



FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION

Patna, February 7. A three-member delegation from the British High Commission in India paid a visit to the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI) today with an objective to familiarize themselves with the current social, political, environmental and economic scenario of Bihar. Ms. Natalia Leigh, Head of Political and Bilateral Affairs of the British High Commission in New Delhi, who primarily looks into the politics and society of India, wanted to know about the priority areas in research being undertaken by ADRI. Replying to her, Dr. Ashmita Gupta, Member-Secretary of ADRI stated that her institute had been connecting ground-level activism with top-level academicians ever since its inception. This had generated a lot of trust for ADRI among local political parties. Of late, it has ventured into the field of Environment and Health. Dr. Sanchita Mahapatra, a faculty member in Health Research at ADRI pointed out that the institute has been helping the state government to build a database which has been tasked with breaking the chain of transmission of infectious diseases like Dengue. The digitalized system for reporting outbreaks has reached hundred percent in Bihar. Dr. Sunil Gupta, also of ADRI said that it is conducting research on how vulnerable groups are being affected by air pollution. ADRI provides suggestions and reports to the state government in order to achieve an ambient air-quality.

Professor Ajit Sinha, Director at ADRI opined that the role of local-level politicians was very important in terms of getting poor people to access the benefits of different government schemes. Dr. Sunita Lall of ADRI held out that women in Bihar tend to think about the benefits of various schemes when they try to decide whom to vote for.

Ms. Natalia Leigh promised that she would persuade her colleagues to associate themselves extensively with ADRI in different areas like Environment, Education, etc. in order to help the state make progress in human development. Ms Bhavna Vij, Senior Political Economy Advisor at the British High Commission in New Delhi and Mr Arunabha Bhattacharya, Political Analyst, British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata also participated in this discussion.

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