Women March to Vaishali, Bihar
Strengthen Grassroots Democracy

♦ Lord Meghnad Desai’s Lecture
♦ Goa-Kerala visit by Brazilian Team
♦ Indo-Nepal Dialogue on Federalism
♦ Vaishali Jantantra Yatra
♦ Women’s Political Empowerment Day
♦ English Language Skills for Madrassa Teachers
International Workshop on "Kerala’s Participatory Planning and Porto Alegre’s Participatory Budgeting", Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
From L to R: Dr. George Mathew, Ms. Adriana Furtado, Dr. Mary George, Mr. Andre Luis da Silva Seixas, Mrs. Elizabeth Corbetta, Ms. Daniely Fontoura, Dr. Ash Narain Roy, Ms. Lara de Lacerda Santos Rodrigues, Prof. M.A. Oommen and Mr. Iain Bruce

Institute of Social Sciences: Senior Faculty, Academics and Staff — August 2011
The Institute's birth was necessitated by the extraordinary demand for the intellectuals and activists to come forward on a common platform.

Fifty Years of Development Thinking

Lord Meghnad Desai, Professor Emeritus, London School of Economics, delivered the Silver Jubilee Lecture on “Fifty Years of Development Thinking” on 15 December 2011 at Abdul Nazir Saab Hall, Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), New Delhi.

Dr. Ash Narain Roy, Director, ISS, in his welcome address, congratulated the ISS faculty and staff for their commitment and hardwork for reaching the milestone of completing 25 years. Dr. Roy said that “all great achievements happen in small steps. The British Empire was once described as an oak tree in a plant pot. Twenty five years ago, we were off on a voyage across the unchartered seas, bound for a land we did not know. But we had one great advantage — we had visionaries by our side who helped us swim across the turbulent seas. And the captain was Dr. George Mathew.

All my colleagues and staff join me in congratulating Dr. George Mathew on this occasion.”

Lord Desai, in his own words, is 24x7 kind of reader. Not many of us know that he read K.M. Munshi’s ‘Gujarat No Nath’ (The Lord of Gujarat) 30 times. His father finally had to ban it. Lord Desai has written extensively on globalization and global governance. Two of his books readily come to mind — The Possibility of Deglobalization in Globalization, Inequality and Social Capital and Marx’s Revenge: The Resurgence of Capitalism and the Death of Statist Socialism”.

Lord Meghnad Desai delivering the Silver Jubilee Lecture on “Fifty Years of Development Thinking.”

Also seen from left are: Dr. George Mathew, Chairman, ISS and Dr. Ash Narain Roy, Director, ISS.
The Institute of Social Sciences is dedicated to a systematic study of social issues and problems that confronts India in a trans-disciplinary perspective.

Dr. George Mathew in his presidential address said that “the 25-year journey of the ISS has been far from smooth, but it has been exciting and satisfying. When the Institute was registered on 28 August 1985, the country was recovering from the turbulent times it had witnessed a decade earlier. Even democracy had been challenged and the concentration of power in the hands of the few had pushed the people on the margins. Instead of people's power, the country had oligopoly of power. The power to the people, therefore, became a rallying point for many intellectuals, activists and concerned citizens. It is against this background that the Institute found its institutional expression.

The Institute’s birth was also necessitated by the extraordinary demand for the intellectuals and activists to come forward on a common platform not only to create knowledge but also to share it with policy makers, workers, practitioners, organizations and others. When I had the opportunity to meet intellectuals, committed democrats, civil society and human rights activists of the time between 1980 and 1985, the idea got crystallized to start a forum “dedicated to a systematic study of social issues and problems that confront India in a trans-disciplinary perspective”. The primary aim of the Institute was the evolution of an informed and action-oriented public opinion.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that an Institute which could integrate research with action could find its feet. The Institute has made modest contribution in areas such as decentralization of power, local governance, empowerment of women, fiscal decentralization, multi-level federalism and human rights, to name a few.

All those who supported the Institute wanted it to be an independent institution which will grow as a think tank. It was indeed a difficult and strenuous task especially as far as the finance was concerned. But many organizations and even the Union and State governments came forward with support at critical times. Finance is still a problem considering our vision and mission as well as the challenges that lie ahead.”

Lord Meghnad Desai, delivered the special lecture on “Fifty Years of Development Thinking” at the Closing Ceremony of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Institute of Social Sciences. Speaking about the current global economic crisis, he said “there is deep crisis in the West today. But it is not a crisis of capitalism. Indeed capitalism is flourishing in Asia, Africa and Latin America.” He further said that the powerful ideas are not always the right ideas. He also dispelled the thinking in many parts of the world that the poor countries are always fragmented and the
rich ones are always united. “No country or society should claim to be absolutely poverty free”, said Lord Desai, adding that even the West has pockets of poverty.

Speaking about the people living below poverty line, Lord Desai said that “the notion of the poor is both absolute and relative. When we measure poverty in terms of calories, then we get one picture. However, when the same is calculated in terms of the capability and resources required for acquiring such capability, the figure is quite different. In fact, the levels of poverty can be different by region, groups of people, gender etc.”

He strongly advocated the system of direct cash transfer to the poor saying they know better how to spend the money and we should not question their wisdom to make judicious use of such money. In respect of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) he said that much of the work being done under the scheme hardly adds to the value addition. The system suffers largely from inefficiency and leakages and our system often “gains from wastage.”

He also referred to the green revolution in India describing it to be “the biggest success in the private sector.” Unfortunately, he said, the lessons learned in agriculture were not transferred to industry as we never considered agriculture as an industry.

Dr. Desai took a dig at the model relating to steel production followed by the socialist group of nations including the Soviet Union which laid emphasis on production rather than on human development. In our own country the earlier five year plans placed emphasis on the development of the industrial sector and not much on quality of people’s life. It was Lal Bahadur Shastri who first used the term ‘aam aadmi’ and emphasized that the quality of life of people should be the real measurement of development.

**Vaishali Gantantra Yatra - Women’s March to Vaishali to Strengthen Gram Swaraaj (Village Republics)**

The Association of Local Governance of India (ALGI) organised a two-day convention of women panchayat leaders on 30-31 January at Vaishali, Bihar in collaboration with the ISS and Bharosa, a civil society organisation from Bihar. Vaishali, being the birthplace of democracy, this convention with the slogan “Vaishali chalo” meaning march to Vaishali - was a historic event. It was also a celebration of women's achievements in public life through democracy, especially in Bihar. Bihar was the first state in India to introduce 50 per cent quota for women in panchayats. The convention was organised to showcase their achievements and potential as well as to deliberate on the hurdles in their way. It was not merely a solidarity meeting, it was also to decide the strategies for better governance and accountability.

There is deep crisis in the West today. But it is not a crisis of capitalism. Indeed capitalism is flourishing in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
The two-day convention began with a march from Vishal Garh ruins, the place where citizens in the ancient times used to assemble to take decisions democratically. More than 1,000 women from all over Bihar assembled here and marched to the conference venue near Pushkarni Talab. It was the largest ever gathering of elected women representatives in Vaishali where they raised their voices and showed their grit, determination and solidarity. The women participants, social activists and leaders also raised slogans demanding equality, dignity and greater participation in local governments.

During the programme, a host of speakers including political leaders and social activists addressed the panchayat women leaders. Women participants deliberated on various issues like challenges and status of women's empowerment, violence in panchayats, different dimensions of violence, panchayats and MGNREGA, corruption and good governance.

Women marching to Vaishali, the most ancient seat of democracy, sends the message of the significance of 50 per cent reservation for women not only in Panchayats but also at higher levels of decision making and governace. Women Leaders Marching through Vaishali Gate

During the open sessions, the delegates shared their experiences as well as their frustrations. Elected women representatives were critical of the state's policies and said that bureaucracy and feudal elements created hurdles in the functioning of panchayats. Therefore, elected panchayat members were not getting their constitutional rights. Hence, the delegates showed keen interest in joining ALGI so that their voices could be heard.

The inaugural session commenced with the chantings of Buddhist monks of Thai-Monastery. Dr. P.C. Chandra and his disciples chanted Buddham Sharnam Gachchami, Dharmam Sharnam Gachchami. Ms. Richa Chaubey and her group from Vaishali presented a patriotic song, Jaise gaganva mein chand wa, Vaishali nagaria hamre deswa ki shaan wa. Their songs set the tone for the historic convention.

Dr. George Mathew in his welcome speech underlined the historical importance of Vaishali Gantantra Yatra. He briefly touched upon the objectives of organising the convention at Vaishali and the need for strengthening democracy at grassroots level. He further said that “equal representation of women in public life, governance and decision making are the prerequisites for strong and vibrant Panchayati Raj.” Today, women marching to Vaishali, sends the message of the significance of 50 per cent reservation for women not only in Panchayats but also at higher levels of decision making and governance. This is a historic moment and this message must spread to other parts of the country as well.”
Shri Uday Narayan Chowdhary, Hon'ble Speaker of Bihar Legislative Assembly, was the Chief Guest at the inaugural function. Inaugurating the convention, he said that “women of Bihar have given a new face to the three-tier Panchayati Raj system. They have shown great enthusiasm with their participation in the working of the Panchayats but they have a long way to go.

The open sessions, spread over two days, focused on the role of panchayats in addressing the problems that women are facing as elected leaders. The first day’s open session was chaired by Mr. Abdul Gani Khan, Councillor, Srinagar Municipality and former President of ALGI. Shri Rajendra Acharya (Orissa), Secretary, ALGI and Mr. Mohd. Umar Ansari, social activist and an active ALGI member from Bihar addressed this session.

Ms. Parveen Amanullah, Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare, Government of Bihar, was the Chief Guest at the Special Session on "Challenges and Status of Women’s Empowerment.” In her inspiring address to the delegates, she called upon the women leaders to take back their learning from this convention and make special efforts for successful functioning of panchayats.

Shri Hari Prasad Shah, Hon'ble Minister for Panchayati Raj, Government of Bihar, delivered the Valedictory address. Congratulating the women leaders for their achievements in the panchayats, he stressed on the significance of Vaishali for our democracy today. He called upon women leaders to work for fulfilling the dreams of our Father of the Nation. He emphasised the role of development and education. He further said that a nation's growth and progress are inextricably linked with the advancement of women.

Dr. Ash Narain Roy, Director, ISS, in his address, underlined the imperative need to deepen democracy through empowerment of the disempowered and inclusion of the excluded groups in the polity. Giving the example of Bihar, he said that some years ago Bihar began to fall off the national map once there was huge governance deficit. Things have started looking up precisely because of better governance.
In December 2008, the Institute of Social Sciences commenced a research project titled "Comparative Study of Kerala's Participatory Planning and Porto Alegre's Participatory Budgeting" under the leadership of Prof. M.A.Oommen, Emeritus Professor at ISS and assisted by Dr. Mary George, Fellow of the Institute. The study looks critically at the contributions of the two models towards deliberative democracy. Is the Porto Alegre experiment sustainable? What are the lessons we can learn from Porto Alegre’s participatory democracy? It is against this background that ISS organized three workshops in Goa, Thiruvananthapurum and Delhi with the participation of Brazilian and Indian experts, academics and people with first hand experience.

The Goa meeting held on 16 and 17 June, 2011 was inaugurated by Mr. Manohar Azgaonkar, Minister for Panchayati Raj, Government of Goa. Mr. Francisco Mickky Pacheco, Member of State Assembly, Benaulim Constituency and former Tourism Minister; Mr.Gurudas Pirlankar, Director, Rural Development Administration and Member Secretary, Goa Institute of Rural Development and Administration (GIRDA); Mrs. Rekha Joshi, Assistant Director, GIRDA, Mrs. Danielly Fontoura and Mrs. Maria Rebello, Chairperson, South Goa District panchayat. Mrs. Nelly Rodrigues, President, ALGI, delivered the welcome address. Mr. Sotter D’Souza, Director of Centre for Panchayati Raj-Peaceful Society, gave a presentation on the present structure and functioning of local governments both rural (panchayat) and urban (municipality) in Goa. More than 60 elected panchayat representatives and civil society members participated in the two day programme.

The session on “Local Government System in Brazil” was chaired by Advocate Sabina Martins, prominent women’s rights activist. The vibrant discussion, exchange of ideas and experiences based on Porto Alegre’s participatory budgeting was extremely informative. The Goan delegates felt they were far behind the Brazilian system. Ms. Melsa Vaz e Monteiro, activist from Centre for Peaceful Society, Panaji led the discussion. The technical session on “Decentralization and Participatory Budgeting” was chaired by Dr. Ash Narain Roy. The speakers were Mr. Andre Seixas, Ms. Elizabeth Corbetta, Ms. Danielly Fontoura, Mr. Iain Bruce and M. Lara Rodrigues. On 18 June the Brazilian delegates visited the Betalbatim village panchayat and other historical sites which created a deep bond between the Portuguese cultures of Brazil and Goa.

The programme in Thiruvananthapuram started with a field visit of two panchayats – Karakulam and Aryanad in Thiruvananthapuram district on 20th June. The visit to Karakulam included interactions with panchayat President, Vice President and other officials and a visit to the Grameena Padana Kendram (Village Study Centre). The delegates also visited one Kudumbashree unit, (Prosperity of Family) a micro enterprise of nineteen women. The Aryanad panchayat President and officials welcomed the Brazilian delegates and...
explained the functioning of the participatory planning in their panchayat.

Dr. M.K. Muneer, Honourable Minister for Local Self Government, Government of Kerala, inaugurated the workshop in Thiruvananthapuram which ISS organized in cooperation with the Institute of Management in Government (IMG) from 21 to 22 June.

Mr. T.K. Manojkumar, Director at IMG, delivered the welcome address and Prof. M.A. Oommen introduced the theme of the workshop and made a presentation on the Comparative Study of the Porto Alegre’s Participatory Budgeting and People’s Participatory Planning in Kerala. He along with Dr. Mary George visited Porto Alegre in November 2009 to conduct field study.

In a session on best practices in participatory planning in Kerala, Dr. Shaheena discussed the experiment in Kanjikuzhi panchayat on integrated planning and other good practices in Vithura, Karakulam, Kumbarkom and Akathethara panchayats. She spoke of an excellent synergy between the local panchayats and the government departments. Ms. Mariamma Sanu George spoke on the ‘Green Kerala Express’ which has brought forth an innovative best practice in the people’s participation in the planning process in the state, used the visual media as a tool to produce 4000 minute television programme with 150 episodes covering 140 village panchayats. Dr. Thomas Isaac, former Finance Minister of Kerala and Mr. S.M. Vijayanand, Principal Secretary, Local Self Government Department, Government of Kerala gave insightful talks on the success of local government in the State since 1996.

The Delhi workshop was held on 24 and 25 June. It focussed on lessons learnt from Porto Alegre and Kerala, particularly for the benefit of the participants from North Indian States. Dr. Ash Narain Roy briefed the participants about the Goa and Thiruvananthapuram workshops and Ms. Daniely Fontoura shared her impressions about the two workshops.

The technical session on “People’s Participatory Planning in Kerala” was chaired by Prof. Partha Nath Mukherji, Emeritus Professor of ISS. Prof. M.A. Oommen was the main speaker. Dr. Mahi Pal, Assistant Commissioner, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India and Dr. Joy Elamon, CEO, Intercooperation, India were the discussants.

The session on “Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre” was chaired by Ms. Caitlin Wiesen, Country Director, UNDP. Dr. Mary George and Prof. Philip Oldenburg of Columbia University were the discussants.

The session concluded with a panel discussion on “Grassroots Democracy, Local governments and South-South Cooperation.” Prof. M.A. Oommen, Dr. Ash Narain Roy, Ms. Preeta Lall, Regional Advisor, Decentralization, LOGIN, spoke of the various facets of South-South cooperation. Ms. Daniely Fontoura shared her impressions of the three workshops and stressed the need for local government in the State since 1996.
for institutionalizing such experience sharing. Dr. George Mathew moderated the session.

The session on “the Porto Alegre Experience” was presided over by Dr. Dagmar Baer, Team Leader, GIZ, EC India State Partnership Programme with Chhattisgarh. Mr. Iain Bruce was the main speaker. This was an interesting session in which there were debates and discussions on the relevance of Porto Alegre experience for other developing countries.

**Eighteenth Women’s Political Empowerment Day Celebrations**

The Eighteenth Women’s Political Empowerment Day Celebrations on the theme “Panchayats, Women and Safe Drinking Water” was held on 25 and 26 April at the Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi. This year’s celebration was sponsored by UN Women, UNDP and WaterAid, India.

More than 500 elected women panchayat leaders from 23 states participated in the programme. They showed keen interest in the discussions and shared their views and experiences with their counterparts in various sessions. Representatives from civil society organisations, academia, media and government also participated in the event with great enthusiasm.

On 25 April, the inaugural session began with the songs by the Gavaniar cultural group from Bikaner, Rajasthan. This was followed by the welcome address by Dr. George Mathew in which said that the Institute took the decision to celebrate April 24 as Women’s Political Empowerment Day when the 73rd Constitution Amendment became Part IX of the Constitution of India with 33 per
cent seats reserved for women. Over the years, this programme has become “a national event” for elected women panchayat leaders. They use this as a platform to learn about various issues they have to deal with and the challenges they face.

The Chief Guest, Hon’ble Minister of State for Rural Development, Ms. Agatha Sangma, in her inaugural address, said that water management schemes “can be implemented in a better way provided women are given a say. Women efficiently manage water and other basic needs of their families.” Ms. Sangma strongly recommended that women “be given 50 per cent representation in village sanitation and drinking water committees.” She also called upon panchayat women to create a situation in their villages where they actually become more empowered in all respects.”

Guest of Honour, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident representative, Mr. Patrice Coeur-Bizot said how important this year’s theme was which resonates with India’s Millennium Development Goal targets. “It is indeed a matter of great pride for India that the country has the largest number of grassroots elected women representatives – nearly 50 per cent. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution of India, which not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.”

Ms. Anne Stenhammer, Regional Programme Director, UN Women, gave an inspiring speech saying “every time you fight for your rights, we salute you. Your struggle is for a more just and equitable democratic order.” She complimented the elected women leaders by saying how they “carry on their shoulders the hopes and aspirations of millions of women in India and that the UN works in solidarity” with them. She described them as “change makers.”

Mr. Aslak Brun, Minister-Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, complimented the Institute for choosing the theme of drinking water and expressed happiness that women in India have begun to change the face of rural India. He gave the example of his own country which was one of the poorest in Europe a century ago. “It is thanks to women’s empowerment that Norway today occupies a place of pride in the comity of nations”, he concluded.

Lourdes Baptista, Chief Executive, WaterAid India greeted the panchayat women and asked them not to get frustrated when they face difficulties and roadblocks.

Quoting Gandhiji, Ash Narain Roy said “True democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village.” He further said, democracy doesn’t start in Parliament, but in panchayat. Panchayats may be
All said, the Women’s Political Empowerment Day Celebrations this year saw far deeper discussion on the critical issue of drinking water. Greater participation in various sessions and greater awareness among the panchayat leaders convey an unmistakable message that women leaders are fast learners. Wisdom does not necessarily lie with experts alone; people with better grasp of rural India have begun to realise that they are the masters of their own destiny.

the third tier of government but it is the first tier of democracy.”

Two women panchayat leaders Smt. Rukmani Devi Savi, Sarpanch, Vijaypura Panchayat, Rajsamand, Rajasthan and Smt. Junpo Jugli, District Panchayat President, Changlang, Arunachal Pradesh were honoured by the Hon’ble Minister Ms. Agatha Sangma, Mr. Patrice Coeur-Bizot and Ms. Anne Stenhammer for their excellent work in their panchayats.

In the two plenary sessions the elected women representatives and experts deliberated upon water management challenges and capacities of panchayat women to manage safe drinking water and health impacts of poor water quality on women and other vulnerable groups. Both the sessions saw animated discussion and enthusiastic participation by women panchayat leaders.

There were two special sessions during the two day event. Professor Wu Quing from Rural Women’s Training School, Beijing, China, gave a lecture on “Preparing Women to be Global Citizens.”

Further, she congratulated panchayat women entering the decision making process at the grassroots. While she was happy that the impact of women’s participation was growing. She stated that “the way is not only long, but also very treacherous.”

Ms. Caitlin Wiesen, Country Director, UNDP India, referred to her meetings with women representatives of Rajasthan and UP who have overcome many hurdles to make a mark. She described 24 April as a milestone in India’s grassroots democracy and said that “you are the symbols of new emerging India. Each one of you are the agents of change.” Ms Wiesen is of firm belief that women panchayat members must be given a say in water management and rain water harvesting.

Dr. Mohini Giri, Director, Guild of Service, New Delhi, chaired the Valedictory Session and Dr. Syeda Hameed, Member, Planning Commission, Government of India in her valedictory address appealed to the women panchayat members to be more vigilant. About the planning process, she told the delegates that there can’t be a single and uniform formula of development all over the country. Panchayats must make area specific plans and take them to the logical end. She gave the clarion call to all the p a n c h a y a t women to emerge as strong leaders and show the world what women can do for the betterment of the society.
A consultation on the topic “Rising Crimes against Women in NCR: Corrective Strategies” was organized on 11 February by the Institute of Social Sciences in collaboration with the Centre for Social Research. The chairperson of National Commission for Women Smt. Girija Vyas was the chief guest and delivered the keynote address. Joint Secretary to the Department of Women and Child Welfare, Government of India and a number of NGOs namely Jagori, Naz Foundation (India) Trust, All India Women’s Conference, New Concept, Lawyers Collective, CEQUIN, Prayas Juvenile Aid Centre, Shakti Shalini, Action India, Prayatn, IANS and Society for Welfare of Poor and Destitute etc. participated in the deliberations. Issues responsible for the upsurge of crime in the National Capital Region and steps to be taken to combat it were discussed. Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime) and Additional Commissioner of Police – Delhi dealing with crimes against women also spoke in the consultation and enumerated the steps taken by the Delhi Police to prevent crimes against women. They also responded to many criticisms against the police. It was also widely covered in the print and electronic media.

Indo-Nepal Dialogue on Federalism

An Indo-Nepal dialogue on federalism was organized by the Forum of Federations and the Centre for Multilevel Federalism at the Institute of Social Sciences on 5 November.

In the inaugural session, Dr. Rupak Chattopadhyay, President, Forum of Federations talked about the new found urge among nations to adopt federalism as a model of governance in order to reconcile differences and usher in an era of peace and prosperity. He argued that federalism is not something as one size fits all, but it grows differently on different lands inculcating local conditions and circumstances.

The first session was on “The Constitution Making Process in Nepal: Problems and Issues.” Mr. Manohar Bhattarai, Secretary General, Constituent Assembly, Nepal meticulously traversed the Nepali course of Oligarchy, Multiparty Democracy to Maoist insurgency. According to him the biggest obstacle in the formation of constitution in Nepal was the difference between Maoist and Non-Maoists on the issue of form of government and restructuring the state. Hon’ble Binalendra Nidhi, Member of the Constituent Assembly and Member of Nepali Congress elaborated on the political problems in writing of the constitution which constitute the main bone of contention between Maoist and Non-Maoists on four issues:

1. Integration and Rehabilitation of Peoples Liberation Army (PLA);
2. Dissolution of PLA;
3. Property to be handed over to the people from whom it has been snatched;

Achin Vanaik, Professor of Political Science, Delhi University urged Nepal
to declare itself a nuclear weapon free zone by including a provision in its constitution. It would become the first state to incorporate such a provision which would have tremendous impact towards increasing its dignity internationally. Prof. Balveer Arora, Chairman, Centre for Multilevel Federalism, ISS, chaired the session and stressed on the notion of asymmetry in federalism to reconcile multiple identities.

The Second session was on “The Federal Architecture of Nepal: Identities and Options.” Dr. Surya P.S. Dhungel, Adviser to the President of Nepal on Constitutional and Legal Affairs emphasized that Federalism was best suited to Nepal to incorporate ethnic and linguistic diversity existing in Nepal. Mr. Vijay Pratap advocated the idea of federalism with a bottom up approach including community and their rights over natural resources. The session was chaired by Prof. M.P.Singh, Former Professor of Political Science, Delhi University. In his remark stated the fact that Nepal, like India, is writing a constitution after a national movement where extra constitutional procedures were adopted.

The third session was on “The Federal Architecture of Nepal: Political Economy and Development Issues.” Dr. V. N. Alok, Associate professor, IIPA advised that in the fiscal side of federation, careful consideration should go before function is assigned to various orders of government, because there always is a mismatch between finance of different orders. Major Dalbir Singh, Member, Delhi Pradesh congress committee talked at length about Indo-Nepal shared history and saw a great potential in Indo-Nepal collaboration for Hydro energy. The session was chaired by Prof. Kamal Nayan Kabra.

The concluding panel was on the “Prospects for Regional and Bilateral Relations.” Dr. Ash Narain Roy, Director, ISS considered that regionalization has the potential to overcome many of the deficiencies of asymmetry. Dr. Surya P.S. Dhungel suggested that frequent exchange of relations with political parties in the region would be enormously helpful. Mr. Manohar Bhattarai lauded India’s Parliamentary democracy and saw a great scope of learning from India’s experience. Prof. Balveer Arora advised to burn differences and build on commonalities. He saw the initiative of South Asian University as a step in the right direction.

Finally, vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Rekha Saxena, Associate Professor of Political Science, Delhi University. She thanked the Nepali delegates, panelists and the participants. She raised concern over the issue of open borders with Nepal, urged for a cooperative mechanism in light of big powers having observer status in SAARC, and the role of states in foreign economic relations.
English Language Skills for Madrassa Teachers

The Institute of Social Sciences and the Regional English Language office of the American Center organised a two week (28 November to 9 December) long training programme on teaching English Language Skills for Madrassa teachers. This course was conducted to train teachers to use current communicative skills in teaching English together with language improvement techniques. The course was inaugurated on 28 November 2011. Important officials of the American Center in New Delhi were present on the occasion.

Ms. Ann Stock, US Under Secretary, who leads the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was the special guest. She interacted with the trainees and addressed them. The programme ended with a valedictory address by the Chief Guest, Mr. Sharifuddin Shariq, Member of Parliament from Baramullah (Jammu and Kashmir). He appreciated this important work being done by ISS at the initiative of American Center. Mr. Sharifuddin presented certificates to trainees for successfully completing the course. Ms. Mary Kay Seales, Senior English Language Fellow and Dr. Amirullah Khan, Assistant Professor at Aligarh Muslim University conducted this high level training programme. This workshop was the fifth in the series.

The Institute of Social Sciences in collaboration with West Bengal Police organized a training program on the topic “Gender Sensitization and Human Rights” at the Police Training College, Barrackpore, West Bengal from 19 to 21 July for thirty four directly recruited Deputy Superintendents of Police. The trainees are well educated and many of them have had experience of serving in other organization before joining the police.
Capacity Building for the Promotion of Labour Rights

Capacity Building for the Promotion of Labour Rights for Vulnerable Groups of Workers

In 2010, the Institute of Social Sciences signed a contract with the European Union Delegation to India regarding the implementation of a project to address the problems of India’s workers who are not in the formal sector of the economy and are therefore subjected to different forms of exploitation. Institute of Social Sciences, the lead agency for the project along with four other partners – European Institute of Asian Studies, Maniben Kara Institute, Ambekar Institute of Labour Studies and XLRI: Xavier School of Management. The project activities started in 2011.

Research: As far as the project studies and research work is concerned, major progress was made towards the completion of the 5 planned project studies, namely: i) Specific field research on the vulnerabilities of migrant workers from rural Bihar, India; ii) and iii) one study each on the working and subsistence conditions of contract and migrant labour in the readymade garment industry and in the Construction industry (Naka workers); iv) Study on “contract labour and migrant workers in Bhiwandi, Navi Mumbai and Taloja and v) comparative study of different contract labour systems in India with focus on Jamshedpur. The contents of the first four studies have been finalized and their results are being used for guidance in relation to the setting up and operation of the Workers’ Service Centers. Proper editing of the study reports is still to be completed, after which they will be published as project outcomes in their own right. As to the 5th study, the preparation of methodology, questionnaires and field interviews were completed in December 2011.

Workers’ Service Centres: With regard to the creation of the Project “Workers’ Service Centers” for the benefit of unorganized and vulnerable groups of workers, 2 of the 6 proposed Centers at Bhiwandi and Kamothe - Mumbai region were started in December, as scheduled.

Visibility: The Project website (http://www.labour-rights-india.eu) was launched in August 2011. The formal “Project Launch” took place in New Delhi on 4 July. It was a public event attended by many stakeholders and personalities, including the EC representatives Mr. Hans Schoof, Ms. Anasuya Gupta and Ms. Renuka Srinivasan.

ISS Interns
University of Bucharest
Ms. Cristina Maglaviceanu
Topic: Intraregional Migration and its Impact on South Asian Region

University of Duisburg-Essen
Mr. Sergio M. Gemperle
Topic: Decentralization and Local Governance in Sikkim

Transylvania University
Ms. Viktoria Safarian

University of Bielefeld
Ms. Sarah Potthoff
Topic: Negotiating Women’s Rights and Cultural Diversity

Banasthali University
Ms. Apurva Sharma

Ms. Annie D. Raja, General Secretary, National Federation of Indian Women, speaking at the official launch of the project sponsored by European Union. From L to R: Dr. George Mathew, Mr. Hans Schoof, EC Representative, Mr. Ashok Singh, Vice President, INTUC, Mr. Umraomal Purohit, General Secretary, HMS, Mr. Eddy Laurijssen, Board Member, EIAS (Brussels) and Dr. Ash Narain Roy.
Conference on Climate Change

The Institute of Social Sciences in collaboration with Association of Local Governance of India (ALGI) organized a Conference on Climate Change on 14 January at the Institute of Social Sciences. The objective of holding this conference was to spread awareness on this important issue to the grassroots by sensitising the members of ALGI about the dangerous consequences that climate change poses to India at present and in the future. This sensitisation attempt was made as ISS strongly believes that it is with the complete empowerment and participation of people at the local level that any development issue including climate change can be effectively addressed. In all, 43 persons from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha, Punjab, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and New Delhi participated in the Conference.

Dr. George Mathew inaugurated the conference by extending a warm welcome to all the participants and members of ALGI who had come from across the States. In his inaugural address, he observed that the Panchayats in the country have been pushed to the margins and in some states like Jammu and Kashmir, no elections have been held at all, implying that the ruling class in India does not want to share the power with the people. This necessitates that the Panchayat Raj Institutions must collectively work like trade unions to get their power, duly enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

Dr. Ash Narain Roy introduced, conceptually, the climate change issue to the members and participants. He, in his address, opined that the issue of ‘climate change’ was not someone else’s concern rather it was everybody’s concern. While recalling Gandhi’s famous statement that, “Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed,” he raised serious objections to the modern man’s greed which has almost brought the earth towards destruction and emphasised the need for as open
The situation has come to a stage now where some scientist have warned that if urgent action is not taken immediately then the world may cross the “tipping point”.

discussion on the issue. He viewed that all the crises that we have faced in the past — be it financial crisis or climate change — were the results of man’s greed. Gandhi practiced what he preached. Today’s India is far away from Gandhi’s ideals. However, we must thank and appreciate the people of rural India for conserving the climate by their natural way of living. He further stressed on the need for change in way of life by involving utilization of such resources that emit least green house gases and the important role that the panchayats in India have to play in addressing the issue at grassroots.

In the first session, Shri Bharat Dogra, resource person for the conference, gave a historical background on environmental degradation and introduced the basic concepts related to climate change. He explained how over the last two decades the issue of environmental damage has become significant and how major world leaders have done very little to address the issue. The situation has come to a stage now where some scientist have warned that if urgent action is not taken immediately then the world may cross the “tipping point”, i.e., a point where it will be no longer possible to reverse the damage to the planet. Several members of the National Council also shared their views on the issue. Smt. Asha Devi of Rajasthan for example, said that in her state one can already feel the impact of climate change in the form of unusual weather patterns including heavy rain in the desert area. Rajesh Parmar of Gujarat said that his state has seen unusual rain in winter and Gujarat government has started to address the issue. However, people need to be made aware of the issue.

In the second session, Shri Dogra gave several examples of how problems of energy, agriculture and disaster mitigation are being managed through low-cost decentralised models in various parts of the country.
Book Release of “District Planning”

Ms. Caitlin Wiesen, Country Director, UNDP, released the report “District Planning” edited by Prof. M.A. Oommen and Dr. Mary George at the Institute of Social Sciences on 10 January.

Ms. Caitlin, while addressing the gathering said that “it is my pleasure to be here today at this event to release the proceedings of the International conference on District Planning held in Kollam District, Kerala in August 2009 [organized by the Institute of Social Sciences]. I am happy to note that UNDP was one of the co-supporters of the event, not only in terms of providing financial support, but also in terms of bringing expertise and resource persons to the event. Simultaneously, UNDP benefitted by bringing several partners and stakeholders from 7 UNDAF states to the deliberation. These participants who hailed from different backgrounds and levels in the state-elected representatives and state and district level officials found the interactions in the field with the grassroots planners immensely useful. We understand that senior state government officials in Bihar and Rajasthan were quite influenced by the strategy of Kollam district to engage volunteers from the district and sub-district levels, train them and use their services in the preparation of comprehensive area development plans....”

She also said that “the aim of the UNDP involvement in district planning is to support the achievement of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) at the Local Governance level”.

Ms. Caitlin also suggested to ISS to produce a short film based on Kollam model in both English and Hindi for the benefit of larger section of the country.

The aim of UNDP involvement in district planning is to support the achievement of the MDGs at the Local Governance level.
**Strengthening Local Governments in the North and East of Sri Lanka by learning from the Kerala and Karnataka Experience**

The visit by the Sri Lankan delegates to Karnataka and Kerala took place from November 13 to 26. The delegates included officials from the Northern and Eastern Province, NELSIP project officials and an elected representative.

Extensive preparation and background work was done to facilitate this visit. This included liaising with the local government capacity building institutions in Mysore and Thrissur, discussions with officials in the governments of Karnataka and Kerala, academicians and in-house scholars at the Institute of Social Sciences. Two background notes were prepared on the evolution of local government system in the two states and its current situation and these were circulated to the participants before they arrived in India. This aided them in having an idea of the local government system and its broad functioning in the context of the states of Karnataka and Kerala.

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**Centre for Multilevel Federalism: Special Lecture Series and Speakers at ISS in 2011**


- **Sumanasiri Liyanage**, Professor of Political Economy at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. Theme: “Identities and Autonomy: Forgotten...”

- Wilfried Swenden, Department of Politics, University of Edinburgh, UK. Theme: “Is the United Kingdom Federal: Devolution and Plurinationalism in Comparative Perspective”, 14 April.

- Asha Sarangi, Associate Professor at the CPS/SSS, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Theme: “Language, Territory and State: The Architecture of Indian Federalism”, 30 August.


- Rekha Chowdhary, Professor of Political Science and former Head of the Department of Political Science, University of Jammu. Theme: “Federal Solutions to the Conflicts in Jammu & Kashmir: Propositions for a Debate”, 20 September.


- Amitabha Pande, Former Secretary, Inter State Council, Government of India. Theme: “Kashmir and the Promise of Federalism”, 29 November.

- Rahul Mukherji, Associate Professor, South Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore. Theme: “Ideas, Interests and the Tipping Point: Understanding Economic Change in Federal India”, 7 December.

- Stefan Hammer, Professor of Public Law and Legal Philosophy at the University of Vienna. Theme: “Federalism and Fundamental Rights”, 13 December.
ISS Regional Centers

Kolkata

Research Projects

A. Urban Studies

Social Audit of Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) in Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC)

The project was entrusted to the Institute by the KMC in September 2010. The objective was to conduct social audit of IGNOAPS in 141 wards. A three pronged method was adopted for conducting the project.

i. Interview with the officials of the concerned departments at the KMC headquarters and 15 Borough offices

ii. Focused group discussions with a selected group in each selected ward.

iii. A detailed beneficiary survey through structured questionnaire in 20 sample wards selected from 15 boroughs of KMC (at least one ward from each borough) from which 25 per cent or 781 beneficiaries were selected on random basis for interview.

The report was finalized and submitted to KMC in August.

Bhubaneswar

Research project on “Implementation Status and Gap between Provisions and Practice of PESA Act in three Tribal dominated states of India (Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha; A Comparative Diagnostic–Cum-Evaluation Study”, funded by Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Research and Training Institution (SCSTRTI), Government of Orissa with effect from November for 7 months, the project tried to examine the implementation of the Act in Odisha with the following objectives

(i) to make an assessment of status/ function of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) after 73rd Amendment and PESA Act in scheduled area

(ii) to examine the degree of understanding about PESA Act among PRI members and community and their extent of empowerment and to identify the organizations (GO/NGOs/CBOs) taking initiative/efforts for empowering and strengthening PRIs in Scheduled areas

(iii) to evaluate peoples’ participation especially women in the democracy and development process in the light of flow of funds and implementations and achievements of different development schemes

(iv) to identify shortcomings in implementation of the Acts related to PRIs and problems of tribal PRIs representatives in participating in the democracy and development process

(v) to review central and state legislation of PESA and make suggestions to bridge the gap between the provisions of the Central Acts and the State Panchayat Acts and legislations, devolution of powers to PRIs by different Development Departments and for taking up further
measures towards achievement of the objectives of PRIs. In all 4 districts, 8 blocks, 16 GPs, 130 villages and 1,528 households were covered in the study using appropriate sampling technologies. The study was headed by Dr. Pramila Prava Patnaik under the technical guidance of Shri K.K. Patnaik, Senior Fellow and Regional coordinator.

ISS Bhubaneswar implemented a 4 year action project on “Improving Access to Land for Socially Excluded Communities for Livelihood Security in Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts of Orissa”. The project was funded by DFID, U.K. Government and started with effect from 15 September 2011.

**Objectives**

- To make people aware of land related Acts and Rules and other legal provisions relating to land administration.
- To intervene and resolve maximum land related problems of socially excluded groups.
- Sensitize, educate and empower a few select leaders of different groups in the community on land problems in the study area to carry out the beneficial message on a sustained basis.
- Building networks among different forums at state level, district level, block level and community based organizations at village level for collective action to strengthen the process of implementation of Forest Rights Act and other land related Acts.

**Outcome**

- Percentage of the eligible households settled land rights over forestland under FRA.

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Kingdom from 3 to 5 February
- Attended the seminar on “Women and former Scheduled Castes in Rural Local Government in India after the Constitutional Reforms of 1992” organised by John Bryden and Karen Refsgaard at NILF, in association with KILDEN Informasjonssenter for kjønnsforskning, Norwegian Research Council, at Norwegian Research Council Building, Oslo on 18 April
- Delivered a lecture on Democracy in India on 28 April at University, Daegu, South of Korea
- Attended the International Conference on the Strengthening of Regional Cooperation to Promote Democracy Organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Government of Republic of Korea in Cooperation with Community of Democracies on 29 April at Seoul
- Attended the joint meeting of the World Movement and CoD Steering Committees on 28 June at Lithuania
- Made a presentation on “Sharing one’s experience regarding the Local Government set up in India” organized by Provincial Ministry of Local Government and Department of Local Government, Sri Lanka at Vavniya, Sri Lanka
Percentage increase in land claims of eligible households under revenue land.

Percentage of the excluded households having access to land as a result of ownership over lease land and revenue land.

Percentage of the eligible households who got physical possession of allotted land.

Percentage of the excluded households who got the ownership of homestead land.

Proportion of households reporting incidents of discrimination in access of FRA and revenue land rights.

Perception of socially excluded communities towards responsiveness of government service delivery.

Training/Workshops/Seminars/Meetings

ISS, lead CSO and two net partners (WOSCA and REEDS) had inception meeting at ISS, Bhubaneswar office for two days from 19-20 September. Head of each partner organization with respective senior staff participated in planning and implementation and worked out the modalities to be followed in the proposed project.

Capacity building of all project staff comprising 30 members was held from 5 to 7 November at ISS, Bhubaneswar. The staffs were introduced about the project concepts, objectives, activities, strategies, monitoring mechanisms, project management and roles and responsibilities for each staff was clarified. All land related laws, acts and issues of socially excluded groups were explained. Other aspects like RTI, NREGS, FRA, and community mobilization and communication skill development were also discussed.

Shri.K.K.Patnaik, Senior Fellow and Regional Coordinator, ISS, Dr.Pramila Prava Patnaik, Research Officer, ISS, Shri. Sanjaya Ku.Sahu, REEDS and Hon’ble Mr. Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Government of the United Kingdom (3rd from left) at the Institute on 20 April.
Shri D.P. Mansingh, WOSCA were the resource persons in different sessions.

- Orientations on baseline survey was conducted on 8 and 9 November. All field staff, engaged as investigators and supervisors were given training on technique of data collection, use of coding, filling up questionnaires, mock exercise etc. Shri. K.K. Patnaik, and Dr. Pramila Prava Patnaik were the resource persons in different sessions.

- Field Practice of all 25 field staff for baseline survey was done on 25 November in Mata village of Dari GP of Karanjia block headed by Dr. Pramila Prava Patnaik.

- The survey was completed on 8 December. Cluster coordinators were divided into three teams at 3 respective partners’ level headed by programme coordinators. A total of 41 sample villages out of 350 villages covering 1,913 households were surveyed in Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts of Odisha. Monitoring was done by Project Manager and Dr. Pramila Prava Patnaik. Data cleaning and editing was done at the end of each day of data collection.

- Six block level consultations were successfully organized at: (i) Saharpada block of Keonjhar district on 12 December (ii) Patna block of Keonjhar district on 13 December (iii) Karanjia block of Mayurbhanj district on 13 December (iv) Jhumpura of Keonjhar district on 28 December (v) Udala block of Mayurbhanj district on 19 December and (vi) Kaptipada block of Mayurbhanj district on 23 December.

- The first partners’ quarterly review meeting was held on 11 December at ISS, Bhubaneswar to assess and review the progress of the project such as achievements, strategies, challenges faced, solutions and way forward.
Delivered a lecture on “Social Audit - The Concept and Experience in Urban Context” in the training programme on Impact of Audit on Local Bodies at the Regional Training Institute (Audit and Accounts Department) on 31 October.

Kamal Kabra

Books Published
- Aam Adami, Budget Aur Udarikaran, New Delhi, Prakashan Sansthaan
- Saamyik Bharat: Sawaal Aur Sarokaar, New Delhi, Prakaashan Sansthaan
- Appropriate Development: People First. February, ISS, New Delhi

Articles, Papers, Reviews
- “Women’s Role in grassroots Institutions” by Karunakar Patnaik, published in the aforesaid journal.

Publications

Plan India: Conducting Trainings and undertakings publicity Measures for Improvement of Birth Registration System in Karnataka
ISS conducted training and publicity measures in districts where recording efficiency of birth and death was low. ISS had co-ordinated, conducted and monitored these activities. Strengthening publicity measures for improvement of Birth Registration System in newly opened Sub-Registration Centres in DH/TH/PHC/CHC in selected districts. This project was carried out in collaboration with the Department of Economics & Statistics.

Morarji Desai Residential Schools for Backward Classes in Karnataka
ISS took up a Evaluation of Morarji Desai Residential Schools for Backward Classes in Karnataka. Department of Social Welfare implemented programmes and activities, provided facilities to achieve universalization of education covering the

Shri. V.S. Acharya, Hon’ble Minister for Higher Education (middle), Minister’s Right Shri. H.E. Rajashekarappa, Chief Registrar & Director, Government of Karnataka, Dr. K. Subha, Dr. Vasudeva Sharma, Director, CRT; from left Shri. C. Narayana Swamy, Ex.MP, Shri. Harshvardhan Sharma, Plan India.
villages. In order to provide good quality of education to bright and intelligent rural students, government started Karnataka Residential Educational Schools in all the districts under the control of Social Welfare Department. In these schools, government provided free education for students of 6th to 10th by providing food, accommodation, books, uniforms etc. Besides, government also provided physical infrastructure like building, water supply, laboratory equipments and library facilities.

**The Saakshar Bharath Mission Project**
The Institute of Social Sciences provided professional support services consultancy to the Saakshar Bharath Mission Project, Karnataka State Literacy Mission Authority, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore.

**Events**
- Conducted ‘IV Quarterly Review Meeting of Universal Birth Registration in Karnataka’ was held at the Bell Hotel on 23 June
- Conducted ‘State Advocacy Workshop to Promote Universal Birth Registration in Karnataka’ at the Bell Hotel on 24 June. Shri. V.S. Acharya, The Hon’ble Minister for Higher Education, Planning Statistics, Government of Karnataka, and Shri. H.E. Rajashekarappa, Chief Registrar & Director, Government of Karnataka, Shri. C. Narayanawamy Former Member of Parliament, Shri.Harshvardhan Sharma, Plan India, Dr. K. Subha, Regional Co-ordinator and Dr. Vasudeva Sharma, Director, CRT, were the speakers in the inaugural session.
- Conducted ‘Orientation Programme on Birth Registration Among Children in Difficult Circumstances for Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Functionaries’ on 30 June. This programme was inaugurated by Shri Niranjan IAS, Special Commissioner. Shri. B. Shankarappa, Joint Director (Bangalore Bruhat Mahanagara Palike), Shri. B.G. Krishnappa, Deputy Director, Civil Registration and Statistics, Dr. L.T. Gayathri, Chief Medical Officer, BBMP, and Dr. K. Subha, Regional Co-ordinator were the speakers.

**Exposure Visit of the Sri Lankan Delegation**
Team of 11 members from Sri Lanka visited Bangalore from 13 to 15 November. During their visit they met dignitaries and had discussions with them. They visited GP, TP & interacted with Members, Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Panchayats.

**Book Release**
1. Shri. Jagadish Shettar, Hon’ble Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Government of Karnataka releasing the book on “Undermining Local Democracy”. From left: Mr. Srinivasamurthy, former Secretary, Department of Rural Development, Government of Karnataka and Mrs. Leela Devi Prasad, Activist, Janta Party

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Two Chapters in The Alternative economic Survey: Two Decades of Neo-liberalism in India: Indian Political Economy Association, Delhi. Daanish Books

- “Do Futures Markets Discover Prices?” in the Book titled Commodity Derivatives Markets: Opportunities and Challenges, Edited by Pavaskar, M., TAER, Mumbai
- Review Article: Back to the Future: Roots of Commodity Trade in India (By Shah J and Rath, B.) in Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics, May.
- “Food Inflation: Price People Pay for.” in Farmers’ Forum May–June
- “Development Discourse: A Review of Emerging Issues” in Recent Development Debates,
Shri Jagadish Shettar, Hon’ble Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Government of Karnataka releasing the book on "Two Decades of Panchayati Raj in Karnataka."

Visitors

Academics, researchers, students and activists from India and abroad visited the centre and had detailed discussion with the faculty. They also collected materials from the resource centre. The general response has been very good and the visitors found the centre very informative.

Other Related Activities

In addition to the above, the faculty members participate and contribute papers in seminars and conferences organized from time to time by Universities, Departments and other Research Institutions. They also serve as Resource Person for training programmes in decentralized governance. They deliver lectures in different Universities as outside faculty, especially in the Department of Political Science, Sociology and Development Administration in some of the leading Universities in Southern India.

Thiruvananthapuram

Ongoing Projects

Comparative study of Kerala’s Participatory Planning and Porto Alegre’s Participatory Budgeting funded by Swiss Development Agency.

Important Professional Visits/Conferences by Prof. M.A. Oommen

- Srothas Social Sciences Congress-2011 on Inclusive Development with
Social Justice: Kerala Experiences and Perspectives held from 30 to 31 December

- International Conference on Kerala’s Participatory Planning and Porto Alegre’s Participatory Budgeting held at IMG, Thiruvananthapuram, from 21 to 22 June.
- Bodhigram Seminar on the Future of Development in Kerala at Bodhigram Centre, Thuvayoor, Adoor from 19 to 20 December,
- National Seminar on ‘Local Self Governance: Fiscal and Service Delivery Dimensions’, held at Nirmala College, Moovattupuzha, Kerala,’ on November 5.
- Strengthening Local Governments in the North and East of Sri Lanka: Learning from the Karnataka and Kerala experience at IMG, Trivandrum, from 24 to 25 November.

Papers Published/Presented by Prof. M.A. Oommen

- Revisiting India’s Fiscal Federalism: Raising issues for Better Local Governance in India keynote address delivered at the National Seminar on ‘Local Self Governance: Fiscal and Service Delivery Dimensions’, held at Nirmala College, Moovattupuzha, Kerala,’ on 5 November.
- Freedom, Development and Democracy: A Journey with Amartya Sen - A Festschrift in Honour of His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolita

Papers to be published

- Institutional Innovations and Inclusive Development: Re-examining the Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions - This paper is written in fond memories of Robert Evenson with whom Prof. M.A. Oommen worked at the Yale University as a Visiting Fellow during the academic year 1974-75.
The Institute of Social Sciences had organized a seminar titled “Human Rights and Good Governance” at the Institute of Correctional Administration, Chandigarh. The subject was “Human Rights and Law Enforcement”. It was attended by about 35 police officers of different ranks from Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab. The officers include 5 SPs, 7 DSPs, 2 Inspector of Police and 21 Sub Inspector of Police.
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