

Seminar on Thinking Social – IIT Guwahati
29 August 2015



Tata Social Enterprise Challenge (TSEC) – a joint initiative of the Tata Group and the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIMC) held the second edition of the student seminars, ‘Thinking Social’, at IIT Guwahati on 29 August 2015.

The day-long seminar had about **90 participants** and it sought to introduce students to the concept of social entrepreneurship and inspire them to start their own venture that solves some of the challenges faced by the society. The speakers for the day comprised eminent entrepreneurs, who have established their own outstanding ventures in the Indian social entrepreneurship space and sought to address the concerns of young, budding entrepreneurs.

Mr Subhrangshu Sanyal, CEO IIM Calcutta Innovation Park, welcomed the participants for this event and explained the objective of the seminar on “Thinking Social.”



Mr Biswanath Sinha, Associate Director of Tata Trusts addressed the audience by presenting the core values of the TATA group. He gave an **overview** of the activities conducted by TATA trusts to support social enterprises that benefit the community and the country. Concluding his speech he said *“I hope many young entrepreneurs will emerge from this region and make changes which are beneficial to the society.”*

Prof. Ashok Banerjee, Director IIM Calcutta Innovation Park explained the concept of Social Entrepreneurship to the audience and presented the “shared value” concept in this regard. He stressed that in order for a social enterprise to be sustainable it must be self

supported, it should have a revenue model and must make profit. He emphasized that “*You should create wealth and distribute it and in the process solve some social problems.*”

Dr Nomal Chandra Borah, Founder, GNRC Hospitals shared his exciting journey as a social entrepreneur and how he created his enterprise out of nothing. He told the young students that “*Money is no barrier to an entrepreneur*” and one should be innovative and should be able to identify opportunities out of challenges.

Pranjal Baurah, founder of **Mushroom Development Foundation** projected a practitioner's view point on the concept of social entrepreneurship. He commented that a successful social entrepreneur focuses on human aspect, environment and profit. He emphasized the importance of agriculture in the society and said that social enterprises should come up to enhance productivity of farming and improve the livelihood of the farmers.



Anirban Gupta, Co-founder of Tambul Plates Marketing Pvt. Ltd. explained the concept of Social Entrepreneurship – “*Doing well by doing good*” and stressed on the fact that doing well is equally important as doing good. He said that while setting up a social enterprise sustainability is a key factor.

Deep Jyoti Sonu Brahma, Co-founder of **Farm2Food** shared a unique concept called Farmpreneur i.e. creating the next generation farm entrepreneurs by promoting entrepreneurship to the students in the upper primary schools of Assam. Sharing his experiences as an entrepreneur he urged that at least 1% of India's population should take up entrepreneurship as a career.

Dilip Baruah, Founder of **Fabric Plus** walked through his journey as a social entrepreneur and shared his dream of impacting the lives of half million people through his venture. He explained his “5 F model” of success i.e. Farm, Fiber, Fabric, Fashion and Foreign.



Manash Chaliha, Co-founder of Organic Majuli, a young entrepreneur talked about his passion for creating a positive impact in the society and environment. He encouraged the youth of today to participate in the social entrepreneurship movement and emphasized the importance of building a strong team and creating a sustainable business model.

Re-emphasizing the importance of innovative solutions for our society **Prof. SRM Prasanna, Dean R&D IIT Guwahati**, inspired the students to take the plunge and start their entrepreneurship journey. He commented *“passion is all that an entrepreneur requires to make a change.”*



Concluding on a high note, the seminar left an audience inspired by the various stories of change and impact, created in society by the speakers for the day. *“Such seminars really inspire the students and will help them make a difference to the economy,”* said a student of IIT Guwahati about his experience at Seminar on ‘Thinking Social’.