



**23rd Annual Conference**  
of  
**North Eastern Economic Association**  
& **National Seminar**  
**16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022**



Organised by  
**Department of Economics,**  
**Tripura University**  
**(A Central University)**

**About NEEA**

The North Eastern Economic Association formed in 1997, is a non-political, non-partisan, voluntary regional economic association with a national perspective with members from not just the NE states but across the country. The objectives of the organisation are to - Undertake, promote, co-ordinate and collaborate in the study of socio- economic problems and issues with emphasis on North East India; Provide a common platform for interaction of ideals and exchange of experiences among the scholars; Contribute in promoting an atmosphere conducive for research through dissemination of information and knowledge; Contribute in promoting technical competence for teaching and research in economics and allied subjects.

**About the Host Institute**

Tripura University was established in 1987 and was converted as a Central University in 2007. It functions in its lush green Suryamaninagar campus on the outskirts of Agartala. The Department of Economics is one of the oldest as well as the first department of the University to be recognised under the UGC SAP. The Department has students, scholars and faculty members from across the country.

**Themes:**

**A] Fiscal Issues and Considerations in the NER states**

By common consent, one of the most serious challenges in Indian macroeconomics is the continuity of the fiscal imbalances both on horizontal and vertical fronts. India's federal structure demarcates uneven financial powers and responsibilities between the centre and the states, where the centre gets the upper hand in revenue generation while states are assigned a greater extent of spending responsibilities. The constitutional provisions for the distribution of legislative powers provide a pre-eminent role to the states in agricultural development, poverty alleviation, and human development and co-equal position in the provision of physical infrastructure. The predominant role in the allocation and cooperative role in distribution make states' fiscal operation critical for macroeconomic stabilization and any deterioration in the fiscal health weakens the developmental effectiveness of the states.

There was not much concern about the fiscal health of states in India up to the 1980s, and the fiscal deficit as a proportion of GDP started increasing in the late 1990s, indicating that borrowed funds were used for current consumption, leaving little fiscal space for developmental activities. Subsequently, the interventions were in the form of FRBM Act in the mid 2000s made to achieve fiscal stability through a fiscal consolidation path. Post-PRBM, most states have been successful in generating revenue surplus leading to a substantial increase in the capital outlay and a reduced fiscal deficit/borrowings. While the fiscal rules have been successful in reducing the fiscal imbalance, much of the fiscal consolidation was achieved through a cut in

discretionary development spending leaving growth implications at the state level. In sync with the diverse nature of Indian society and culture, the economic strength and capacity of the state governments also varied substantially. Thus, differentials in the fiscal capacity and space amidst the Indian states remained a reality.

It may be noted here that the North Eastern region of India is an economically backward region. The region's fiscal needs and responsibilities are very much governed by exogenous factors such as difficult geographical terrain, long international border, turbulent rivers, etc. The per-capita incomes of the states are much lower than the developed states of the country, even though there was not much difference in per-capita income of the region to that of all India in the pre-independence period. The low pace of economic growth of the northeastern regional states in post-independence period is the cause for the persistence of the development deficit. Moreover, due to the economic backwardness and poor infrastructural facilities, private investors are limited, thereby, making government investment in crucial sectors, particularly, prerequisite for development.

While there is a need for substantial investment from the part of the public sector, the northeastern states have limited resources to discharge their expenditure responsibilities. The own-tax revenues in the northeastern states remain considerably low compared to the mainstream states. With limited revenue-raising capacity, these states have become highly dependent on Central funding in the form of transfers, grants, and aids. The evolving centre-state relations in terms of revenue sharing in form of Finance Commission Awards and other mechanisms also have a huge impact on the fiscal consideration and conditions of these states that had been clubbed as Special Category states for quite some years. However, the post-Planning Commission era does not throw any light on the status of the Special Category states regarding their additional grants, loans and special assistance in the forms of SCA (Special Central Assistance), SPA (Special Plan Assistance) etc.

Nonetheless, fiscal prudence is not the result of the fiscal operation in one or two years, but is cumulative over the years and at times calls for fiscal reforms. Reforms are again not just restoring fiscal balance but more a road map for the future. Thus, the issues of State Finances and associated fiscal considerations emerge as extremely relevant topics for the North Eastern states as government expenditure is of paramount importance in the region. It is in this background that the seminar invites research papers examining fiscal issues for the northeastern states.

The major sub-themes (indicative only and not just limited to) are-

- State Finance of the NER states-Vertical and Horizontal Inequalities
- Public Finance in India-analysis of debts and deficits

- revenue generation patterns of the NER states-scopes and challenges
- Public Expenditure profile of NER states
- Goods and Services Tax (GST) in Indian Economy: trends, patterns & effect on NE states
- Local area development funds
- Fiscal reforms at national and sub-national level-Progress and Prospects
- Awards of Finance Commissions and NER states
- Intergovernmental Transfer system in India
- NER States in the Post-Planning Commission Era
- Decentralisation of the State Finance
- Debt Sustainability for the NER States

### B] India and her neighbouring Countries

Though border is a political demarcation of land between two or more countries, people living along the international borders, often share relationships of different dimensions spreading across culture, settlements, ethnicity, economic and several other diverse facets. And this is true for India as well. The word 'border' in the present context refers to the political boundary that demarcates India from its neighbouring countries. Incidentally India shares its border with seven countries and five of these lie on the other side of the perimeter of the Northeastern regional states. It may be noted that, it was India's partition in 1947 that created the current geo-political structure leading to the evolution of new neighbours and thereby generating several new international dynamics.

The immediate outcome of 1947 partition of the country was stopping of the land and railway transport and communication between East Pakistan via Calcutta in West Bengal. As a result the northeast region became landlocked. In spite of the strategic importance of the region, it remained relatively isolated from rest of India

The NER despite its wealth of natural resources remains poor with little economic diversification and lags behind in terms of development indicators like road link, banking, access to health care and power consumption. The high literacy rate has not translated into higher employability or productivity, as skill development is low leading to high incidence of unemployment and outmigration of the youth work force from the region. Further, cross border terrorism as well as internal insurgencies have compounded the developmental prospects of the region.

It is to be noted that the South and Southeast Asian have not been much successful in capitalising on its synergy among the bordering countries and in translating that in to developmental activities. Consequently, intra- and inter- regional activities are at low levels. However, things are poised for change, as the erstwhile Look East Policy in its current refurbished version of Act East Policy is taken as a panacea for unleashing the growth and development potential of the states in the northeast region of India. Apart from being just the driver of India's Act East Policy,

the region can also act as a major driving force for enhancing India's partnerships with East and South East Asia given the strong cultural affinity that exists between the two. The NER states are economically important for investment given the strategic location to connect the product markets of this part of the world.

Another connect between the neighbouring regions are in the form of cross-border human flow, which has increased manifold during the recent past due to growing ease of travel, declining transportation cost, increased economic inequality among neighbouring states, refugee generating conflicts and violations etc. Challenges associated with cross-border human flows have emerged as a focus of political debates, policy discussions and academic discourses as numerous incidences of human rights violation, human trafficking as well as refugee problems have been reported. Such issues have the potential to change the nature of international relations and also offer opportunities of forging cooperation to address mutual problems relating to migration and displacement, trafficking of people, drugs and weapons, spread of HIV/AIDS and now COVID 19.

Nonetheless, one has to accept that borders impose threats as well as opportunities and this dynamism cannot be examined in isolation and needs to be resolved and taken ahead in a regional dimension. Thus, the present conference invites presentation on the following themes and beyond:-

- In Search of New spaces: Migration in South and Southeast Asian region,
- Culture and Society- Shared Commonalities across the region,
- Cross border community engagement and shared space of livelihood
- Regional trade and market linkage
- Augmenting Regional Value Chain: Opportunities and limitations
- Climate Change and Environmental concerns
- Connectivity: Transport and Communication
- Resource Endowment, production potential and regional cooperation for developing an integrated Market
- Security along the Border: Insurgency, Counter Insurgency and Military Engagement
- Missing Link: Regulation and Policy Harmonization across the Region
- Emerging Service Sectors for Cross border engagement: Tourism and Education
- Substance and humans Trafficking: The Cross Border Challenge

### C] Researchers' Forum

This category welcomes papers based on on-going or completed M Phil, PhD work, Post Doctoral work or research projects. The scholars submitting papers for this segment should specify the

basis of the paper and in case of being part of funded projects should acknowledge the sponsoring agency

### Best Paper Award {Quick submission suggested}

#### Guidelines for Submission

- There will be three best papers for young researchers in the two themes of the conference and the Researchers' Forum.
- The maximum age limit for consideration for the award of best paper is 35 years (on the last date of paper submission).
- A proof of his/her age (e.g. class X Board Certificate or any other with date of birth mentioned) along with the paper.
- For consideration of award, full paper should be submitted within the deadline. No consideration based on abstract.
- Clear mention should be made whether the paper should be considered for the best paper award or not.

#### Dates & Guidelines:-

Abstracts (300 words): to [secretaryneea@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryneea@gmail.com) and/or [ecotripurauniv@gmail.com](mailto:ecotripurauniv@gmail.com) as document file **on or before 31st October 2022** with the subject: *Abstract for NEEA 2022*.

- Acceptance: latest by **5th November, 2022**
- Soft copies of Full paper (max 3000 words): by 12/11/22

#### Registration

Fees: (With accommodation)

For Members: Rs 2000/-

For Non-members: Rs 3000/-

For Research Scholars/Students: Rs 1500/-

Fees: Rs. 1000/ less for each category without accommodation

By: **12th November, 2022**

**Online Payment to: Savings A/C 38342183040**

**Name: Coordinator SAP-DRS-II-TU**

**Bank: SBI TU Campus Branch; IFSC- SBIN0010495**

Registration Link

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1VVVlrwcZNenFKKGRP9YUbhYHv2E6DMIQJzL0-CEhG24w/edit>

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**ABSTRACTS TILL-31/10/2022**