

GENERAL SECRETARY REPORT

**On the Auspicious Occasion of the XVII Annual Conference
and National Seminar
of
The Association of Geographers, Bihar & Jharkhand
December the 19th and the 20th 2015
Department of Geography
B.N. Mandal University, Madhepura, Bihar, India**

**Respected chairman, honorable guests, dignitaries, senior professors,
colleagues, friends and students!**

It is really a matter of prestige and privilege for me to present once again the General Secretary's Report of the Association of Geographers, Bihar and Jharkhand on the occasion of the seventeenth annual conference and the National Seminar before this august gathering. It is a matter of great satisfaction that this gathering comprises people not only from nooks and corners of the States of Bihar and Jharkhand but also from different parts of the country and not only from the fraternity of geography but also from several other branches of knowledge.

Friends! our academic activities have been very relevant for the last sixteen years. We have visited almost all parts of our states right from Bettiah in the north-west corner of Bihar to Chaibasa located in the south-east part of Jharkhand and from Ara and Chapra in the west to Bhagalpur in the east. The journey, was started from Patna on the 25th of April, 1999 and it has been continuing through hosting annual conference at places, like, Muzaffarpur, Bodh Gaya, Chapra, Bhagalpur, Hazaribag, Ara, Bettiah, Patna, Bodh Gaya, Darbhanga, Bhagalpur, Chapra Ranchi and Chaibasa successively. This year we have assembled at Madhepura or almost in the north-east part of the state of Bihar.

This association has created an environment whereby scholars, teachers, researchers and students of geography of our two states have not only come into close contact with each other but it has also created a very conducive atmosphere for research and teaching. It has encouraged the young geographers to engage themselves in research by creating a sense of competition among them by introducing Young Geographers' Award. Formerly it was known as R.B. Mandal

Young Geographers' Award but now it is known as Prof. R. Gauntia Young Geographers Award. We have also started honoring our teachers and the fatherly scholars of our states, who had laid solid foundation of teaching and research by dint of their vision and labour during their life time and even after their departure from this world they have been inspiring and guiding us through their inspiring work. In their memory and honor we use to organize memorial lectures. The memorial lectures are regularly delivered by distinguished scholars. The association has also created an atmosphere of research and teaching in the educational institutions by organizing seminars and publishing research papers in 'The Geographical Perspective'.

The association has been promoting the applied aspects of geography by selecting useful topics as focal themes for its annual conferences. For example, the 11th conference, which was organized in a flood prone area like Darbhanga, the focal theme was 'Natural Hazard Management'. For the 16th conference, which was organized in the most industrialized belts of the country, i.e., Chaibasa of the East Singhbhum district of Jharkhand, the focal theme was 'Constraints of Industrial Development'. Likewise, for the seventeenth conference the focal theme is Changing Dimensions of River Basins as the conference is being organized in Madhepura. The region around Madhepura witnesses devastating floods of river Kosi, which is notorious for frequently changing its course. The Focal themes for some other conferences were also relevant, e.g., Development And Locational Conflicts for the Ranchi conference (2013) : Water Resource Management and Human Resource Management for the Bhagalpur conference : Natural Resources: Use And Misuse for the thirteenth conference held in Hazaribag : Human Resource Development: Health And Education for the fourteenth conference held in Chapra : Geography And Development for the tenth conference organized in Bodh Gaya : in 2008, Rehabilitation of Economy and Society of Bihar and Jharkhand for the eleventh conference organized in 2009 in Darbhanga: Environment and Development: Issues and Challenges for the twelfth Conference organized in 2010 in Bhagalpur. Thus, we have covered a wide range of topics as focal themes of our conferences. In fact the selection of topics of contemporary relevance in different conferences provided prominence and popularity to the association.

The association has also undertaken the study of the problems of the Kosi river basin in collaboration with the Department of Geography, B. N. Mandal University, Madhepura and the Department of Geography, A. N. College, Patna.

About three thousand respondents of various parts of the region were interviewed by groups of teachers and students. The groups also observed empirically the physical and cultural scenario and took photographs to obtain first hand information. The groups also sought the views of the inhabitants about the problem created by the floods and also solutions of the problems. An intensive opinion survey has also been conducted by these groups among intellectuals, media persons, social activists, bureaucrats and common man etc.

The Department of Geography, B.N. Mandal University, Madhepura also organized a seminar on this topic in collaboration with the association on the 30th of November 2014, which was attended by a large number of intellectuals and social activists. Valuable suggestions regarding sustainable development of this region emerged from the discussions.

Friends! the association is promoting the cause of geography in the departments of the Universities and colleges. Several organizations are helpful in our efforts. The Nalanda Open University, Patna has proposed to start Diploma and Post-Graduate courses in Disaster Management from the session 2016 to broaden the scope of geography teachers, researchers and students in the planning and management domain.

The Department of Geography, B. N. Mandal University, Madhepura organized successfully the XVI Foundation Day Lecture of The Association of Geographers, Bihar and Jharkhand on the 16th of May 2015. The foundation day lecture was delivered by Dr. Ram Bilas, Professor of geography, Banaras Hindu University. The topic of his lecture was 'Appraisal of Water Resource: A Case Study of Kosi River Basin'. A large number of geographers from Bihar and Jharkhand and particularly from the B.N. Mandal University, Madhepura attended the function. Several scholars of other branches of knowledge also attended the function. The occasion was graced by his presence of Professor Md. Ishtiaque, an eminent geographer and Vice-Chancellor of the Magadh University, Bodh Gaya. He also delivered a lecture on this occasion.

The Department of Geography of Magadh University, organized the ninth International Conference of The Deccan Geographical Society, India on February 26-28, 2015 on 'Tourism, Environment and Development'. The conference was attended by a large number of participants from all parts of the country and also from abroad. The deliberation and recommendations are significant to the evolution

of the Geography of Tourism in the country. Professor R.B.P. Singh, the Editor-in-Chief of the journal of the society was conferred the 'Bhugol Bhushan Award' 2014 by the Deccan Geographical Society in this conference. Shri A.K. Singh, IAS, Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bihar, who was also a student of geography and continue to keep interest in geography, was also conferred 'The Life Achievement Award' by the society.

The Department of Geography, Magadh University also organized Ph.D. Methodology course for research scholars, keeping in mind the guidelines, 2009 of the UGC.

The Department of Geography, A. N. College, Patna organized several seminars, workshop and extramural lectures by prominent scholars. It includes Prof. H. N. Mishra, retired Professor and Head, Department of Geography, Allahabad University, Prof. B. C. Vaidya, former Professor and Head, Department of Geography, Pune University, Prof. R.B.P. Singh, Vice-Chancellor, Nalanda Open University, Patna and Prof. Kailash Mahato, retired professor and head, Department of Geography, Patna University, Patna on different occasions. This department has also successfully organized Ph.D Course of 2015, which was attended by forty seven research scholars.

The Department of Geography of Patna University, Patna has been upkeeping its tradition of promoting the subject by organizing seminars and conferences.

The Department of Geography of L. N. Mithila University, Darbhanga has a vibrant society. The Mithila Association of Geographers organizes its annual conference regularly and also publishes a journal.

The Department of Geography of Patna Women's College, Patna organizes seminars and is also engaged in other academic activities. U.G.C. sponsored national seminars have also been organized by this department. Other geography departments of Universities and colleges are also doing wonderful jobs of teaching and researches in order to promote the subject.

We are also regularly publishing a journal, 'The Geographical Perspective'. The journal has created an atmosphere of research and publication, particularly for the young geographers. Our journal is a peer reviewed one with ISSN number.

One of the founder members of the Society, Prof. (Dr.) R. B. P. Singh, has been elected to the prestigious post of the President of the National Association of Geographers, India (NAGI) in the thirty seventh geography congress of NAGI

held on December 2-4, 2015 in the Department of Geography, Jammu University, Jammu. The 37th Congress of NAGI also accepted the proposal of the zonal meet to nominate Dr. S.N. Choudhary as the zonal vice president and Prof. Minz as the executive committee member. Prof. D.P. Singh continues as the member of national executive.

Friends! we have, thus marched far ahead during the sixteen years of our journey from a humble beginning on the 25th of April 1999 in the Coffee Club of the Geography Department of Patna University under the chairmanship of the millennium geographer, Prof. P. Dayal. We have actually organised our association in such a manner that it has now occupied national prominence. Our life members are not only from Indian states but also from abroad. The number of life members is about eight hundred.

Friends! even then we need to work hard for strengthening the society to such an extent that geography may be recognized as the most important subject and no plan and policy may be formulated without engaging geographers right from the national level plan to the state and village levels. The task is ambitious and challenging but I am sure we shall achieve our goal very soon.

I am thankful to you all for your blessings, cooperation and support for making sixteen years of march of the society successful. I wish these two days of our stay in this historic city of the Kosi basin be memorable and pleasant. I hope that the deliberations of the national seminar and annual conference will also be fruitful.

I am grateful very much and obliged to the organizers of the national seminar and annual conference and express my thankfulness to them on my own behalf and also on behalf of the association.

Thanking you all once again.

Jai Hind!

Jai Bhoogol!!

Jai AGBJ!!!

Sd/-

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