

**Proceeding of the National Seminar on Poverty and Rural Development in India with  
special reference to North Eastern Region**

**Organized by:**

Department of Economics  
**Debraj Roy College**  
In collaboration with  
**Vox Populi**

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The national seminar was organized by the Department of Economics, D. R. College, Golaghat on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September- 2017. Rural development generally refers to the process of improving the quality of life of the people residing in rural areas. Rural development has traditionally centered on the exploitation of land-intensive natural resources such as agriculture and forestry. However, changes in global production networks and increased urbanization have changed the character of rural areas. Increasingly tourism, niche manufacturers, and recreation have replaced resource extraction and agriculture as dominant economic drivers. The need for rural communities to approach development from a wider perspective has created more focus on a broad range of development goals rather than merely creating incentive for agricultural or resource based businesses. Rural Development in India is one of the most important factors for the growth of the Indian economy. India is primarily an agriculture-based country. Agriculture contributes nearly one-fifth of the gross domestic product in India. In order to increase the growth of agriculture removal of poverty, the Government has planned several programs pertaining to Rural Development in India which has witnessed several changes over the. It has assumed a new dimension and perspectives as a consequence. Rural development has assumed global attention especially among the developing nations which has great significance for the countries like India where majority of the population live in rural areas. The present strategy of rural development in India mainly focuses on poverty alleviation, better livelihood opportunities, provision of basic amenities and infrastructure facilities through innovative programmes of wage and self-employment. In this seminar an attempt has been made to discuss the scenario of rural development in India along with special focus on poverty in India.

The seminar was started with the lighting of candle by the principal followed by an inaugural song sung by the students of economics department. The inaugural session was presided by Dr. P. C. Saikia, principal, D R College. Prof. Mrinal Kranti Dutta, Professor of Humanity Department, Guahati IIT delivered the key not of the seminar. In his speech he analysed the topic

systematically. According to him Poverty as a term is much easier to recognize than to define it. It, however, is a stark reality in India and the government, therefore, has given top priority to poverty reduction right from the beginning of the plan period. Thanks to a number of policy initiatives to counter poverty, India has been able to reduce the number of poor people in the country considerably from 53.86% in 1983 to 21.23% in 2011. However, the intensity of poverty among different marginalized social groups, women headed households and rural areas is still found to be much higher. For example, rural poverty in the country is considered to be very high (41.80%) (as estimated by Tendulkar methodology), although poverty in general has seen substantial reduction. Many scholars have attributed the deteriorating rural conditions in Asia in general and India in particular to a number of historical forces. According to Gunnar Myrdal, the gradual deterioration of rural conditions in Asia throughout the twentieth century can be attributed to three major inter-related forces, namely, the intervention of European rule, the progressive introduction of monetized transactions and the rise in power of the moneylender, and the rapid growth of Asian population. The cumulative impact of these forces is still very relevant in explaining rural poverty in the country. While higher growth provides the resources necessary for public expenditure on goods and services for the poor, growth in itself is not sufficient to overcome the problem of poverty unless distributive equity is ensured. The high incidence of rural poverty alongwith general lack of inclusiveness in the growth process in the country is one explanation for massive rural development initiatives. As scholars argue, the widespread poverty and hunger in rural areas arise more from low intensity of employment and general low productivity of resources than from open unemployment. The general deficiency of basic facilities such as roads, communication, electricity, health, sanitation and drinking water in rural areas is said to have contributed to low productivity and intensity of employment and also has a general depressing effect on overall quality of life in rural areas. Additionally, the disparities in the distribution of opportunities between rural and urban areas also necessitate pursuing the cause of rural development a little bit strongly. In the absence of enough job opportunities in the rural areas, people are often tempted to migrate to the urban centres in search of better livelihood opportunities. However, general stagnancy in rural sector pushes too many people from rural areas to urban centres to be absorbed in the organised sector, a phenomenon which has tremendous effect on urban civil amenities resulting in degradation of urban environment as well. After the key note address Dr. Rabin Deka, Professor, Tezpur University and Dr. Pranjal Pratim Buragahain, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Dibrugarh University also expressed their opinion on the topic. Renowned scientist Dr. Padmeswar Gogoi also shared his experience the delegates. After the inaugural session two technical sessions were held on 16<sup>th</sup> September and another two technical session were held on 17<sup>th</sup> September. After the session valedictory session was held under the presidenship of Dr. P. C. Saikia. All the repporteurs described briefly their reports. Certificates were also distributed in the meeting. The seminar ended with the vote of thanks given by Devojit Phukan, convener of the seminar. The name of the paper and paper presenters are mention below