

Researchers from east get expert help

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SOCIAL SCIENCE researchers in the eastern region never had it so good.

A host of scholars working on doctoral theses in subjects like economics, sociology, history, political science and anthropology got an opportunity to present their research papers before, and interact with eminent teachers and academicians at a city workshop, which concluded on Wednesday.

Prof Anjan Ghosh who coordinated the three-day Eastern India Social Science workshop at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC), told *Hindustan Times* that senior teachers including Andre Beteille, retired professor of sociology at the Delhi University and chairman of the Centre, economist Prof Sugata Marjit, Nivedita Menon, Janaki Raman and Joy Dasgupta spoke at the workshop.

The researchers, who hailed from different parts of the region, used the opportunity to redesign their theses under the guidance of the academicians. "The workshop provided them an exposure to various research techniques," Ghosh said.

Prof Beteille spoke on "Development and Critiques" on the first day, when three scholars presented their papers. Akhil Ranjan Dutta of Guwahati University is working on "Development Versus Democracy: A Case of Pagladia Dam Project in Assam and its Displacements" while Pratyush Pattanaik from the Bangalore-based Institute of Social and Economic Change is researching on "Decentralisation and Political Power", a probe into the level of people's participation in the Panchayati

Raj institutions in Orissa. Sumohan Bandyopadhyay presented her research paper on "Development and Sustainability of the Craft of Weaving in a West Bengal Village" (Dhaniakhali in Hooghly).

While Sudeshna Ghosh chose a very topical and controversial subject like "Disparities in Education in Bengal", Rituparna Basu enlivened the discussion with a paper, titled "The Founding of Asutosh Museum and the Building of a Folk Art Collection".

The second day's theme, "Gender and Violence of Development", was highlighted by five papers. Asha Achchuthan presented the first: "Languages of Consent". Sudhanya Dasgupta's "Of Violence and Displacement: Women's Narrative of Partition in the East (Bengal)" followed.

The third paper by Rangili Biswas was a study on civil rights violation in West Bengal. The fourth paper threw light on yet another interesting subject: "Students' Evaluation of Teachers: a Contemporary Analysis". Sanhita Das's thesis on the "Impact of Changes of Health Care Policies on a Plural Society" in the context of the plains in Darjeeling district was highly impressive.

The third day was devoted mostly to environmental issues. Satyapriya Raut presented his thesis on joint forest management in Orissa, while Sharmistha Pattanaik highlighted mass movements to protect the environment like the Chilika Bachao Andolan.

Subhendra Bhowmick presented a paper on the "urban dirt" in West Bengal and Kaushik Chakrabarti spoke on "deprivation, resistance and domination" in colonial India (1765-1799).