



**Speech  
Of  
His Excellency  
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**GOVERNOR,  
MIZORAM**

**Seminar On the occasion of  
150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF MAHATMA GANDHI**

**AT  
Durbar Hall, Raj Bhavan  
ON  
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I am very happy to be here as chief guest for this auspicious function on celebrating 150th birth day of Mahatma Gandhiji. This will surely give us an opportunity and occasion to see that his teachings and thoughts on sustainable development are relevant and important in the present day situation.

Gandhiji said. "I do not want a fallen or a prostrate india, I want an India which is ready to die so that humanity may live". It is this worldview which formed the core of his vision as a humanist and it is this vision which made him the Mahatma.

Gandhiji said, "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed," This, I think, neatly sums up the concept of sustainable development. after all, what is sustainability? It means 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

Much before sustainable development came it vogue as an idea, Gandhiji used the expression 'Economy of nature. Being a votary of Sarvodaya, Gandhiji had the entire humanity in his realm of societal development. Over exploitation of natural resources had no place in his scheme of economic growth. Gandhiji lamented, if Indians take to industrialization of the western model, it will strip the world bare like locusts. For him a change from a consuming society to a conserving society was the need of the hour. He envisaged a universal order in which man is integrated with his ecosphere.

The Gandhian model of sustainability was not a structured one. He did not define environmental conservation within a straight jacket . But Gandhiji's writings and speeches contain enough thoughts on his vision of man living in tune with nature. Like, Gandhiji inspired Schumacher to conclude that 'small is beautiful'. The Mahatma was against mass production and preferred production by masses. When this is read along with his theory of trusteeship, we get a logical and convincing model of sustainable development. When the producer and the consumer transform

themselves into trustees of wealth they exist in seamless harmony and stop being predators on nature.

We know that in Gandhiji's scheme of development, man occupies the centre stage. Unlike in the western model of industrialization, growth for the sake of growth has no place in the Gandhian perspective. Profiteering which leads to exploitation at all levels will make inroads in to the environment leading to wanton destruction of natural resources. Gandhiji's concept of Swaraj, Gramswaraj and Sarvodaya, forms an integrated and holistic paradigm on development without deprivation. Deprivation, not only among men but also in nature.

We forgot Gandhiji and ignored his teachings in our relentless pursuit for material gains. Gandhiji's focus on renunciation should prompt us to meet our needs and not our greed. What better way of conserving nature than renouncing our wants which end up in destroying the vitals of mother earth.

I see a parallel between Gandhiji's vision and the mythological tale of King Pridhu. As you know, Pridhu was emperor of earth. He saw that someone had ran away with the resources of nature meant for the sustenance of the earthlings, his subjects. Pridhu the king saw that it was a cow which took natural resources in its breasts and ran away. Pridhu chased the cow with bows and arrows. It was mother earth who took the form of a cow and carried away the resources. Mother earth stopped, turned back, and told Pridhu, I have all the resources for my children. Milk me gently. This, my friends, is the mantra of sustainability. Is it not this noble thought which Gandhiji puts across in his own inimitable way, "the earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."

We ignored Gandhiji, we ignored nature, and where are we now? We are threatened by climate change. We are covered by greenhouse gases. We witness acid rains. We face desertification. We look helplessly at Ozone depletion. We are worried about global warming. We cannot contain carbon dioxide emission. We are experiencing those evil effects of toxifying our air, earth and water. Now we wish we had the good sense to follow the Gandhian 'economy of nature'. Don't we see Gandhiji holding hands with Albert Schweitzer who said, 'man has lost the capacity to foresee and forestall; he will end up by destroying the Earth.

The concept of the sustainable development is multi-dimensional and multimodal. "Use and Throw" is not fit for the sustainable development while Reduce- Recycle- Reuse is the best concept of sustainable development as it refers to balancing of needs and usage.

Instead of economic development we should focus on environmental development. Before any type of development we should check for ecology and environmental impact. There should be environmental, social, moral and spiritual balance without all these values development is unperfected proxy for the progress.

From consumption to conservation, the world has gone a long way. Let us not forget the milestones of progress towards sustainable development, in 1970 the world decided to observe the Earth day. In 1972 the Stockholm conference and the club of Rome published the historic report on the 'Limits to growth'. Then we had the Brandt commission report on 'North - south; a program for survival'. We then reached the stage when the report on 'Our common future' opened our eyes. The Earth summit in Rio gave us the Agenda 21. The Kyoto protocol, the 'living' planet' report, the Paris commitment on climate change are all landmarks in our stepped progression from destruction to conservation of nature...In my humble opinion, we have an opportunity now before us to atone for our failure in listening to the words of the

Mahatma. In word and deed let us work for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG- 301 which the comity of nations, including India, laid for ourselves, our children, our grand children to live in a safer and better world

The holy Bible gives us a lesson. A lesson in how to be forewarned and forearmed. The Pharaoh has a dream. Seven fat cows emerged from the river Nile. Then come seven lean cows. The seven lean cows swallowed the fat ones. Pharaoh was confused. Joseph interpreted the dream. Seven fat cows represent seven years of prosperity. Seven lean ones represent seven years of poverty .The wise ruler took the warning of nature seriously, took precautions and arranged buffer stock of grains. Nature has given us enough warnings. Act fast, act firm. Hasten slowly with so called development. Avoid the recurring tale of acting in haste to repent at leisure. Let the Mahatma lighten up our path. "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed,"

In the backdrop of 150th birthday celebrations of Mahathma Gandhiji, let we take pledge to development our nation with integral sustainable plan of action to full fill the vision and mission of great soul Mahathma Gandhiji. I hope today's celebrations here will give us inspiration and hope to move further for the welfare and well being of whole nation. Wish you all the best

Ka lawm e

Jai Hind...