Seminar on the Issues in Sustainable Development of Meghalaya, held from 5-7 at the Don Bosco Youth Centre, Shillong, comprising of scholars and practitioners in the areas of Environment Science, Education, Entrepreneurship, Social Science, Economics, Law, Aquaculture, Biological Sciences, Ethics, Political Science, Gender Concerns make the following recommendations to the Community, to the education fraternity and to the policy makers and implementers in the Government at various levels:

1. The sustainable development of Meghalaya is a major concern to be addressed by all concerned people in the State on a priority basis. William Carey University can initiate short-term sustainable

programmes for training young people in areas like environmental issues, aquaculture, food processing etc. These programmes should be recognized by the State Government for employment.

2. William Carey University in collaboration with Kalyani University, WB, can offer short-term and post graduate degrees in Aquaculture.
3. William Carey University should conduct seminars and workshops more frequently on relevant topics like sustainable development and integrated learning.
4. People's awareness programmes need to be initiated in natural resources and their sustainable use. We should minimize the use of resources that will reduce all kinds of pollution such as air pollution, water pollution and soil pollution. Urban waste management and water management should be pursued with greater urgency and implemented at the community and Government levels. WCU should consider urban waste management as a priority work with the government in whatever way possible.
5. The policy makers and implementers of development projects in Meghalaya need to make sure that all projects enhance the sustainable development of the State and its people.
6. Government agencies can provide adequate funds for Universities and NGOs to bring awareness of sustainable development to the common people.
7. William Carey University should come up with certain courses like development entrepreneurship, community development and aquaculture and other vocational courses. These programmes should be career oriented so that the youth can be self –employed and thus help in the economy of the State.