

UN International Youth Day 2016 observed with the theme The Road to 2030- “Eradicating Poverty and Achieving Sustainable Production and Consumption” organised by Women’s Studies Centre and Department of English, Nagaland University in collaboration with Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development and Rotary Club Kohima at Indira Gandhi Multi Stadium, Kohima on 12th August, 2016. Prof.P.Lal, Pro Vice Chancellor, NU, Kohima Campus the Chief Guest of the occasion.

Various Resource Persons from diverse backgrounds spoke on relevant themes for the celebration under the United Nations theme of “Eradicating Poverty and Achieving Sustainable Production and Consumption.” The chief Guest spoke extensively on the role and importance of youth in the overall development of a nation. Former Chief Secretary of Nagaland, Mr. Alemtemshi Jamir (Retd IAS) spoke on Youth and Sustainable Development and encouraged the students to think of the larger picture of overall development. He outlined the Sustainable Development Goals in terms of the various sectors of development like agriculture, health, educational facilities, gender issues, good governance etc. He highlighted on international goals in the Naga Context and encouraged them to think of reforming and restructuring.

Dr.A.J.Sebastian, noted academican and youth animator spoke on challenges for 2030 and dwelt on the vibrant energy of youth and outlined different strategies and experiences for success in life. He said failure catapults one to success by giving a second chance to try again. He corroborated this message by sharing various life experiences of young people who have become success stories today in their lives. He concluded by saying that there is a hero/heroine in each one of the youth and that they are angels created and blessed by God. Therefore one should strive to live to their full potential.

Dr. Rosemary Dzùvichù, Director i/c, Women’s Studies Centre and President Rotary Club Kohima spoke on the importance of Youth as peace builders in a society ravaged by all kinds of conflict for decades. Bringing examples of peace work by youth in Nepal and Lebanon, she called upon the youth to be ambassadors of peace. She said, the youth are the intellectuals of Naga society, the future leaders, who must learn to go beyond the narrow boundaries of tribe, village and state and to think globally. Culture is not static, so while preserving tenets of culture, university life must teach one to change with the changing times and be an important influence and guide for the community that you come from. The role of youth in peace building is often ignored by the Naga society but the reality of the decades of arm struggle has seen thousands of our youth join political groups and the best people to reach out for peace are the young people themselves. They must be included in policy making for the future because their voice matters. Decision making must be inclusive of young voices. She further pointed out that, “we have seen that violent conflict arises from social exclusion, injustice, lack of development and violation of human rights and Naga youth have seen such situations. Do not be voices only in social media with complaints everyday but learn to speak out, write to policy makers, meet them and be the change maker.” Underlining the importance of a gender equitable society, the youth of today must be gender friendly and have respect for the female counterparts and walk together as partners. She challenged the university students and other youth to form a group of peace volunteers that could help and build healthier relationships amongst Naga and be voices for peace.