"Padmashree, Dr. Nirupam Bajpai at Royal Group of Institutions (RGI)

In the wake of the present economic scenario, Royal Group of Institutions (RGI), Guwahati, organized a talk on 'The Indian Economy & Its Challenges' in its premises which was presided over by noted macroeconomist and Padmashree, Dr. Nirupam Bajpai. Padmashree, Dr. Nirupam Bajpai, Director of the South Asia program at the Columbia University Earth Institute's Center on Globalization and Sustainable Development, is a macroeconomist by training.

Guwahati, Assam, October 29, 2013 /India PRwire/ -- In the wake of the present economic scenario, Royal Group of Institutions (RGI), Guwahati, organized a talk on 'The Indian Economy & Its Challenges' in its premises which was presided over by noted macroeconomist and Padmashree, Dr. Nirupam Bajpai. A man who seems to know India's pulse, he held everyone's attention while he spoke on a wide frame of topics ranging from the Indian economy and education system to agriculture and climate change.

Dr. Nirupam Bajpai deliberated on the highly important role that the youth has to play in order to push the nation towards greater social and economic development. If demographies are compared, then India is found to be the youngest nation in the world. The country needs 16 million jobs every year but it has been able to provide only 5 million as of now. So, that is a huge gap that needs to be filled. If this situation persists then the nation might very well be heading towards a demographic disaster.

This also points towards the importance of public health and education sectors. Steps have been taken to widen the spread of literacy in the country but much more is needed to be done. He emphasized on these two sectors terming them as the only two areas that can directly lead to self-sustained growth. And both of these domains fall under public or government investment. With the right amount of focus, the condition of these two sectors can be greatly uplifted.

Talking about agriculture, Dr. Nirupam Bajpai said that India needs to have far higher production levels of rice, wheat and other cereals and cash crops. He also put forward a very valuable suggestion of creating an agriculture research centre at Royal Group of Institutions (RGI) which could study and research on HYV (High Yielding Variety) seeds.

He also spoke about the global effects of climate change and how it is affecting each and every nation in this world. He shared simple measures which can be observed by anyone and everyone to help save energy.

Dr. Nirupam Bajpai also opined that nothing short of a revolution is required when it comes to planned urbanization. The Indian cities are just not planned and it is a condition which just cannot be accepted in the 21st century.

He concluded his talk by noting that if the government just pays sole attention to five particular areas and leave the rest to private companies then the nation can very well get on track towards economic and social development. These five areas include law and order, external relations, education, health, and lastly, measures to create the right regulatory environment so that private industries can flourish.

ABOUT PADMASHREE, DR. NIRUPAM BAJPAl

Padmashree, Dr. Nirupam Bajpai, Director of the South Asia program at the Columbia University Earth Institute's Center on Globalization and Sustainable Development, is a macroeconomist by training. His research interests include economic growth and development, information technology, and the relationships among geography, demography, and economic growth. He focuses on policy reform in India, China, and the South and East Asian regions. In India, his work is aimed primarily at the state level, with a view to achieving rapid economic growth via continued reforms that improve institutions and economic policies. His most recent work focuses on scaling up health and education services in rural India, and outsourcing of global services. Through much of his career, he has collaborated on projects with the Earth Institute's director, Jeffrey Sachs. Since 2004, Bajpai has informally advised Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and several cabinet ministers. Earlier, he informally served as an economic adviser to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and several of his cabinet ministers, including the ministers of finance, commerce and industry, and information technology.
The Planning Commission of India, using Dr. Bajpai’s research for “Scaling up Services in Rural India” is working with the state governments of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh to scale up public investments in rural primary health and education. The federal government is also helping provide larger resources to the states for these sectors. On Bajpai’s advice, a pilot project to capture and sequester carbon dioxide will be put together at a coal-based thermal power plant in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Based on Dr. Bajpai’s work with Sachs, former Prime Minister Vajpayee announced major national goals for development in 2000. These included a target of doubling India’s per capita income by 2010, and ensuring that every child receives education to the eighth grade. A large number of special economic zones are now being established across several states based on their recommendations.

In 2002 the chief minister of Tamil Nadu announced several major state-level development goals based on Bajpai’s work. Along with advances in education for girls and disadvantaged groups, these included making the state a leader in information technology and manufacturing, and giving all villages electricity, a trunk road, telephone and internet connectivity, a school, clean water and sanitation, a health worker and local self-government. In addition, Bajpai’s work has helped Tamil Nadu implement tax and expenditure reforms. After earning his Ph.D. in economics in 1988, Bajpai worked at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1995 he moved to Harvard University’s Institute for International Development and later its Kennedy School of Government, where he worked with Sachs. Bajpai moved to the Earth Institute in 2002. Currently he is an associate editor of the journal Asian Economic Papers, and is on the editorial board of the journal Economic Change and Restructuring. He is the author or coauthor of numerous articles on economic reforms in developing countries, fiscal policy, and the role of trade and foreign direct investment. In 1998, he co-edited the volume India in the Era of Economic Reforms with Jeffrey Sachs and Ashutosh Varshney.

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