

Crafting India's Sustainability Growth Model – Management Seminar at IIM(B)

India's strength of sustainability or the uniqueness of an average Indian's approach was aptly covered with this simple statement at the welcome address – "A question was put to two persons; one European and the other Indian. The question was "what you do with a tooth brush"? The European said "we use it for brushing the teeth and throw out when the bristles are old." The Indian answered: "first brush the teeth, then clean ornaments, then tiny parts of vehicles and then as a stick to insert the pyjama thread!"

The event held on 11th January 2016, was inaugurated by Manoj Chakravarti (COO-IIMB-CCGC) and Benedict Paramand (Editor and Publisher, Sustainability Next).

The first speaker Ram Nidumolu (Sustainability Expert and CEO Innovastrat.com) emphasizing on application of ancient Indian wisdom to modern business, stressed on 'being capital' or 'Atma Sakthi.' He then elaborated the phrase naming it 'Dharma Capitalism.' What does 'Dharma Capitalism' means? Appreciation or growth of wealth such that it brings universal harmony. And from this platform he gave a new version to GDP (Gross Domestic Product) to that of GDH or Gross Domestic Happiness.



This notion brings, he said, a change to the perception of future growth mode – moving beyond self-marketing and expanding the entrepreneur consciousness. That will bring the real meaning of Upanishad – getting connected. Yes – getting connected with all stake holders – the earth, the environment, the investors, the employees, the govt. and The society at large.

Madhu Pandit Das, Chairman of 'Akshaya Patra' was candid that the aim and objectives of all earthly activities should be to generate and spread happiness in the society. He was skeptical in the wide spread copying of western industrialization module to increase wealth



and comforts of the people in our country. "We have an indigenous package of sustainability in the Dharma 'technology'. The user manual kit of this technology is with India – in our ancient scriptures. We have to start applying it widely; spreading awareness among every social minded persons and working professionals, on the application of the technique. Even many of our educated ones are not aware of the ancient Indian modules."

Historian Dr. Ramachandra Guha narrated the three waves of India's environmental history. He explained Gandhiji's vision and

insistence of development using the resources given by nature and not to ape the western style of development. It was Gandhiji's conviction that the life of the mass of India, particularly the poor and weaker section in rural India, can be uplifted through human intensive economic activities, Dr.Guha explained. But when India achieved independence Gandhi's followers were in a hurry to bring all round economic development; hence the Five Year Plans were formulated. The struggles to safeguard environment and biodiversity of the country from Meera Ben (Gandhiji's adopted daughter) to Medha Patkar were resisted by the so called development campaigners. Whether it was CHIPCO movement or the NARMADA Andolan, they have created a slow but steady positive vibration in the mind of the right thinking people of the country, he added.



This consistent social activism of environmentalists that spread throughout the country has brought a positive change in public policy and finally a Ministry of Environment was set-up at the Central Govt. level.

From Gandhiji's concept of economic growth, to five year plans, to the finally adopted public policy on environment and economic growth, the three waves of Indian Environment History needs to be scientifically analysed with reasons and understanding, summed up Dr.Guha.

The Panel discussion that followed was coordinated by Prof.P.D.Jose of IIM(B). The panelists included Nagaraj Prakasham (Impact of Capital and Sustainability Model), Prof. Vasanthi Srinivasan (Enabling people/talent to support the model), Patrick Antony (MNC view of the Indian Model), Santosh Jayaram (Indian Model from a Consultant's lens and Madanmohan Rao (Role of Knowledge Management/Technology).

A.V.Balakrishnan



The Panelists



A Section of the Audience