

# **ECHO OF ARUNACHAL**

## **EU delegation visits RGU, NERIST to explore ways on collaboration in research & innovation**

ITANAGAR, Apr 4: In an effort to throw light on areas of possible collaboration in research and innovation, the Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU) today hosted a delegation from the European Union (EU) for an interaction in this regard. The EU delegation comprised of Tania Friederichs (team head), Dr Vivek Dham (member), Inger Midtkandal (Royal Norwegian Embassy), Dr Srinivas Kaveri (Director CNRS, Paris), Alain Ghislain Baetens (Embassy of Belgium), Dr Massimo Spandoni (Embassy of Italy) and Dr Jakob Williams Oerberg (Royal Danish Embassy). The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the University organized the interaction programme. Marking the start of a series of presentations on the EU MS/AC-India research-funding programme by the visiting team, Friedrichs shared that research and innovation cooperation was an integral part of the EU's relation with India and called upon the University to engage more with the instruments of research that the EU offers. Describing the present visit just as a beginning of a long-term engagement, she said that the EU has an implementing arrangement with India that included scholar mobility programs, individual fellowships as well as bilateral and multilateral collaborations. Other presenters of the delegation from Belgium, France, Italy, Denmark and Norway shared the respective country's perspectives on thrust areas of possible funding and collaborations. All the speakers commended the RGU on the innovative research initiatives and studies that were already in place in the University and said that this provided for a fertile ground for academic engagements in the future. Concurring with the RGU's mandate and its respect for biological and cultural diversity, the need for sustainable development and the idea that change elements must benefit all sections of society, the members of the delegation expressed their support towards activating instruments through which "we could internationalize future research and innovation initiatives". The members also emphasized on the need for a mix of stakeholders in the research initiatives and suggested for a multi-disciplinary approach in conceptualizing the proposals where the focus could be on (new) technologies but also on how they impact society. RGU vice chancellor Prof Saket Kushwaha, in his address, said that the University has been striving to serve its mandate of providing access to higher education as well as contributing to research in the border state of Arunachal Pradesh. Expressing his gratitude to the EU delegation for its initiative to reach out the RGU, he said that the University and its entire fraternity are enthused at the possibilities of affiliation and collaboration and congratulated each of the departments in working together to formalize the presentations that were made by the University. IQAC Director Prof Amitav Mitra, in his speech, shared that through its various research projects and collaborations the RGU has created a very congenial research ecosystem. Terming the visit of the EU delegation as very significant, he said that the fact that EU is India's largest trading partner and that India is one of 10 countries that the EU has chosen as strategic partners, this makes for people to people contact and cooperation in higher education a key feature of this interface and hoped for a new era of fruitful academic cooperation. Meanwhile, the EU delegation visited NERIST today and interacted with the faculty members to apprise them about various opportunities and avenues for collaborative research with scientists/ universities of different European countries. Quite a few areas have been identified for collaborative research the prominent of which include Cancer research, Arsenic removal using fungi, Impact of climate change on water resources, and Green Vehicle. Earlier, the Director of NERIST provided a brief overview about the institute and the Dean (Admin) presented the ongoing research activities undertaken by faculty members of different departments.

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