

Theme of the 1s^t International Conference
on
**World Languages and North East Languages:
Convergence, Enrichment, or Death" ?**

At the turn of new century, it has indeed become imperative to strengthen the linguistic plurality index of India's North East Area. Needless to say, the linguistic diversity of NE inhabits in its complex social realities as the whole region consists of at least a three inter-languages system which is hierarchically functional. However, the worry is: the majority of languages across the North East region remain largely undeveloped and unless some efforts to maintain them are made at the earliest, over a few decades some or most of these will become extinct. The 'Look East policy' can harness a better result if the linguistic functionality of vast speech group of this region is addressed in a better way. Hence, North East Languages need a special treatment amongst Indian Languages. The North East Languages should get into the main stream of Indian languages and also move towards the goals of enrichment and integration in their own right.

The fear is not confined to the languages of North East alone, it is more alarming and frightening even at the world level. In recent times only, more than 750 languages have already become extinct around the world. According to UNESCO, 'Atlas of the world's Languages in Danger of Disappearing' up to half the 6,000 languages spoken on the planet are endangered or on the brink of extinction. Some linguists claim that a language dies somewhere in the world ever two weeks. Therefore, the value of the conference focusing on North East and World Languages in the context of linguistic impoverishment is profoundly huge considering the extraordinary linguistic diversity of the region. The goal of conference is to initiate a new discourse on the linguistic ecology of North in the wider perspective of world languages. The experience of other language scholars is most welcome at this juncture.

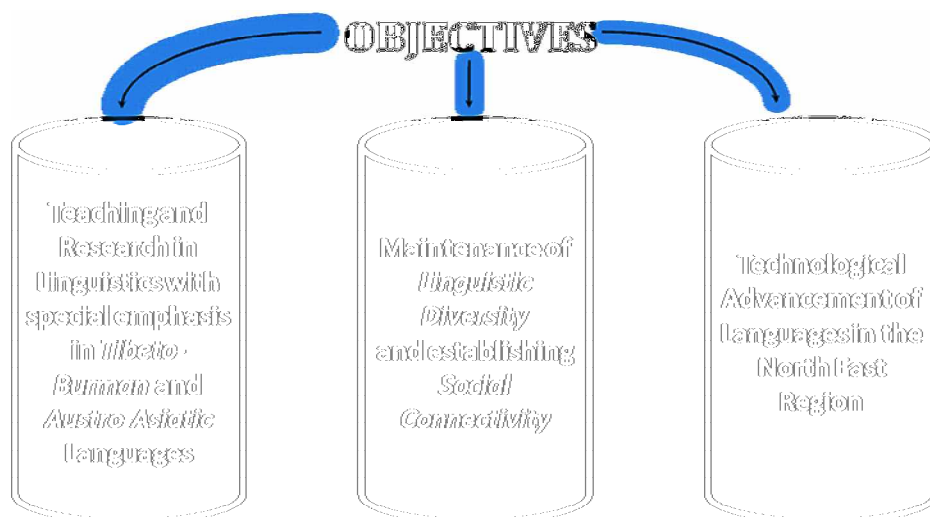
The following are a number of research topics for the conference and discussions :

- ⇒ Trends in North East Linguistics: Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax and Semantics
- ⇒ Use of English(s), Hindi and other languages of wider communication in the 21st century : In various contexts in the North East Region
- ⇒ Language Technology, Information Technology and Translation Technology: A new task ahead
- ⇒ Pedagogy for Endangered languages: Towards empowering languages and New Voices
- ⇒ Making and maintaining of (g) local Identities: Language, Culture and Region

- ⇒ Critical reflections on concepts, definitions and terminologies: Dilemma of Minority languages
- ⇒ The Dialogues between NE Languages: Social, Cultural, Political and Gender Discourses
- ⇒ India and NE: Towards making a Translation Area
- ⇒ Multilingualism: Defining Global and Local at the Cross – roads
- ⇒ Tribal languages: Prospects and perspectives in India

In this conference, the participants are expected to discuss and share their knowledge with regard to the modern trends in linguistics across languages of the world and North East languages in particular. Scholars will also look into North East Languages in the light of advancements in the field. It is expected that the outcome of their fruitful discussion will pave a way for the development of North East languages, with clean directions earmarked.

The Department of Linguistics, NEHU has been successful in bringing out the descriptive sketches for some of the Languages and dialects of Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic Language families. The Department of Linguistics, NEHU has three main objectives as given below and the International Conference will contribute immensely:



On this occasion we share the happy news with you that the Department of Linguistics, at the North Eastern Hill University, Shillong (Meghalaya State) is going to complete 20 years of its Existence in March, 2009 and to mark this happy event and befitting with decennial celebration, we are organizing a whole week long Language Festival 2009 at Shillong. Please find the details of the program enclosed.