



IIPA NEWSLETTER

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INSTITUTE NEWS

Seminar on Consumer Protection and Consumer Welfare

IIPA's Centre for Consumer Studies in collaboration with Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur, organised the programme on January 7-8 at the Sacred Heart College. It was sponsored by the Department of Consumer Affairs. The Seminar was inaugurated by Dr. C. Antonyraj, SDB, Secretary and Rector, Sacred Heart College. The other dignitaries present on the occasion were Dr. D. Maria Antonyraj, SDB Principal, Sacred Heart College; and Dr. V. N. Viswanathan, Principal, Periyar Government Arts College, Cuddalore who delivered the keynote address. The main objectives of the seminar were to: (i) enhance the knowledge and skill of the participants in the area of consumer protection and consumer welfare; (ii) understand the need and importance of consumer protection and welfare and the role of various stakeholders; and (iii) discuss the legal dimensions of consumer protection in different service sectors. More than 100 participants from various parts of Tamil Nadu including teachers, NGOs and students from different departments of the host college and other colleges attended the programme. The programme was divided into various sessions covering: (i) Consumer Protection and Empowerment; (ii) Consumer Protection: Education and Awareness; (iii) Consumer Protection Act; (iv) Food Safety and the Consumers; (v) Media and Consumer; (vi) Insurance and Consumer; (vii) Banking and Consumers; and (viii) Telecom Services and Consumers. Prof. Suresh

Misra and Dr. Mamta Pathania coordinated it.

Programme for Hospitals and Healthcare Administration

Sponsored by Tibetan Voluntary Health Association, Dharamshala, the caption programme was conducted at IIPA from January 11-15. The programme was designed to equip the medical officers and hospital administrators with the necessary administration and management inputs for efficient and effective management of their health facilities and healthcare system. The programme-content included: (i) healthcare systems and the role of healthcare facilities; (ii) accounting and financial management in healthcare; (iii) healthcare financing and national health mission; (iv) managing supply chain in healthcare system and storage; (v) biomedical waste disposal and waste management; (vi) health and hospital information system; (vii) communication in hospitals: grievance management; (viii) medical ethics and legal issues in healthcare facilities; (ix) service quality management for patient safety and expectations; (x) emergency services and disaster management; and (xi) operations management in healthcare facilities. Programme faculty comprised guest speakers and in-house faculty. Dr. Girish Kumar and Dr. Pawan Kumar Taneja coordinated it.

Workshop on Gender Budgeting

Organised jointly by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and IIPA, the programme was conducted at IIPA for officials of state departments

of finance, planning and WCD/social welfare from January 18-20. Besides refreshing the understanding of gender budgeting concepts, tools and techniques, the programme was designed to: (i) facilitate cross learning regarding initiatives taken and challenges faced in implementing gender budgeting; and (ii) enable identification of strategies for strengthening institutionalisation of gender budgeting and improved integration of women's needs and priorities in the budget and other policy documents. Programme faculty comprised guest speakers and the programme coordinator, Prof. Aasha Kapur Mehta.

Workshop on Fiscal Decentralization and Role of State Finance Commissions

The Institute teamed up with the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj in organising the programme on January 18-19 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The programme was organised in the light of the recommendation of the Fourteenth Finance Commission in para 9.84 and the recommendations made by earlier Union Finance Commissions(UFCs) to strengthen State Finance Commission (SFC) so that local self-governments both panchayats and municipalities could perform their mandated roles more effectively. Such arrangements, as envisaged in the Constitution, reinforce efficient delivery of basic public services and peoples' participation. The programme provided a forum for the participants to have inter-state consultations on the working and approaches of SFCs and to learn lessons from the best practices in India and abroad. Shri Birender Singh, Union Minister of Rural Development, Drinking Water and Panchayati Raj, delivered the inaugural address. Union Minister of State for panchayati Raj, Shri Nihal Chand, in his address urged the states to strengthen decentralisation process further by equipping SFCs with professionals. He also suggested streamlining SFCs for standard service delivery. Shri S.M. Vijayanand, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, referred to three key institutions, i.e. State Election Commission (SEC), State Finance Commission and District Planning Committee. He also highlighted the need to identify the fiscal space of local government in the total fiscal space of the state and urged to develop simple assessments on fiscal needs and fiscal capacity of panchayats. Subsequently, Dr. V.N.

Alok, Prof. O.P. Mathur and Prof. Roy Bahl made presentations to highlight institutional arrangements in fiscal decentralisation. While the first two speakers focused on national arrangements in terms of the constitutional provisions, their interpretations and working, the third speaker dwelt on the international practices on fiscal decentralisation. Shri Vijayanand announced the considerations of the following: (i) annual consultations of SFCs at national level, digital data base of SFC reports and action taken thereon, (ii) creation of the school of local governance and SFC resource hub to provide technical inputs to SFCs, (iii) national support for data analysis cell in states for SFCs, and (iv) a technical group to assess the expenditure norms and standards of various services delivered at local level. Dr. V.N. Alok coordinated the programme.

Faculty News

- Prof. P.K. Chaubey, Professor of Economics (Economic Administration): (i) spoke on "Infrastructure and Research Funding in Higher Education" in the ICSSR-sponsored National Seminar on "Higher Education in 2025: Growth, Challenges and Opportunities", organised by The IIS University, Jaipur on November 21; (ii) spoke as a Panelist in Zee Marudhar on the issue of "Ordinance on Stocks of Mustard and Mustard Oil by Rajasthan Government" on November 25; (iii) delivered a lecture on "Role of Public Finance in Governance" in a training programme on "Financial Management in EPFO" organised by National Academy of Training and Research in Social Security, New Delhi on December 2; (iv) made a presentation on "A New Index of Urbanisation" in the National Conference on "Urbanisation in India: Emerging Issues", organised by Institute of Public Enterprise in collaboration with IASSI on December 10-11; (v) chaired Track IA session on "Corporate Governance: A Move Towards New Paradigm of Accountability and Sustainability" in the Fourth International Commerce Convention, Department of Commerce, Delhi School of Economics on December 19; and (vi) delivered five lectures on "Time series Econometrics" in Pre-D. Phil. Course work for research students

of Economics in the University of Allahabad on January 5-6.

- Dr. Nupur Tiwari, Assistant Professor of Political Science and Rural Development, chaired a session on “Governance in India: Problems and Prospects”, organised by the Department of Public Administration, Mizoram University from November 4-6. She also presented a paper on “How Many battles Will I Fight: Women Panchayati Raj in Bihar”. Dr. Tiwari participated as a delegate in the second round of Pakistan-India Legislators and Public Officials Dialogue on Sharing of Experiences on Governance and Democracy which was convened in Dubai, UAE on December 12. This Dialogue was to share lessons among two countries on each others’ local government system and anti-corruption mechanisms and institutions to address the problems of corruption.

Visitors

As a part of their study tour focused on 'Indian Government and Politics' as a component of their course on “Comparative Cultures and Politics of India and United States”, a group of 10 students and six faculty members of Community College of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA visited IIPA on January 15. They had an interactive session with the Director and faculty members. In his address, the Director raised some pertinent issues pertaining to the formal and informal dichotomy prevalent in Indian and American societies, the way society and culture influences politics and economy in India and how the diversity, a feature of Indian society has become an issue in US with lot of immigration. Referring to the nature of elections, the basic feature of any democracy, he pointed out to the micro issue based elections in India and the issue based elections in US. Dr. C. Sheela Reddy coordinated the visit.

Prof. Roy W. Bahl, Regents Professor of Economics, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University, Atlanta and author of many policy papers and books including Urban Public Finance in Developing Countries delivered a talk on “Implementation Rules for Fiscal Decentralisation” on January 20. Prof. P.K. Chaubey moderated the



Director and the IIPA faculty with the members of the group.

discussion; and Dr. V.N. Alok coordinated it.

Case Study Completed

The study entitled ‘Integrated Cooperative Development Projects (ICDP) in Hanumangarh District in Rajasthan’ is a part of the national level evaluation carried out by the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi for the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), New Delhi. In consultation with NCDC, a two-member team of IIPA comprising of Prof. Vinod K. Sharma and Dr. Gadadhara Mohapatra conducted the impact evaluation study of ICDP in Hanumangarh district in Rajasthan in 2014. The findings of the draft report were presented before the Board Members of NCDC and the final report incorporating the suggestions were successfully submitted to NCDC in April 2015. The main purpose of the study was to examine to what extent the project has been able to achieve the objectives envisaged at the time of sanction of the projects in the selected district of Rajasthan. It also examined the major constraints of the project and suggested suitable changes in the scheme so that better results are obtained in other projects under implementation. It also documented the case studies and success stories of cooperatives in the study area.

The Integrated Cooperative Development Project (ICDP) ended with an expenditure of Rs. 2250.41 lakh on creation of rural infrastructure, margin money, share capital, training and incentives among the assisted cooperative societies in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan. The major interventions that were undertaken throughout the project period

were such as development of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS), Primary Agri Marketing Societies (PAMS), Primary Land Development Bank (PLDB), District Central Cooperative Bank (DCCB), Wholesale Consumer Bhandar, Dairy Cooperatives, Consumer Stores and women cooperatives. The study team made the following observations based on the impact evaluation study visit carried out in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan: (i) Godowns have been constructed by the DCCB through the ICDP in the district of Hanumangarh, Rajasthan, so the cooperatives can store manures and fertilizers, seeds, insecticide/pesticides. This has increased the consumer business of the societies at large. Cooperatives and their members have been able to identify and associate themselves with the infrastructure created. Farmer members of the cooperative and nearby villages are able to save the transportation and time for bringing manure/seeds due to the storage of agricultural inputs in the village godown; (ii) Consumer stores/shops established in the PACS campus. So the reputation of the cooperatives Society has enhanced and business has also gone up. Earlier the consumer goods were not kept in the godown due to inadequate space. After the construction of consumer stores in the society better facilities are available. These shops are working like 'super-markets' in some societies, where all essential goods are available on reasonable price and quality is assured. Thus, establishment of primary consumer stores in Hanumangarh district has promoted petty business and employment opportunities for the rural youth who works as helpers to sell essential commodities to the villagers; (iii) Deposit counters established among the cooperative societies at the village level has enabled the farmers to save money in their account safely and withdraw money as and when required especially during the agricultural season to purchase agricultural inputs and for consumption purpose; (iv) Necessary furniture and fixture has been provided to cooperative societies, which has increased efficiency and reputation of the society and led to the infrastructural development of the respective societies; (v) Earlier, the godowns were in very bad condition and stored manure and seed was affected/damaged in rainy season and was

not available to the farmers for next crop, but after the repairing of old godowns, it is fully utilized and condition of the godowns has improved; (vi) Safety of the cash and deposit kept in the societies has increased after cash safes were provided to the cooperatives, (vii) The boundary walls were constructed in the societies to avoid encroachments. The stray animals cannot enter in the campus. Further, plantation was done for better environment; (viii) By providing share capital, societies are getting good reputation and it has increased business and societies are running in profit. Borrowing power of the societies has increased; (ix) The training provided to the members of the management committee has enabled them to improve their skills and competencies to run cooperatives in a better way; (x) Exposure visit of Governing body to other states gave them knowledge of the development of cooperative movement in other states; and (xi) Modernization of the DCCB and availability of sitting arrangements has given a new look to the bank and the faith of customer has increased.

In short, the physical infrastructure created among the assisted societies under the project such as construction of godowns, mini bank counter-cum office space, consumer stores, construction of new godowns and repairing of old godowns in the marketing societies has enhanced the storage capacity of fertilizers, increase in consumer business activities, farm inputs distribution, disbursement of credits and other-agribusiness development activities. This has resulted in increased membership, share capital, deposit mobilisation, business development and trust building. Margin money provided to the assisted cooperatives has certainly helped in increasing the capacity of the cooperatives to avail fund from the DCCBs and continue their business as well as loaning and other income generating activities. There is decline in the number of loss making societies in the district. The overall analysis of the project implemented in the district shows that ICDP has played a vital role in raising the level of income of the farmers by extending financial support for agricultural and allied activities as well as generating alternative livelihoods in a sustainable manner. The DCCB, Hanumangarh as the project implementing agency (PIA) has played a vital role in agricultural

and non-agricultural enterprise development and income generation which finally leads to improve the economic condition of the farmer members. The project inculcated a sense of self dependency, self-help and economic discipline among the members among the assisted cooperative societies. Following are some of the suggestions: (i) Demand for fertilizer and seeds are quite high in Hanumangarh district due to better irrigation facilities, farmers see better prospects in investing in agricultural activities. During the field visit to various Primary Agricultural Societies (PACS), it was noticed that there is no regular supply of seeds and fertilizer to the members of the cooperatives during the peak seasons. Thus, the farmers including the members of the cooperatives at times have to depend upon private vendors for purchase fertilizer and seed from the nearby market which is quite expensive. Therefore, the cooperatives at the village level should have more godowns for storing fertilizer and seeds for the agricultural season; (ii) Some PACS such as Dangar Gram Sewa Sahkari Samiti Ltd. and Haripura Gram Sewa Sahkari Samiti Ltd., in Hanumangarh district have different varieties of agricultural equipment, some of the equipment's have been provided to these societies through ICDP. These societies gave this equipment's on rent to the members and farmers on hourly basis and charge Rs. 400-500 per hour from them. Thus, use of agricultural machinery has reduced the drudgery of the farmers and enhanced their working capacity. Thus, the agricultural productivity has increased. Realizing the utility of the agricultural equipment's, members of other societies were demanding for agricultural equipment's, water tank and tractor trolley etc. The societies possessing the agricultural equipment's were demanding for roof-shed in the society to keep the agricultural equipment's safely; (iii) During the impact evaluation visit to the cooperatives at the village level, it was noticed that the PACS having mini-bank counters were also assigned to open new accounts for wage labourers under MGNREGA. Thus, the staff of the mini-bank/ PACS suggested that due to additional work of managing bank accounts of the MGNREGA has further increased the workload and there is no supporting staff / incentives have been provided to the PACS staffs. The additional staff / incentive

may be thought of; (iv) The common complaint that was raised by the members of the various credit cooperatives were that the rate of interest for loans is high (12.75 per cent); (v) To enhance the business insights of the members of the cooperatives, training for the members of the PACS should be continued even after the project completion; (vi) Self Help Groups in the district have the potential to take up income generating activities if adequate training facilities should be provided to them. The Women Self Help Group Members at Likmisar are quite active in producing handloom based products like shawls, bed cover, hand fan and leather bags and market linkages are provided by the Likmisar cooperative Society, (vii) During the discussions at the PACS level in Hanumangarh, it was found that the office bearers of PACS would like to start the LPG Gas agency. Though it was also demanded by the members during the ICDP period, but was not sanctioned due to some technical reasons. There were also a need of the members of the consumer societies to establish Super markets, (viii) At the time of diversion of funds, the project should have taken up some of the following activities also for income generation of farmers: (a) Funding SHG specially, women SHGs, their training and federating to a cooperative society to improve their borrowing capacity and undertake income generation activities keeping in view their potentials; (b) Funding for the infrastructure arrangements for PACS doing the business of agricultural implements; and (c) Training awareness for future trading of agricultural commodities especially for wheat crop will be useful in terms of getting a better price for their produce. The study also suggests the following further course of action that could be considered while implementing similar programmes/projects by NCDP/DCCB: (a) System for post project monitoring to be developed for maintaining the continuity of momentum and further improvement in overall performance of cooperatives; (b) Training awareness activities for the members should continue even after the project completion, (c) Many societies in the district have the capacity to go for diversified activities and they have additional infrastructure need. This may be suitably addressed by NCDP/DCCB and (d) Mid-term review should be conducted in the 3rd / 4th year of project implementation.

NEWS FROM BRANCHES

Budaun Local Branch

The branch organised three seminar meetings in the villages—Maurari on November 29; Sikrapur on December 10; and Babat on December 17—to motivate the villagers for ensuring the better functioning of their villages in association with the newly elected gram pradhans.

Maharashtra Regional Branch

The branch in its general meeting elected the following office bearers for the period 2015-2017: Chairman: Shri Swadheen S. Kshatriya; Secretary: Dr. Vijay Satbir Singh; Treasurer: Shri V.V. Deodhar; Members: Dr. M.R. Kolhatkar, Dr. S.V. Ratnaparkhi, Shri Veerkumar Doshi and Shri Pramod Shah..

NEWS FROM THE CENTRE

New Inclusions under Disabilities Bill

The Union Government has planned to include dwarfism as one of the conditions covered in the long-delayed legislation on disabilities that mandates the right to school education and government job reservations. Under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014, which is being considered by a group of ministers, children with disabilities will have the right to school admission and there will be employment quotas for persons with learning and locomotor disabilities. The legislation is in line with India's ratification of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that was adopted by the General Assembly in 2006. The legislation will make admission of children with disabilities not only in government educational institutions but also in all educational institutions recognised by the government as mandatory. While specific learning disability will be included along with autism, intellectual disability and mental illness, dwarfism will be included along with locomotor disability. The initial survey of school-going children to identify children with disabilities will be conducted within two years of the proposed Act coming into force. It will be made mandatory to conduct survey of school-going children to identify children with disabilities every five years. A separate clause seeks to protect the rights of women and children with disabilities. Some of the other recommendations by the parliamentary standing committee to be included in the Bill pertain to accessibility. The definition of 'barrier' will include attitudinal factor; definition of 'communication' will include visual display, video and sign language. Quotas for persons with disabilities will be computed

against total vacancies. The government will be able to relax the upper age limit for persons with disabilities by notification. Disability certificates issued by state authorities will be valid across the country. The National Commission for Persons with Disabilities will be augmented to five members from three, with one of them being a woman with disability. The exemption of posts will be done by the appropriate government in consultation with national commission or the state commission, as the case may be; national commission will also be responsible for enforcement of regulation of accessibility standards. Private establishments will be brought under the ambit of the proposed bill for the purpose of ensuring accessibility. However, reservations will not be made mandatory in the private sector.

India Ranks Fourth in Number of Thinktanks

According to the Global Go To Think Tank Index Report (GGTTI) 2015, India ranks fourth on the list of nations with the most number of thinktanks, with nearly 100 new ones taking the country's total to 280 in 2015. Last year, India ranked fifth with 192 think tanks. The US tops the list for 2015 with 1,835 thinktanks, followed by China and the United Kingdom with 435 and 288, respectively. Among the 6,486 thinktanks worldwide, the US-based Brookings Institution emerged on the top for the eighth consecutive year. Six Indian thinktanks figure in the global top 175 List Center for Civil Society (CCS, rank 79), Institute For Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA, 104), Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (109), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI, 111), Observer Research Foundation (ORF, 118) and Development

Alternatives (136). If the lists of think tanks in the US are excluded, then four more Indian think tanks make it to the top 175 list (non-US) – Brookings India, Gateway House-Indian Council on Global Relations, United Service Institution of India and Vivekananda International Foundation. The report classifies and ranks think tanks in various ways, including by region, area of specialisation and even on aspects such as use of social media. Think tanks to watch out for are those who have done excellent research in the past 24 months and six Indian organisations made it to this list – ORF (10), IDSA (13), Vivekananda Institute of Technology (20), Gateway House (38), Council on Energy, Environment and Water (54) and Centre for Land Warfare Studies (69). The annual rankings are compiled under the auspices of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) at the University of Pennsylvania.

E-Sanchar

E-Sanchar integrates mobile telephony with information technology for generating voice calls for the timely transfer of information to rural citizens, specifically target groups including the elderly, physically challenged and widowed persons. E-Sanchar provides quick and efficient dissemination of information to citizens through database driven automated voice calls. This is to address the problems of deprived citizens, informing them of the government's interest and mission to adhere to the principle of SMART governance. The project is simple in nature: it is an automatic information dissemination (AID) system that harnesses the benefits of the telecom technology for the provision of information to rural citizens. It can be used as a plug-in module in all individual/group beneficiary schemes for the direct communication of government to the beneficiaries/citizens.

NEWS FROM STATES

BIHAR

Jaankari

Jaankari facilitates the Right to Information (RTI) for all citizens in Bihar through a call centre. This model has managed to reach the most disadvantaged sectors of the population and moreover, it is easy to replicate. Jaankari call centre empowers citizens to claim information from government officials through the provision of telephone facilities. The citizens' requests are formulated by call centre operators and sent to Public Information Officers (PIO) for response within 35 days. In absence of a response, a first appeal and if further delay, a second appeal can be filed by the applicant. The programme has enabled citizens to file requests from the most remote and underdeveloped parts of the state. No physical movement is required by the applicant, thus saving time on travel and money. In addition, due to no direct communication, citizens are free from hostility from interactions with public officials. The transfer of applications to PIOs has been streamlined through the use of email. In sum, Jaankari has increased accessibility of information to citizens and hence, enhanced accountability of the government to the citizens.

UTTAR PRADESH

Lokvani

Lokvani is a public-private partnership e-governance programme which has been initiated with the combined efforts of both the district administration as well as the National Informatics Centre in the district of Sitapur which has an 88 per cent rural population with a 38.86 per cent literacy rate. It is an outstanding example of a highly cost-efficient, economically self-reliant and user-financed community network. This solution is targeted at 3.6 million citizens residing within the district, located in the province of Uttar Pradesh, which is the world's sixth largest political entity in terms of population. Lokvani has been projected as a commitment to the people in providing them with transparent, credible and accountable systems of governance. This system is grounded in the rule of law, encompassing civil, political as well as economic and social rights underpinned by accountable and efficient public administration for the multiphase development of rural people. The primary objective of the IT solution is to bridge the digital divide and connect the common man to the

Do not do what you would undo if caught—Leah Arendt

strategy makers in a seamless fashion. Lokvani stands out amongst all other e-governance projects as it symbolises the success of the concept of e-accountability, the next step of e-governance. While other e-governance efforts are limited to

servicing the citizens by providing existing services electronically, Lokvani goes beyond that and makes government functionaries accountable to the citizens.

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Quotable Quotes

- *One who is too insistent on his own views, finds few to agree with him—Lao Tse*
- *Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity—Aristotle*
- *Imagination is more important than knowledge—Albert Einstein*
- *To go beyond the bounds of moderation is to outrage humanity—Blaise Pascal*
- *Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it-- Henry David Thoreau*
- *It is better to be hated for what you are than to be loved for what you are not-- Andre Gide*

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