



The Rural Leadership Summit, XpectRM– XSRM, XUB

October 13, 2019

The **RM Alumni Committee** of **Xavier School of Rural Management (XSRM)**, **Xavier University, Bhubaneswar (XUB)** conducted its rural leadership summit at the Xavier City campus, on **October 13, 2019**. The theme for the session was, “**Indian Economic Slowdown & Rural Scenario**”.

The summit was graced by esteemed alumni speakers and faculty members alike and was inaugurated by **Fr. Donald D’Silva S.J.**, who ceremoniously lighted the lamp along with the panelists. He stressed upon the uniqueness of Rural Management as a course and the changes in the field of Rural Management over the years, enlightening the students about the opportunities in rural economic growth and development, taking the present political and economic scenario into consideration. **Prof. S.S. Singh** (Assistant Professor, **XSRM**) emphasized on the objectives behind the event and how it would help establish a link between the successful alumni and the future prospective alumni of XSRM. Thereafter, the panelists and faculty members launched the annual magazine “**Alohomora**” published by the RM Alumni Committee. This was followed by the launch of their official YouTube Channel and the felicitation of the panelists with saplings as a token of gratitude.

The first panel was moderated by **Prof. Gautam Prateek** (Assistant Professor, **XSRM**) consisting of **Ms. Neelima Burra** (Country Marketing Director, **Hewlett-Packard**), **Mr. Puspendra Singh Rathore** (Operations Manager, **ITC Limited**) and **Mr. Ved Prakash** (Sr. Business Development Manager- Banking (India/SAARC), **Gemalto**). They deliberated upon, “**Rural Dynamics Driving Marketer’s Approach & Shaping Consumer Behaviour to Counter Current Market Slump**”.

Mr. Prateek shared the challenges faced by the rural managers in the industrial and financial context due to economic slowdown. Ms. Burra questioned the biggest concern of the organization and the impact of new investments, revenue streams, and consumer habits on the rural market, and its dynamics. Mr. Rathore highlighted the diversity among rural consumers, the emotional connect they have with the brand and the need to have specialized departments in an organization to attend to and satisfy each segment of the consumers. Mr. Prakash threw light on the deficit of technology in rural India, the importance of technological advancements concerning rural economic development, and the growth potential of technology in the rural dynamic markets.

Consequently, the second panel, moderated by **Prof. Satyendra Nath Mishra** (Assistant Professor, **XSRM**), comprising of **Ms. Itishree Kanungo** (State Coordinator, **Climate Parliament**), **Mr. Prakash Panda** (Associate Consultant, **NABARD Consultancy Services**), and **Mr. Pratyaya Jagannath** (Managing Director, **Kabil Professional Services**), elaborated on the “**Incapacitate Rural Infrastructure & Reducing Agricultural Produce in Current Background**”.

Prof. Mishra correlated Indian agriculture and the economy and emphasized the importance of maintaining social security in India. Ms. Kanungo stated that there is a decline in economic growth, and to fill the gap, we need more experts in the area of health and agriculture. Mr. Panda elaborated on the causes of economic slowdown and its effects on various sectors. He suggested certain remedies such as strengthening agricultural extension and skill development to address this issue. Mr. Jagannath spoke about the policies that need to be changed in the development sector and gave examples of people facing difficulties in rural areas due to lack of development.

Subsequently, the third panel, moderated by **Prof. Pradeep Kumar Mishra** (Assistant Professor, **XSRM**) involved **Mr. Pravash Dash** (Founder, MD & CEO, **Arthan Finance**), **Mr. Surya Panda** (Head – Credit, **Samasta Microfinance Limited**) and **Mr. Sudhanshu Shekhar** (Founder & CEO, **Aurbery Consulting Firm**) who emphasized on “**Dilemma of Financial Institutions – Rift Between Financing the Unfinanced and Maintaining Profit Sustainable Model**”.

Mr. Dash brought to light the recent trends in the micro-finance sector along with the impact of demonetization. Mr. Panda conveyed that it is important to focus on the quality of manpower and adopt proper strategies to retain and serve customers. Mr. Shekhar explained the significance of introducing and implementing financial reforms in the rural sector for strengthening the foundation of rural economic growth and development.

The conclave concluded with a public address by **Mr. Vishes Jena** (**RM Secretary**) and a vote of thanks by **Ms. Richi Mohanty** (Coordinator, **RM Alumni Committee**) to the speakers, faculty members, and everyone who contributed in making it a grand success.