



Interview With Vice-Chancellor Professor Prabha Shankar Shukla

Date: May, 2024: Vice-Chancellor, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Professor Prabha Shankar Shukla, attended the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Vice-Chancellors' Summit 2024, held in London, UK. Prof. Shukla discussed the role of artificial intelligence in cultural preservation with the gathering. Here are excerpts from an interview with him upon his return from London.

Question 1: How was your experience with the Association of Commonwealth Universities Vice-Chancellor Summit held recently in London?

Answer 1: It was a privilege to engage in the high-level discussions at the Association of Commonwealth Universities Vice-Chancellors' Summit in London. The summit focused on shaping the future of higher education and promoting international collaborations. It provided a platform for strategic discussions on higher education policies that brought together vice-chancellors,

ministers, and stakeholders from across the Commonwealth countries.



Question 3: Could you please provide details on any plan of collaboration among Commonwealth universities for the exchange of knowledge?

Answer 3: Collaboration among Commonwealth universities for the exchange of knowledge will be a corner-



Question 2: How do you think such summits can improve the status of higher education in India and across the globe?

Answer 2: Participation in international summits such as this reflects the status of higher education in India and globally. These summits provide a vital platform for strategic discussions on higher education policies and enable Indian stakeholders to contribute to global policy dialogues and align national priorities with international best practices.

stone of our strategic initiatives in the next three years. We plan to develop and establish joint research projects and academic programs and to promote faculty and student exchange programs to share teaching methodologies and research findings and promote cultural understanding that would benefit NEHU.



Question 4: Can you please elaborate on your address on AI and Cultural heritage given during the summit in London? Is there any plan to integrate AI into the education system at NEHU?

Answer 4: In my speech, I highlighted AI's potential to preserve cultural heritage. AI technologies like speech recognition can transcribe and interpret recordings of endangered Indigenous languages and aid their revival. I also discussed unique geographical products like Muga silk, Turmeric, Khasi Mandarin, Tree Tomato, and Naga Chilli, which are grown in Northeast India. At NEHU, we plan to gradually incorporate AI into our education system, focusing on educational apps and e-dictionaries to improve learning experiences while maintaining ethical standards, particularly for translation into local and regional languages.



Question 5: What is the takeaway of the summit for Indian universities and NEHU, Shillong from the summit?

Answer 5: The summit provided valuable insights and perspectives crucial for NEHU and other Indian universities. It includes a deeper understanding of global higher education trends and best practices, which can inform policy development and enhance academic programs.

Question 6: What was your experience in the universities you visited in the UK? What was their schedule and working culture, and how did it differ from Indian universities?

Answer 6: I had the opportunity to interact closely with faculty, students, and administrators and gained insights into their rigorous, structured, and disciplined academic practices, time schedules, and working culture. I observed their strong emphasis on research and teaching excellence. Their working culture was marked by a high level of professionalism, efficiency, and a strong commitment to academic integrity that can be incorporated into our education system.

(Research Scholars, Department of JMC, NEHU, Dimple Baro, and Antriksh Kar Singh conducted the interview.)

Celebrating Indigenous Wisdom: North Eastern Hill University Hosts Landmark Conference



Date: 16th-17th May, 2024: The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (JMC), North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), hosted a two-day conference on 16-17 May 2024, sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), titled “Indigenous Knowledge, Culture, and Media in North East India.” The conference commenced with a welcome address by Prof. Manash Pratim Goswami, Head of the Department of JMC at NEHU in the inaugural session. The event was graced by distinguished dignitaries, including Prof. Sanjoy Hazarika, Former Director of the Centre for Northeast Studies and Policy Research and senior journalist, and keynote speaker Prof. Streamlet Dkhar from the Department of Khasi at NEHU. Prof. Nirmalendu Saha, the VC (i/c) presided over the inaugural session and Prof. Moses N Naga delivered the Dena’s for the School of Economics, Management, and Information Sciences (SEMIS)

Esteemed dignitaries and educators in the field of media from several educational institutions contributed to the depth and diversity of the discussions, including Padma Shri awardee and editor of The Shillong Times, Smt. Patricia Mukhim, Prof. Abhijit Bora, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Tezpur University, Prof. V Ratnamala, Department of Mass Communication, Mizoram University, Prof. Uttam Kr Pegu, Department of Mass Communication, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh, Dr Kinshuk Pathak, Department of Mass Communication and Media Studies, Central of Punjab, Dr. Narendra Tripathi, KT University, Dr. Chandan Goswami, Department of Communication and Journalism, Gauhati University among others.

Prof. Sherwin May Sungoh, a noted academician and Prof. Desmond L Kharmawphlang, a highly acclaimed folklorist were present as invited speakers for the plenary sessions of the conference.

The conference attracted an impressive 88 abstracts of research papers. After careful selection by the organizing committee, 59 abstracts were chosen for presentation. A total of 43 full research papers were presented with participants from across the country. During the inaugural event, the conference proceedings in the form of an ISBN book titled Indigenous Knowledge, Culture, and Media in North East India was released.



The conference concluded on a high note with the screening of “Beacon of Education,” a film about NEHU produced by the department of JMC. The closing event was honoured by the presence of Padma Shri Mrs Trinity Saioo, a renowned activist, teacher, and Padma Shri awardee, who served as the Guest of Honour. Also gracing the occasion was Prof. B. Panda, Honorary Director of the Indian Council of Social Science Research, North Eastern Regional Centre (ICSSR-NERC), Shillong. The event has been hailed as a significant success, underscoring NEHU’s dedication to fostering academic excellence and cultural awareness.

Dr Kamaljit Chirom, Dr Barath N and Dr Karen L Donoghue, the Assistant Professor of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, were the co-conveners and the editors of the book released at the conference.

***Gratitude to Old Guest House Staff for
Exceptional Hospitality and Cuisine***

The Department of Journalism & Mass Communication extends its gratitude to the Staff of the Old Guest House for their delicious food, warmth and hospitality provided them for the two national seminars that were held recently from 13-15th March 2024 and 16-17th May 2024.



**“Anusandhan”,
A One-Day Sensitization Programme For First And Second Years Research
Scholars Of Nehu Organised By The R & D Cell, Nehu, Shillong.**



Date: 22nd May, 2024: “ANUSANDHAN”, the envisioned flagship activity of North-Eastern Hill University was organized on 22nd May 2024 at the Golden Jubilee Auditorium of the Shillong Campus where the scholars from 28 different departments of Shillong and Tura campus participated in the one-day event. The inaugural programme was graced by Dr A.K. Sarma, Director General, North East Centre for Technology Application and Reached (NECTAR) as the Chief Guest and Prof. D.K. Nayak, Vice-Chancellor (In-charge) of NEHU as the Chairman. Prof . S.R. Joshi, Director, Research & Development Cell, NEHU along with Prof Timir Tripathi, Prof . Santosh Kumar, members of R & D Cell and faculties were present among the participating scholars.

The purpose of the program was to sensitize fresh research scholars on how a research problem can be oriented towards start-up and entrepreneurship ventures without going the extra mile. Prof. A.K Sharma is enthused with scholars with the idea of exploring their expertise and how it can be worked out as a utility product for society. This can be done if one understands the requirements of society and works in that direction to provide solutions to the needs. Prof. D. K Nayak lauded the efforts of R & D Cell for initiating such inspirational activity in the university which will assist in channelizing the interest and focus of the scholars in research-oriented societal problems and the development of solutions. Prof. S.R. Joshi, highlighted the responsibilities and the role of R & D Cell in the university, stressing that research should not only aim at publishing papers and dissertations or thesis writing, rather it needs to find means to translate for its applications in one form or the other. He emphasized that ANUSANDHAN is an initial step in this direction which aims to assist scholars in finding mentors and facilities for incubating their ideas. He expressed his gratefulness to the Honourable Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P.S. Shukla who took a deep interest in starting the R & D Cell at the NEHU Campus and organizing events which should benefit the students of the university. Prof. Timir Tripathi, the organizing Secretary of the event, expressed his gratitude on behalf of the R & D Cell of NEHU for the overwhelming response received from participants of the one-day programme and assured that the cell is working sincerely to meet its objectives.



Dr. A.K. Sharma in his talk in the first session brought out the relevance of Industry-academia interaction and highlighted programs that NECTAR has floated to benefit students from North-East India. He illustrated with examples the rich bioresources of the region and how scholars can target areas which may have relevance to agriculture technology, climate change, fibres, biofertilizers, enzymes, the energy sector etc. He said that one has to think uniquely to use resources available around us for which we need to understand the properties of those resources citing reference to 2500 tea gardens and about 43 varieties of bananas in northeast India, and highlighted the importance of quality assuring production technology to have quality control meeting the market demands.



The second session was conducted by Dr Tania Paul Das, Manager at BIONEST Incubator Facility at the Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST) Guwahati. In her presentation, she stressed deep on the domain of Student Entrepreneurs. She said that “innovation is invention and execution”. She explained

the importance of incubation centres in entrepreneurship, and the facilities and funds required to develop entrepreneurship. This was followed by intense interaction where the scholars got their queries clarified by the expert. The last session consisted of a Panel Discussion led by the experts and university students selected from the East Zone to participate in the International Level ANVESHAN-2023 at the University of Mumbai. The students spoke very highly of their experiences and exposure they had by way of an opportunity to participate in ANVESHAN 2023 and appealed to the scholars present in the programme not to underestimate the value and relevance of research undertaken by each of them. Prof. S.R. Joshi in his interaction emphasized that challenges and problems are always there but creating space and niche in such circumstances gives greater satisfaction and valued output. Prof Timir Tripathi from the Department of Zoology, Prof Santosh Kumar from the Department of Mathematics, and Dr. Shruti Shukla from the Department of Nanotechnology presented their views on research and deliverables which created an atmosphere of intense discussion in the session. The programme ended with summing up by Prof. S.R. Joshi who presented to the participants the mandate, role and planned activities of the R & D cell of NEHU which were based on the suggestions made by the participating scholars.

North-Eastern Hill University Hosts Capacity Building Programme On ICAR-IIHR Technologies For Horticultural Crop Production In Ne Region



Date: 25th May, 2024: The Department of Horticulture, North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Tura, in collaboration with the NEHU-Deen Dayal Upadhyay Community College for Skill Development (DDUCCSD), Wahiajer, Jowai, and the ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), Bengaluru, organized a “Capacity Building Programme on ICAR-IIHR Technologies for the Production of Horticultural Crops in NEH Region” on May 25, 2024, at DDUCCSD, Wahiajer, Jowai. The programme saw the participation of approximately 200 farmers, predominantly women, who each received 50 kg of horticultural inputs.

These inputs, supplied by ICAR-IIHR, included 20 kg of compost, 3 grow bags, 8 kg of the microbial consortium, 6 kg of citrus special, 4 kg of vegetable special, 6 kg of banana special, 1 kg of neem soap, and a kit of vegetable seeds. The ICAR-IIHR, a premier horticultural research institute in India, ranks as the number one research institute among ICAR institutes and has developed 354 varieties and 156 technologies across 58 horticultural crops.

The event aimed to disseminate advanced IIHR technologies to farmers in the West Jaintia Hills, promoting sustainable horticultural practices with minimal chemical use. The programme began with a traditional song by Ms. Sunita Shylla and a dance performance by NEHU students. Prof. (Mrs) S.M. Sungoh, Principal, DDUCCSD, Wahiajer, Jowai, welcomed the dignitaries and participants. The programme was chaired by Prof. P.S. Shukla, Vice Chancellor, NEHU, Shillong. Prof. Sanjay K. Singh, Deputy Director General-Horticultural Sciences, ICAR, New Delhi, served as the Chief Guest, and Dr Prakash Patil, Director, ICAR-IIHR, Bengaluru, was the Guest of Honour. Other notable attendees included Prof. D. Walia (Dean, SHES, NEHU, Shillong), Shri M. B. Tongper (ADC, West Jaintia Hills district), and Shri Sanwatki Laloo (Headman, Wahiajer).



Dr. T. Sakthivel, Principal Scientist at IIHR, detailed the usage of the distributed farm inputs. Shri M.B. Tongper highlighted the significance of organic agriculture and natural farming, emphasizing the potential for G.I. tags beyond the success of Lakadong turmeric and Khasi mandarin. Dr Prakash Patil stressed the benefits of using resistant vegetable crops to reduce input costs and encouraged farmers to fully utilize the distributed inputs. Prof. Sanjay K. Singh emphasized the importance of chemical-free farming and motivated farmers to adopt the organic technologies provided by IIHR. He urged farmers to document their success stories to serve as role models for future generations.

The event concluded with a presentation of mementoes to the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor by the village headman, Shri Sanwatki Laloo, followed by a Farmers' and Scientists' Interaction Session where farmers discussed their issues and received on-the-spot solutions from scientists.

The DDUCCSD staff, students, and other guests attended in large numbers, contributing to the event's organization. An exhibition by the Tailoring section students added to the day's activities.

One-week Research Methodology Workshop conducted at the ICSSR NERC Office, 27-31st May 2024



Date: 27th-31st May, 2024: ICSSR NERC office conducted a One-week Research Methodology Workshop, starting on 27th May to build capacity to conduct rigorous impact evaluation among young research scholars coming from different parts of North-East India. Dr Mohd Murtaza and Dr Rajib Sutradhar, both Assistant Professors from the Department of Economics, co-ordinated the program as Course Director and Course Co-Director. The workshop started with an inaugural session that featured Honourable VC NEHU Prof Prabhakar Charan Shukla as Chief Guest and Prof@Biswambhara Mishra HoD The Department of Economics, NEHU as a Special Guest.

The week-long program benefitted from the participation of Dr. Zakaria Siddiqui, Associate Professor of the Department of Economics, Jamia Milia Islamia University, Dr. Pratap Mohanty, Associate Professor, of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Roorkee, and Parag Dutta Associate Professor, Department of Economics, KKHSOU as external resource persons. The internal resource persons include Prof Utpal De, Prof Chittaranjan Nayak and Dr Veronica Pala.

The workshop dwelt on the Multi-Level model and propensity score matching as methods of impact evaluation. The workshop also dwelt on the basics of extraction of large-scale data and handling of STATA software. The workshop concluded on a note that befits the occasion. Chaired by Honorary Director, Icssr Nerc, Prof Bhagirathi Panda, the session was graced with the presence of Padmashree Patricia Mukhim who shared her words of wisdom with the participants, reminding them of their responsibilities to educate the society to differentiate facts from the noise by adopting scientific evaluation and publishing their research in popular media.

Symposium Report From The Department Of English

Date: 17th May, 2024: The Department of English, North-Eastern Hill University in collaboration with ICSSR and SFES, hosted a distinguished symposium titled “Voices from the Northeast: Celebrating the Works of Esther Syiem & Robin S. Ngangom.” The event honoured the literary contributions of two of the most illustrious writers from the Northeast, Esther Syiem and Robin S. Ngangom. The programme began with a melodious welcome song by the students, setting a warm and inviting tone. Dr. S. Choudhury’s welcome address initiated an engaging afternoon, followed by Prof. J. Prodhani’s remarks underscoring the distinctive perspectives in Syiem’s and Ngangom’s works.



The first session, chaired by Prof. M.M. Mazumdar, featured a talk by Prof. Nandana Dutta titled “On Speaking of a Contemporary.” She engaged critically with the concerns of ethical outsider predicament, indigeneity, and strategic oral resistance framing Prof. Syiem’s work as a form of academic activism. The talk concluded with a thought-provoking question: Can one be ‘purely indigenous’ in today’s globalized world? In the subsequent session, chaired by Prof. Desmond L. Kharmawphlang, Prof. Mridul Bordoloi examined two strands in Ngangom’s poetry: the ‘aesthetic of pleasure’ and the ‘aesthetic of suffering.’ A poetry reading session followed, featuring translated works of Syiem and Ngangom, read by Dr. Amitabh Ranjan Kanu. The symposium concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. S. Tunyi, who highlighted the collaborative spirit that marked the event by expressing gratitude to all the speakers, participants, and organizers. Attendees left the event inspired and enriched.

Report On International Women In Mathematics Day



Date: 13th May, 2024: The Department of Mathematics at North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, commemorated International Women in Mathematics Day on May 13, 2024. This significant event was attended by faculty members, Ph.D. students, and master’s students of the department. The programme commenced with a warm welcome address by the Head of the Department, setting an enthusiastic tone for the day.

A highlight of the event was a brief but insightful speech by retired NEHU professor, Mangesh Balchandra Rege, who shared his perspectives on the importance of recognizing women's contributions to mathematics. Following this, Dr Sanghita Dutta delivered an enlightening talk titled "Maestro of Geodesics," which vividly illustrated the groundbreaking contributions of the late mathematician Maryam Mirzakhani, in whose honour the day is observed. Dr. Dutta's presentation highlighted Mirzakhani's profound impact on the field of mathematics, particularly in the study of differential topology.

The program continued with an engaging talk by Dr. Arde-line Mary Buhphang, titled "Why Did We Forsake Noether?" Dr. Buhphang's presentation provided a compelling account of the challenges faced by women mathematicians throughout history, drawing parallels to the life of the renowned mathematician Emmy Noether. Her talk emphasized the enduring struggles and resilience of women in mathematics, inspiring attendees to reflect on the current state of gender equity in the field.

The event concluded with closing remarks from the organizers, expressing gratitude to the speakers and participants for their contributions to a successful and thought-provoking program. The day ended on a pleasant note with light refreshments, allowing attendees to discuss the themes of the talks further and foster a sense of community within the department.



Nehu Panorama Wishes Nehu Employees A Happy Retirement Life

NEHU Panorama wishes the following employees of NEHU on their retirement and wishes them a healthy and prosperous life ahead.

- 1. Prof. Erbanoris Jyrwa, Department of Adult and Continuing Education.*
- 2. Shri Sajan Kollannur Job, Senior Technical Assistant, S.A.I.F.*
- 3. Smti Ridalin Kharakor, MTS, Finance.*
- 4. Shri Nesparlin Thongni, MTS (Chowkidar), Security Cell.*



A Glimpse of Meghalaya: “Singing Village”



Kongthong, popularly called the Singing Village, is a village and tourist attraction in the East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya state in the Northeast hilly region of India. It is a popular tourist destination known for the panoramic picturesque views and the unique culture of inhabitants who use the whistled language “Jingrwai lawbei” and build the remarkable living root bridges. Each native of the village has a unique name, which is a whistling lullaby, and villagers call each other by whistling the lullaby. This tradition roughly translates to the “song of the first clan lady” and involves the practice of creating a unique melody for each individual in the community. This melody, or jingrwai lawbei, is used to call out to the person and is believed to be so distinctive that it can even be heard by the spirits of the ancestors. The tradition has been passed down from generation to generation and is still very much alive today, making Kongthong a truly special and culturally rich destination. The tradition of whistling in Kongthong dates back to several generations. It is believed that the practice was started as a way for mothers to call their children who were playing in the forests and hills surrounding the village. Over time, the whistling sounds became a unique form of communication that was used by everyone in the village.

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