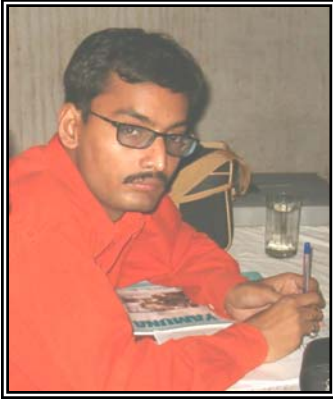


Venkatesh Dutta receives Global Development Award



Venkatesh Dutta received Global Development Network (GDN) Award (2005) standing top amongst the finalists at the Seventh Annual Global Development Conference held in St. Petersburg, Russia from January 19-24, 2006.

The Award carries a citation, a prize of US\$ 8000 plus travel grant. Final winners of the Global Development Awards Competition were announced from amongst the five finalists presenting their work at the Conference by Executive Director of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). The other finalists included researchers from IIT, Mumbai, Catholic University of Chile, Senate Economic Planning Office, Philippines and Groupe de Recherche et D'Analyse de la Pauvrete et des Politiques Economiques en Guinee (GRAPPE), Guinea. According to the GDN, this is the world's largest international development research competition.

The GDN Conference remains unique in the global platform it provides to the best research produced in developing and transition countries. Nearly 450 researchers from across disciplines and regions attended the Conference that offered unique networking opportunities for researchers from the developing world and valuable international exposure at a global level.

The selection of final award is done at several stages through peer-review process by eminent experts in the field. It was a challenging competition this year as record-breaking submissions (nearly 700) from about 100 countries were received. Ten semi-finalists were first announced from which five finalists were selected for presenting their work at the Conference. These five finalists presented their papers/ projects at the Conference, out of which first and second winners were announced.

This year the theme of the conference was 'Institutions and Development: At the Nexus of Global Change'. The three-day annual global development conference organized by GDN examined the crucial role of institutions in the development process. As always, the Conference attracted established researchers including Nobel Laureates among the keynote speakers at the plenary sessions.

Mr. Dutta's paper titled "Public Support for Water Supply Reforms in Unplanned Sector: Empirical Evidence from an Urban Water Utility" argued that lack of political will – resulting from a traditional belief that the government has a moral obligation to provide clean water at highly subsidized rates or for free – stands in the way of commercializing water utilities for the benefit of such households, who may now remain underserved. The paper addressed growing perspectives on provision of reliable water supply with better quality in infrastructurally disadvantaged and unplanned areas of Delhi addressing concrete policy issues in the context of institutional and sector reform, long-term growth of water utilities and public policy decision.