



# National Seminar on SDGs and Integral Humanism

**23 – 24 September 2017**

---

To commemorate Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Centenary Year, the Research and Information System for Developing Countries, NITI Aayog, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and Deendayal Research Institute organized jointly the National Seminar on SDGs and Integral Humanism on 23-24 September 2017 at New Delhi. The inaugural session was chaired by Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog. The session started with the introductory remarks of Shri Atul Jain, General Secretary, Deendayal Research Institute and Prof Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS. Shri Ram Madhav, Director, India Foundation, delivered the keynote address. Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Culture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, also addressed on the important issues.

Shri Atul Jain, General Secretary, Deendayal Research Institute, welcomed the delegates and highlighted the special focus of the consultation, which was on the interconnectedness between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the philosophy of integral humanism in this era. He talked on these two concepts, which are mirror image of each other, and discussed over how these ideas were incorporated in the current flagship programme.

Prof Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, in his remarks emphasised on the policy action to be developed based on the integration of multiple dimensions for ensuring human welfare. He highlighted conceptual differences between MDGs and SDGs. SDGs bring convergence and interconnectness irrespective of silos approach of MDGs. SDGs cover 5Ps— people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership—and inclusion of these five components place SDGs in a different league. He highlighted the concept of “Triple Transition” — the ideas of economic, political and social transformation. The “Triple Transition” concept brings out the key philosophical component of Deen Dayal Upadhyay's thought process and crux of SDGs.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, stated that policy making is not an elite activity rather it relates to Aam *Janta* (common people). Therefore, localization of SDGs is important in the Indian context where the welfare of the last person has to be taken into consideration in consonance with the philosophy of “Sabka Sath Sab ka Vikas”. He stated that, even economists like Joseph Stiglitz and Kaushik Basu agreed to the fact that if the most deprived are benefitted, then there would be growth in the economy, which can be measured using the last decile/quartile. He pointed out the the philosophy of the SDGs, which emphasise environmental conservation, have been a part of historical Indian philosophy of “*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*”. Indian philosophy forbids humans to overpower environment and posits the co-existence of both human beings and environment. He proposed that we should focus on how the deprived ones can be uplifted through economic empowerment and increased income.

Shri Ram Madhav, Director, India Foundation, reiterated Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of integral humanism based on peace, freedom and dignity. He stated that the concept of integral humanism is more holistic than SDGs. The idea of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya is captured in SDG 16. Shri Madhav drew the roadmap for SDG 16 and addressed the important issue of universal peace for the world. He stated that MDGs were considered to be a laboratory/ experiment of ideas in 20<sup>th</sup> century, but at the end of the MDGs, it was noted that even the basic necessities were not met. Therefore, it was concluded that these experiments were not sufficient

for the betterment of the mankind. He cited that two eminent philosophers, Jacques Maritain and Deen Dayal Upadhaya, were of the same view. Jacques Maritain's view that man is an integral entity was missing in these experiments (either he was seen as a political entity or as a community entity and this in turn gave the theory of integral humanism which led to the social development movement in the various parts of the world). And Deen Dayal Upadhaya was of the view that all the models in the world have looked at different parts of the problem but not the whole problem; which is similar to thinking in compartments, which should not be the way things should be worked on. He highlighted that man needs to be looked at as an integral human being. He pointed out the philosophical difference between western history and Indian history. Benchmark of western history is war and victory while Indian history emphasises natural state of creation through the institution and inspiration of peace.

Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State, Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, in his inaugural address emphasised the fundamental ideas of one world for which peace, prosperity and global partnership are the necessities. He reiterated the need to attend to the aspirations of poor and shared a few incidences of his life reflecting significance of balanced growth and development, irrespective of cast and religion.

### **Opening Plenary: SDGs and Integral Humanism: Moving for New Paradigm of Development**

The plenary was chaired by Shri Mahesh Chand Sharma, Chairman, Research and Development Foundation for Integral Humanism. He raised the issue of integral humanism which is not new in India because Indian philosophy includes mankind with integral inclusion of everyone. He referred to the targets of SDGs as outputs which are not attainable without proper inputs. He proposed that first we need to fulfill materialistic needs then only we can talk about the spiritual needs. He observed that challenges should be listed out rather than focusing on targets; and pointed out the need for an alternative to the western paradigm of development. Trend in the development pattern has been that we focused only on economic terms but further need is to focus on both social and environmental aspects. He indicated the negative impact of centralization which has destroyed creativity. To be an independent country, we need to focus on localization. That means focus has to be on export-dominant economy, instead import dependent economy.

Smt. Arachana Chitnis, Hon'ble Minister, Women and Child Development, Government of Madhya Pradesh, drew attention to the roadmap for achieving the SDGs which need prioritisation of interconnecteness. She raised issues concerning farmers as agriculture has special significance for our economy. She stressed upon the need for nutrition security; promoting use of technology in agriculture sector and transforming villages into smart villages.

Smt Meenakshi Lekhi, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) empathetically said that integral humanism requires fulfilling one's own responsibilities as a starting point to fulfill societal responsibility. She also indicated that format of SDGs should be looked at from a different perspective including the idea of *Dharm*, *Artha*, *Kaam*, *Moksh*. She raised the issue of meeting the basic needs of the individual; and performing the right deeds. She pointed out

that SDGs give a horizontal, but Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's ideology provides the essence of the new paradigm.

Dr. Ashok Tandon, Media Adviser to former Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee reiterated the need for alternative paradigm focussing on decentralization of human, political and economic power.

Dr. Ramesh K Jalan, Global Advisor, Waste Management, 3Wayste, stated that the phrase Sustainable Development was defined by the UN's Brundtland Commission in 1987, while Integral Humanism, which is a more holistic approach, was elucidated in 1965 (over 22 years before). He raised the question why are we following the path to implement the SDGs and not inculcating Integral Humanism, which is more holistic and simpler to understand than SDGs, among the masses in India. He pointed out the linkages of SDGs and integral humanism. He proposed the true indicator of progress, which should not be increasing wealth of the rich but should be the availability of the basic amenities and comforts for the poor.

### **Session I: Sustainable Economic Growth: Implementing SDG 8 and SDG 12**

The session was chaired by Dr. Bajrang Lal Gupta, Delhi University, who gave his remarks on sustainable production and consumption pattern. He stated that economic democracy is away forward, which can be achieved only if we have employment for all. He reflected on two aspects of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's ideology— one is self-employment sector which should be focused and promoted for achieving full employment and the second is industrial development. He also stated the circular notion of shared responsibilities. He proposed a way forward for "*Sashakat Bharat*" which requires academic discourse, addressing grassroots level challenges, and positive government intention and involvement.

Dr. Venkatachalam Anbumozhi, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Indonesia, highlighted the prerogative for SDG; inclusive growth through waste resource management in formal and informal sector; equality and inclusion as building blocks for a sustainable society; interlinkages of the SDGs; drivers and enablers for circular economy; regenerative system— minimizing use of resources; reusing product, service; sustainably designing the product and services; improving the economic efficiency and maximizing social benefits. He gave the example of plastic consumption and recommended adoption of 3 transitional strategies – need fundamental redesign and innovation; reuse and recycling with radically improved economics & quality.

Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, was the Chief Guest. He emphasised the need for improved efficiency in agriculture and informed about successful initiatives in agricultural sector like E-marketing, *Nakul Swasthya Patra*, Soil Health Card, and Agro-processing chain, which are making good impacts. He also mentioned about initiatives related to deep sea fishing and Blue Revolution, which are being taken up to increase the productivity. He also talked about the initiatives like processing plant for *a2 milk* (packaging of cow milk) and highlighted experiences of some states in this regard. He said that institutionalization is the key for the success.

Prof. A Damodaran, IIM Bengaluru, highlighted the issues of infrastructure and governance in villages and their links to the circular economy. He stated that integral humanism is not actually practiced and proceeded to give the example of Indian villages, which function as communities i.e. multiplicity of hands. He brought out the linkages between man, livestock and nature at large by way of an example of a Karnataka village. He proposed to have an organic system of living. He discussed the binary divide and observed that there is nothing like private or public- everything is private and everything is public, depending upon the perception.

## **Session II: Multidimensionality of SDGs for harmony between ‘Man & Nature’**

The session was chaired by Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, Hon’ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha). Shri Ashok Jain, Adviser (Rural Development and SDGs), NITI Aayog, presented the National Strategy for achieving SDGs. He highlighted the actions and initiatives of the government to implement the SDGs like mapping the ministries and programme; identification of national SDG indicators, consultation with stakeholders, dovetailing the national development agenda with SDGs, meticulous implementation of schemes aligned with SDG targets, outcome based dashboards and rigorous monitoring. He stated that India has committed to reduce emission intensity per unit of GDP by 33% to 35% by 2030 relative to its 2005 levels. To do so, government is implementing various initiatives to build harmony between man and nature. He acknowledged that organic farming is being supported with a cluster of incentives under the *Paramparagat Krishi Yojana*. He also gave an example from the marine sector. By-catch is high in marine fishing, which depletes the fish stock and also undermines the ecosystem. So new technology has been adopted to overcome such mindless depletion of fish stock. He also highlighted the idea of “Waste to Wealth”, which has been brought up by Hon’ble Prime Minister.

Prof T C James, Visiting Fellow, RIS stated that SDGs are a realization that pure economic models for development would not be sufficient. That is why the SDGs include 3 Ps—people, planet and peace. He stated that 17 goals are comprehensive but how they come up with harmony between man & nature is important. Bio-diversity has been the centre of many economic activities and essential for development. Globally half of the population is directly dependent on bio-diversity. Health, renewable energy and reducing inequality are the major keys. He emphasised simultaneous consideration of economic, social and environment interventions in a mutually balanced manner. As the SDGs are inter-linked, he proposed that every scheme or project should be examined from the point of view of harmony between man and nature towards achieving human wellbeing.

Dr. Leena Gupta, Social Scientist, discussed on ecological indicators considering the impacts of climate change. She shared her field experience in sustainable pasture development and talked about the potentials of various types of community land (e.g. panchayat land, common resources, revenue wetlands, etc.) for pasture development. Her presentation focussed on aspects like ecological farming, role of Gaushala and its importance for various SDGs in the rural context, Indian Cow based Sustainable Economy Model, use of ‘Gauchar’ (grazing) land for Food Security, use of wild edible Plants, etc. She said that we are left with only 360 varieties of seeds in rice in comparison to much higher number in early times. She raised the question

of high biodiversity loss and commented that it is important to work together to restore biodiversity as much as possible.

Dr. P K Anand, Visiting Fellow, RIS, stated that India should take a lead on SDGs like we did in Paris Climate Agenda. He stated that we should not be in the rat race of consumerism and production and we should focus on sustainability. He highlighted the importance of circular economy and to fulfil national aspiration, he proposed a convergence among Niti (Policy); Niyati (destiny); Niyat (Intention).

### **SDGs and Integral Humanism: The Way Forward**

The concluding session began with the welcome remarks by Shri Atul Jain, General Secretary, Deendayal Research Institute. Prof Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS and Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), summarised the outcomes of the Day 1. Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice- Chairman, NITI Aayog, addressed the august gathering.

Shri Arun Jaitley, Hon'ble Finance Minister, Government of India, delivered the valedictory address. He discussed about the ideological churning of India's political arena. He pointed out that the damage to the national security is caused by convergence of ultra Left thoughts and IS. He reiterated on delivering the basic services to the poor and highlighted the current initiatives and achievements of the government towards Financial Inclusion and Direct Benefit Transfer. He also stressed on the importance of sanitation and development of infrastructure for sustainable growth of the country. He underlined the role of additional resource allocation to promote rural economy, connectivity and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Further, he stressed that economic growth would benefit both poor and rich alike, against the general belief that only the rich are benefitted. He advocated that financial inclusion and investment in infrastructure can bring us rich dividends and address the economic difficulties of poorer sections of society.

Hon'ble Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Culture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, was the distinguished guest and offered his valuable inputs on the way forward. With Shri Virendrajeet Singh, Chairman, Deendayal Research Institute, extending the vote of thanks, the seminar drew to a close.

\*\*\*