



Ailaan

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From Bloom to Gloom: Harvesting good things is the only way out



The current global economic slowdown is certainly the most scary phenomenon. Call it meltdown, recession, depression, economic slump, the sheer scale of it, the economic turmoil unleashed by it, is posing a challenge to the collective DNA of nation states, big, medium and small. The most profound and preferred economic changes that swept the globe in the last half-century have gone into a tailspin. The series of economic upheavals have shaken almost every country, from Brunei to Bolivia and Iceland to India. Countries that achieved an economic miracle like USA or the beneficiaries of petrodollars like the oil-rich sheikdoms are the worst hit. Suddenly the realisation has dawned on us that we live in a finite world, and that there are limits to speculation with easy money - - doing business with other's money to satisfy one's greed. Bailouts, sellouts, closures, mergers and pink slips have become the order of the day. Prophets of doom and soothsayers of gloom are getting a respectable hearing in public discourses. There is a clarion call from a few business tycoons to socialise large chunks of private liabilities arising out of mega-scams. There are others who point to the pitfalls in governance, especially the deliberate non-application of regulations in the rule book. The debate goes on. One thing is certain. The economic turbulence and chaos we are now experiencing are merely the opening salvos in a long disruptive period of adjustment.

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Thomas Friedman, author of *The World is Flat*, argues that the United States is facing a looming crisis —a crisis with the potential to wreck the old and the young, rich and poor alike. The crisis that Friedman talks about is mostly in terms of foreign policy and global economics - - what nations, states, governments, businesses and workers must do to adapt to the changing world in the first decade of the 21st century. Given the sheer scale and enormity of the economic turmoil, the situation calls for both short-term and long-term adjustments, the latter in the realm of education. In this context we have to ask ourselves: Is our present system of education good enough to prepare youngsters to face up to such crisis situations? Has it been giving our children and future generations the required intellectual and mental strength to prepare them for life in this interconnected world and global village? Schools fixated on teaching everyone to read are ignoring a far more serious problem: that our students have to be prepared to face the challenge of long-term adjustments.

Consider this! India is an agrarian economy and agriculture continues to be the mainstay of the Indian economy. Directly or indirectly, almost two-fifths of the Indian population depends on agriculture sector. The contribution of agriculture to GDP in India is decisively higher than that in most other countries of the world. Ultimately, harvesting has been the hope of this wonderful nation.

Ironically the harvest season was celebrated in many places in the country in January amidst news of the collapsing global financial health. The word harvest is used in varying contexts: like water harvesting or to harvest energy, oxygen and atmospheric health to prevent depletion of the ozone layer.

I am looking at harvesting in a different context, viz., harvesting of ideas, values and attitudes for uplifting ailing ambitions, lifestyles, shaping people and dissemination of knowledge. Harvesting takes place in many areas, not merely of crops, but also ideas, beliefs and anatomy. Obviously there are many dimensions to harvesting as it encompasses several areas of biological activity. In the present context, our effort should be directed towards harvesting educational initiatives to enable us to contribute to sustainable lifestyles and positive mindsets.

Dr S. Radhakrishnan, the illustrious philosopher-statesman of India, was one of the greatest sons of our motherland.

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“Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful.”
~ Albert Schweitzer

He cautioned the world against the domination of science in society. It is erroneous to claim that scientific knowledge alone would bring perpetual progress and a steady improvement in human relations. As the coin has its flip side so does science. The recent era of great scientific and technological achievements have also increased human misery: two world wars, concentration camps, atomic destruction, cold war, and deadly wars in the Middle East, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, etc., on top of all of them is terrorism.

Growth in human wisdom has not been commensurate with the increase in scientific knowledge and power. The fear of universal destruction hangs over the world every moment. There is a feeling of disenchantment, anxiety and even despair. Science has not so far succeeded in liberating man from the tyranny of his own nature.

Mankind is passing through a critical period and education of the human spirit has become imperative. In order to rebuild society, man has to transform himself. If humanity is to survive, man must integrate his knowledge with a sense of social responsibility.

There is no human happiness without inner development. We think that the kings lived happily in the past. But a common man in the present day is much happier than the kings of the yester years. This is because he has better access to resources. End use of things may give us happiness, but the mass consumption is causing insurmountable suffering. Anything that helps human progress is good. It is only 0.75 of the resources that we are harvesting towards the betterment of mankind, but the rest is used for human destruction. All the chemical wastes, radio-active wastes, technical wastes of the rich countries are dumped in small countries like Uganda and Vietnam. Have we ever bothered about the people there?

Vietnam was once upon a time a major cultural region among South Asian countries. But nowadays countries like Vietnam and Cambodia are being devastated because of the misuse of resources and dependence and also due to the exploitative nature of rich countries. Everything has been polluted right from land and water to human hearts. Man is not able to use harvesting in pursuit of his knowledge to put oneself on the right track.

Dwelling in this vicious circle of complexities and sufferings is unending! What we have, we shall not get and what we get we shall not think of them. What matters is the attitude. Gandhiji said: "Everything is there, but you have to make your choice". You have to understand what is bad and what is good.

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**"The Grand essentials of happiness are: something to do, something to love,
and something to hope for."
~ Allan K. Chalmers**

Recently I visited a group of institutions promoted by a particular trust. The group solely caters to women. If we realise the concept of exclusivity for women the concept of harvesting can be easily comprehended. To invest something on women is valuable than to invest on men, because if a woman is educated, then the whole family is educated. If you are investing on women then you are investing on the pursuit of economic and cultural independence to build a harmonious and humane society. Mother is the true educator for the child. So the world's future is inextricably linked to the society of women.

To fulfill our human potential it is required that we transcend our physical and mental limitations to something infinite and eternal. Julian Huxley, in his article, 'Evolution After Darwin', written on the centennial of Darwin's 'The Origin of Species', wrote: "Man's most comprehensive aim is seen not as mere survival, not as numerical increase, not as increased complexity of organisation or increased control over his environment, but as greater fulfillment -- the fuller realisation of more possibilities by the human species collectively and more of its component members individually. Once greater fulfillment is recognised as man's ultimate or dominant aim, we shall need a science of human possibilities to help guide the long course of psycho-social evolution that lies ahead." ✨

Dr. S.V. Prabhath
Chairman, NCRI

Listen to the Exhortation of the Dawn!
Look to this Day!
For it is Life, the very Life of Life.
In its brief course lie all the
Verities and Realities of your Existence.
The Bliss of Growth,
The Glory of Action,
The Splendor of Beauty;
For Yesterday is but a Dream,
And Tomorrow is only a Vision;
But Today well lived makes
Every Yesterday a Dream of Happiness,
And every Tomorrow a Vision of Hope.
Look well therefore to this Day!
Such is the Salutation of the Dawn!

KALIDASA

“ Happiness belongs to the self-sufficient .”

~ Aristotle

Committee meeting on Nai Talim and Gandhian Thought and education



Chairman NCRI discussing with Dr. Mrunalini, Dr. Suresh Reddy and other NCRI Projects team members

A meeting to deliberate upon planning a programme in the area of 'Nai Talim and Gandhian Thought and education' was held on 13th, February, 2009 at NCRI. Dr. Suresh Reddy, Former Head, Rural Education, Byrraju Foundation and Dr. Mrunalini, Professor, Philosophy of Education, I.A.S.E., Osmania University and NCRI project team members have attended the meeting.

The meeting focused in bringing out sustainable and feasible action plan for implementing different programmes that can be initiated ranging from Nai Talim awareness programmes and action research programmes to new generation teacher training programmes in collaboration with universities and state governments.

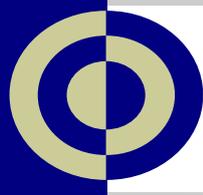
During the day long proceedings of the meeting, members deliberated upon evolving short term as well as long term strategies towards training of teachers on Nai Talim with an integrated approach.

Dr. Suresh Reddy mentioned about 120 residential schools in the state of Andhra Pradesh, where experiments like reinventing education, emerging role of teachers etc. have been seriously taken up by state Government. He opined that it would be relevant to adopt the Nai Talim curriculum in these institutions, which would help the children in getting better exposure to deal with life situations.

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"Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action."

~ Benjamin Disraeli



Committee meeting on Nai Talim and Gandhian Thought and education.....

Dr. Mrunalini raised the concern of over-burdening teachers in schools with the new methodology of education. She stressed that this aspect needs to be kept in mind while preparing an integrated framework, curriculum etc. She also highlighted Gandhiji's ideas on correlation and bringing out Entrepreneur model using participatory approach. She expressed that Nai Talim training would bring up children in an appropriate and relevant social context. While discussing on strategies of Nai Talim training for Teachers, Dr Mrunalini made some significant suggestions, notable amongst them being, conduct of short term orientation programmes in association with B.Ed. colleges and D.I.E.T. colleges, and imparting Nai Talim training as a co-curricular project in the regular B. Ed. Programme.

Craft, art, health and education should all be integrated into one scheme. Nai Talim is a beautiful blend of four and covers the whole education of the individual from the time of conception to the moment of death..... Instead of regarding craft and industry as different from education I will regard as the medium for the latter.

Harijan, 10-11-'46



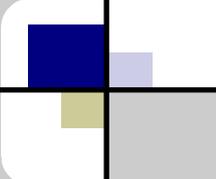
Dr. Suresh Reddy expressed that Rural institutes must be encouraged to give their contributions and ideas on basic life skills, Entrepreneurship skills etc. for successful implementation of these programmes. He opined that awareness programmes targeting teachers as well as community should be planned. An impact study could be carried out to ensure their effectiveness.

Dr. Suresh Reddy emphasised that giving priority to different departments of state governments which are dealing with education is very important for networking and field research for fruitful results. Dr. Mrunalini expressed that it is also important to form alliances with all the Universities and training colleges to have effective projects and programmes.

While discussing 'Supporting the Preparation of Centres of Gandhian Education' Dr. Suresh Reddy expressed that, it would be better to take up one or two Centres of Gandhian Higher Education in each state in selective manner. Dr. Mrunalini suggested that one University also can be sought for the same. ✨

"Happiness comes when your work and words are of benefit to yourself and others."

~ Buddha



Committee meeting on RRIC



Chairman, NCRI discussing with Dr. T Hanuman Chowdhary, Technical Advisor, TCS & Satyam, Col SS Rao (Retd.), COO, AP Online, TCS, Shri Ravi Mani, Program Manager, AP Online, TCS and Shri K. Subrahmanyam, CMC Ltd and other RRIC officials of NCRI

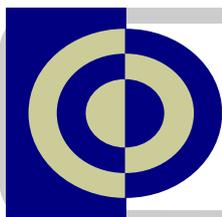
A meeting towards preparing framework for RRIC was held at NCRI on 20th February 2009 at NCRI. Dr. T Hanuman Chowdhary, Technical Advisor, TCS & Satyam, Col SS Rao (Retd.), COO, AP Online, TCS, Shri Ravi Mani, Programme Manager, AP Online, TCS and Shri K. Subrahmanyam, CMC Ltd and other RRIC team members have attended the session.

The meeting was aimed at clearly defining the scope of Rural Resource Informatic Centre conforming to the NCRI's mandate. The meeting began with a brief introduction by Dr. S. V. Prabhath, Chairman, NCRI, about NCRI and the purpose of establishing an Information system that can support its activities. He explained the Nai Talim philosophy propounded by Gandhiji based on which the Council is mandated to spread the wings of rural higher education.

He briefed the action programme that NCRI has chalked out over last few months to revive the concept of Nai Talim system of education. He drew attention of the committee as to how NCRI could explore various possibilities of utilising IT and other technological advancements to support the exercise of promoting Nai Talim. Dr. T. H Chowdhary has recommended that NCRI must evolve e-content and disseminate it through RRIC to achieve integration with the main stream educational institutions.

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“Happiness is not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort.”
~ Franklin D. Roosevelt



Committee meeting on RRIC....

Educational institutions, NGOs could be identified, to achieve the necessary integration of the methodology.

Responding to a question, 'How IT could be best used for Micro planning exercise?' by the Chair, Dr.Chowdhary stated that a field study pertaining to knowledge of people about Govt. programmes / policies could be helpful in this regard and the information could be made available through RRIC.

Narrating the experience he had gathered over a period in implementing various Govt. programmes, especially in rural sector like NREGS, Arogya Shree etc., Col SS Rao had suggested that different trades could be identified and content could be prepared for dissemination through RRIC.

He also referred to EGMM (Employment Generation Marketing Mission) a programme of Rural development ministry, details of which can also be integrated with NCRI through RRIC.

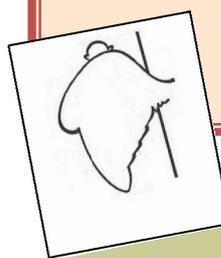
Dr. Hanuman Chowdhary mentioned that re-skilling could be achieved by carefully preparing and disseminating relevant information about latest technologies and scientific methods related to specific trades. According to him, adding a two way-service delivery mechanism would be helpful.

The meeting concluded by drafting a three phased action plan of 1) User Identification (Schools/NGOs/RIs) preferably from two states to pilot the programme. 2) Content Development & Management and 3) Disseminating through RRIC platform. ✨

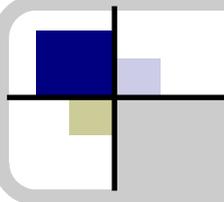
The villagers should develop such a high degree of skill that articles prepared by them should command a ready market outside. When our villages are fully developed there will be no dearth in them of men with a high degree of skill and artistic talent.....

The reconstruction of the villages along these lines should begin now. The reconstruction of the villages should not be organised on a temporary but permanent basis.

Harijan, 10-11-'46

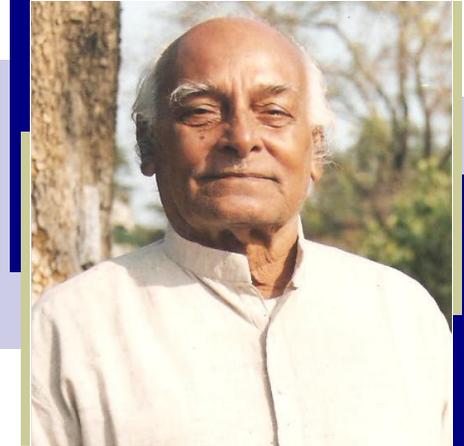


“ When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.” ~ Helen Keller

Gandhian Speaks

There is no dearth of people who can write volumes on Gandhiji. There are people who follow his teachings by the letter. But here is someone who actually implemented and practiced the spirit of Gandhian thoughts. There are several institutions working on Gandhian model. But it is worth noting that The Majhihira National Basic Educational Institution (MNBEI) was the earliest to be established in the remotest of places, the very remoteness being the major criterion for selection of this place. This is precisely what Gandhiji had directed his followers to do.



Shri Chitta Bhusan Das Gupta

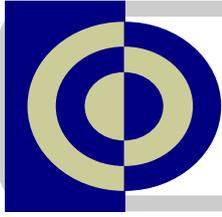
The writing also outlines the importance of proper government policy and a sensitive administration to implement the policies. It is unfortunate that even today the Nai Talim institutions are denied independent existence. They merely function as affiliates to the Macaulay system followed by our main stream education. They “hang as parasites from the trees whose roots are in the foreign soil”, as described by Gurudev in Bishwabharati. Even our concept of “Development” is based on the Western Capitalist centric multinational model, which is opposed to Gandhian decentralised model. It is therefore necessary to establish a completely independent structure for Nai Talim to implement the ideals of Gandhiji in a proper and fair manner. While it is necessary to have external funding to some extent to run such institutions, too less will starve them and too much will make them rot.

I had the privilege of living in the ashram for the first fifteen years of my life and when the institution was at the peak of its performance. After receiving basic education from here, I could receive higher education in the formal stream. Having taught science for over three decades in a junior college in Mumbai, and having observed the main stream education closely, I am convinced that Nai Talim is not only a national form of education, but in today’s world, it is the Global form of education. It could become the panacea to a host of the problems faced by today’s world. Only one has to understand the

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“The greatest part of our happiness depends on our dispositions, not our circumstances.”

~ **Martha Washington**



Gandhian Speaks

spirit of it in today's context. My father, the founder of MNBEI is one of the few, who did, and still does. To him Nai Talim is work based and not finance based. To express his feelings about Nai Talim, he quoted Khalil Gibran, "Work is love made visible". ☼

Shri Chitta Bhusan Dasgupta was born on 6th June, 1915 at Patna. Chitta Bhusan came to Purulia 'Shilpashram' in 1925. In 1927, at the age of 12, he first participated in the political conference of Manbhum Congress Committee held at Village Ramchandrapur. He attended the 1928 Congress Session at Calcutta. He was first arrested and imprisoned in 1930 at the age of 15 yrs for picketing before a liquor-shop in Purulia. Since then, Shri Chitta Bhusan Dasgupta had actively participated in eastern districts of Bengal – Dhaka, Chittagon, Sandip working as a Congress-volunteer and organiser. He also actively participated both at Tripuri and Ramgarh Congress.

In 1939 he went to Sevagram, Wardha. There he had his first lessons in basic education under Acharya Aryanayakam and the watchful eyes of Mahatma Gandhi. At Sevagram he came in closer contact with Mahatma Gandhi.

In 1940, Shri Chitta Bhusan Dasgupta came to a remote village Majjihira of Manbhum District of Bihar and founded the first Bengali Language Buniyadi Vidyalaya. Since then he remained at the village working for Buniyadi Talim, till today. MNBEI was inaugurated by Acharya Aryanayakam. Though devoted to propagation of Buniyadi Siksha, he remained an active Congress Worker. In 1941 he was jailed for six months for individual civil disobedience.

In 1942 he actively participated in Quit India Movement was arrested and kept at Bhagalpur Camp Jail for one year. Shri Chitta Bhusan Dasgupta never left Majjihira after 1940. He lives there, mentally alert and physically agile even at 91, and still dreams of making Basic Education for all and meaningful.

Shri Chitta Bhusan Dasgupta is a member of All India Nai Talim Samiti Wardha.

"Happiness is a conscious choice, not an automatic response."

~ Mildred Barthel



Nai Talim of Connected Society with Education for Transformation

~ Professor Ram Takwale

[Part-II : Continued from January 2009 issue]

Nai Talim of the Connected Society

We have a communication revolution going on very fast throughout the world. We can now begin Indian educational revolution with digital or communication revolution. ICT is permeating all walks of life and work. It is changing the nature and functions of communicating, transporting, marketing, employing, working, organising and managing. In fact, currently, the humanity is in a transitional phase from industrial or modern society to the post-industrial or post- or neo-modernistic era, in which many of the earlier processes and practices dependent on old technologies, processes and structures are going to change radically. The industrial processes will vanish and new industry processes of information age will emerge. The prerequisite for entering into information society is, therefore, the connectedness of anyone, anytime and anywhere. This connectedness is being created through two-way communication through many technologies such as telephony, mobile cell phones, internet, broadband of various generations, etc. We can divide these new processes into three categories: *Information communication technology generated processes*: these include digitisation, virtualisation and mass-personalisation. *Connected society generated*: these include global standards development, various protocols for communicating and working together, open resource movement, global knowledge access activities (Google, Wikipedia, etc), mass-collaboration process- various wiki-processes, web based self-organisation process (blogs), etc., and finally, *Open knowledge based creative processes*: these include social creativity, co-creation and prosumer (producer +consumer) or combining roles of producer and consumers.

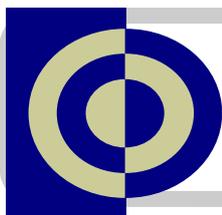
On the basis of Gandhian Developmental Model, the Nai Talim model emerges as a system of interactions amongst *man, machine, nature and society* for creating common social, natural and cultural capital for the use of whole humanity and justice.

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* **Prof. Ram Takwale** is President, CONSENT and an acclaimed educationalist in the country . He was former Vice Chancellor of three Universities; Pune University, Pune (1978-84) ,YCMOU, Nasik (1989-95) , IGNOU, New Delhi, (1995-98).

“Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”

~ Mohandas K. Gandhi



.....Nai Talim of Connected Society with Education for Transformation:

The capital and credits can be shared on the basis of equality. The model has four components: such as *Technology Network*, which offers global connectedness, *Earth's Natural Resources*, which is managed by localities for development, *Global Human Resources*, which organised through pariwar and communities, and empowered with global and local resources ensure sustainability, and finally, *We and Our Pariwar*: organised locally with villages, village clusters and locality (taluka). These components, linked in global networks, serve the common goal of creating prosperous and peaceful society through Social Capitals that are transacted locally as well as globally.

Linking Education with Industry and Wealth Creation

In this new knowledge society, emphasis on monetary wealth and personal property should be replaced with non-monetary wealth for prosperous, happy and peaceful society. The other essential capitals or wealth are: Social Environmental Capital, Ethical, Moral and Service Capital and Social Financial Capital. These can form the basis of a new society based on equality and justice that should lead to a society based on service culture. There is a need for paying special attention to check unscrupulous exploitation of natural resources and human resources.

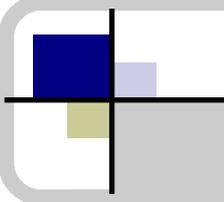
The Gandhian Economy lays down the natural limits and limits to growth with non-exploitative and non-violent ways of using social and human resources. The Kumarappa Scale of Service Economy, patterned after the Gandhian Economy, is based on three factors; Natural resources and their conservation and enhancement; Social resources and their empowerment and enrichment; and Individual and group use of the natural and human resources. Creation of artificial materials, products and services that empower humans has to be accounted appropriately in this model of economy.

Linkage of Education with Social Transformation: The ideas and its formulation presented here for linking education with transformation conforms not only to the Gandhian basis as stated above but also to the four pillars of education proposed by UNESCO in its book on 'Learning To Be'.

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"Happiness is a conscious choice, not an automatic response."

~ Mildred Barthel

.....Nai Talim of Connected Society with Education for Transformation

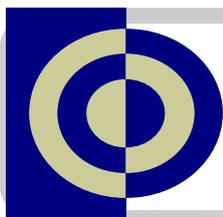
The four stages of social and education development conforms to learning to know, learning to develop, learning to work together and create social wealth, and learning to form and ‘transform’ individually and socially. The mode of deployment of education is developmental in a connected society linked intimately with each other. The ‘trans-mode’ of education combines and elevates the formal, non-formal and informal modes of learning to a higher mode of education in a higher stage of human development.

Most of Gandhiji’s important writings on education and development are based on Nai Talim system of education, creation of a new society called Sarvodaya, Social Trusteeship and above all the non-exploitative utilisation of human and natural resources. The powers, which dominated the industrial age in exploitation of natural and human resources, are being considered as the root cause poverty in the world today. It is therefore essential to develop a New Gandhian *Sarvodaya* or the *Third Model of Development* for *creating a new knowledge society of the connected world*. Nai Talim is essentially linked with learning through working and participating in production processes and development activities of society and locality; and hence called life education or *Jeevan Shikshan*.

The present factory model of education, which separates learning from working, enabled mass education but lost all personalisation and also does not develop the ability to solve real life and work problems. Any life education process should possess four stages such as, education for learning and developing knowledge, skill and competence; education for application and production in promoting innovation, creativity; education for marketing and value creation; and education for transformation of individuals, pariwar into a society. Of course, education in the existing system is linked with acquisition of knowledge but, it lacks the development of attitudes and capabilities linked with solving social and local-global issues. The need is to link education directly with development though appropriate pedagogy as in Nai Talim. It is noteworthy that The Indian Consortium for Educational Transformation, (I-CONSENT), have developed a B.Ed programme for role based e-education. The constructivist education is essentially a Nai Talim and Jeevan Shikshan programme, and combines working, developing and learning. ***Continued.....***

“Happiness. It lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort.”

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt



.....Nai Talim of Connected Society with Education for Transformation

This programme is using connectedness of information age provided by the Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Ltd., (www.mkcl.org/ebed), and developing a model based on *future scenario based constructivist pedagogy*. Concepts like cooperative learning, mass collaboration, open educational and developmental resources, use of outsourced e-platform and support services, portfolio based developmental learning, assessment and certification have been given priority. The 'social capital' theme and connectedness are also linked to this programme to offer *quality education to every student* in the system. Significantly, programmes of *virtual school and learning homes* have been outlined to supports and enhances effectiveness of the e-B.Ed programme. One can also use e-education and virtualisation, self-organisation and mass collaboration of all students and teachers in learning, teaching and developing. The Open Education Resource movement is gaining worldwide support to create a new world with sharing and caring approach. This will replace the earlier selfish personalised purposes of creating content and earning from it.

Concepts like social technology capital and social organisation capital along with other essential capitals can form the basis for transacting social credits for receiving quality education for development. A concept of credit bank could be developed in which credit account of every individual and pariwar could be kept , and the *social capital* could be made an ever growing resource. These credits could be loaned for specific purposes with social collateral assurance given by pariwar. The loans of credits could be returned with interests as and when possible.

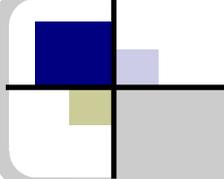
Where Do We Go From Here? Creating Alternatives:

The task before us is to solve a *six parameter* equation simultaneously: Firstly, solving J P Naik's illusive triangle of education- *quality, quantity and equality* triangle or *value triangle (Quality education for all)* and Secondly, creating an e-management triangle to solve the value triangle with *social mobilisation, mass-personalisation and social e-governance*. Appropriate addition of these two triangles will give rise to social capital, ever developing and transforming communities based on cultural scale of JC Kumarappa.

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"Wisdom is the supreme part of happiness."

~ Sophocles

Nai Talim of Connected Society with Education for Transformation: ...

Many wealthy and rich people have two phases in their social life. The first one is for earning property and wealth for the welfare of self and family members as well as for their pariwar and partners working together. The second phase is to do social charity and adopt trusteeship role either with selfless or for some selfish motives. A concept of social trusteeship is, therefore, essential. Anyone who is endowed with physical prowess, intellectual knowledge, technological skills, and moral values can share some part of his/her power or wealth for the benefit of society. This is the basic concept of social trusteeship. This is amply demonstrated by large number of selfless contributors in creating free Wikipedia for all.

The proposal before MKCL is to create a *Social Developmental Education Corporation* (S-DEC) as a company for social profit. The functions of the S-DEC will be to enable social networking of pariwar and communities, create the six social capitals by promoting social trusteeship, promote innovation, co-create and promote Public-Private-Community (PPC) partnerships.

The new society has an entirely different set of cultural and value system. With appropriate changes and adaptation, we can expect that the Gandhian Third Way of development could be made a reality. ✨

Gandhi on Education:

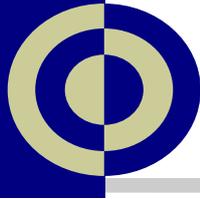
Education is distancing us from our age-old culture. If a semblance of our national spirit is still alive, it is certainly not because of this system of education, it is because that spirit is running in our veins and is so deeply rooted that it cannot be destroyed.



Readers are welcome to contribute research studies, feature articles, case studies, success stories etc. on various themes related to rural higher education, application of Gandhian philosophy by rural institutions in their various development initiatives. Your valuable suggestions, views and feedback to be mailed to editor@ncri.in. (Content received will be edited for brevity and clarity.)

“Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go.”

~ Oscar Wilde



A Rural University – Need of the Nation

~ Dr.Arun Kumar Dave**

The seeds of thought

In 1949, 59 years ago, the Government's University Education Commission, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, presented a report on the prevailing higher education system — how it was and what it should ideally be.

Commission member Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, then President of Tennessee River Valley Authority in USA, wrote a chapter on how an ideal university should be set up in India. He noted that the university system focused on cities, not villages — its roots were laid in a foreign culture. It dispensed degrees, creating an employment pool mainly for Government services, but its graduates were not suitable “to be the agency for access of education to villages of India, i.e., education of rural India”. Dr. Morgan opined that for creating a new India one needed a “new, distinct and independent institution which is free to develop its own form, in its own way and that too, keeping intact villages of India as its core and controlling element.”

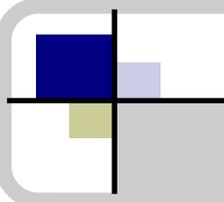
Concept of a Rural University

Shri Nanabhai Bhatt was the first educationist who tried to implement Dr. Morgan's concept of a rural university. In 1951 Gujarat Vidyapith translated Dr. Morgan's chapter into Gujarati. In his preface to the booklet 'Gram Vidyapith', Nanabhai stated that a rural university would be the crowning glory for Nai Talim. It would be a 'Lok Vidyapith'. The universities, he lamented, remained dependent on an alien culture though the nation had gained freedom; its graduates were isolated from the common people and even disdainful of their own country and its needs. They lacked character, humanity and spirituality. In fact, the universities adversely affected our culture, looking towards the cities, while India was a land of villages. Even the intelligent rural youth preferred to migrate to cities.

“In contrast to this, Lok Vidyapith would grow from our own soil and would be nourishing our culture and philosophy of life... *Continued.....*”

Dr. Arun Kumar Dave is President, Ravi Krupa Trust and former Vice-Chancellor, Gujarat VidyaPith, Ahmedabad .

“Happiness always looks small while you hold it in your hands, but let it go, and you learn at once how big and precious it is.”
~ Maxim Gorky

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The aspiration of Gram Vidyapith is to prepare such leaders who can guide the society in the right direction with the feeling of oneness with the common people of the society.”

The foremost thinker in Nai Talim Shri Manubhai Pancholi stated that villages should have a decisive voice in the functioning of the nation. “The Gram Vidyapith would impart such education as would sustain, enrich, empower and organise villages. Its ultimate aim would be to strengthen the existence of villages and enhance their prosperity and power, because only in it lies the ultimate welfare of the nation and the world at large.”

Setting up Gram Vidyapith — developments

In 1953, at the inaugural of LokBharti , Nanabhai stated that Dr. Morgan’s writings helped crystallise his own vision of LokBharti Gram Vidyapith. He pointed out that Gram Vidyapith was not against other universities, but its focus would be villages. A precious stone from India’s Golkonda mine has little intrinsic perceived value; but with a Belgium cut, its value escalates greatly. The same philosophy lies behind LokBharti , which is an effort to build upon the villagers’ assets/talents.

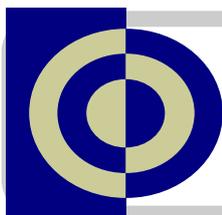
He said, “Even the poorest man in the village has good inner qualities in hidden form. It is the desire of LokBharti that the continuous flame of new education may reach upto the hut (cottage) of the poor in order to awaken those inner qualities.”

The first LokBharti was started in 1953 in Sanosara in Bhavnagar district of Gujarat. In 1954 the Government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. K. L. Shrimali to look into higher rural education. Based on its suggestion, the National Council for Rural Higher Education (NCRHE) was established in 1955. In the first phase, the council selected 10 institutions, called rural institutes, which would be developed into rural universities.

The catchphrase of the Shrimali Committee’s report, ‘Freedom on Experiment’, enthused the people. Ten institutions joined the Council; they were Shri Niketan (West Bengal), Jamia Milia (New Delhi), Mouni Vidyapith (Gargoti, Kolhapur), Shivaji Lok Vidyapith (Amravati), Gandhigram (Madurai), Vidyabhawan (Udaipur), Ramkrishna Mission Vidyalaya (Coimbatore), LokBharti (Sanosara, Saurashtra),

Continued.....

“ We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it.”
~ George Bernard Shaw



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Toorki (Bihar) and Balwani Vidyapith (Bichpuri, Agra). In 1958, the issues of affiliation were discussed at an international seminar at Bichpuri; it was feared that external examinations and bureaucratic rigidity would dilute this experiment. This turned out to be true; hide-bound ideas on administration, lack of unanimity, and a wrong approach marred these institutes' progress.

The Central Government insisted that the medium of instruction be English. LokBharti did not agree with this, hence one of its two courses closed down. The affiliation continued up to 1968. The other nine institutions also suffered the same fate at the end of the 15-year experiment and most of them became affiliated with the State universities. In this way a promising experiment ended without any significant impact. In view of the extensive work of Gandhigram Rural Institute, the University Grants Commission granted it the status of a 'Deemed University.'

Other rural higher education programmes

Nevertheless, LokBharti remained an inspiring concept. Nanabhai said LokBharti was started with several ideas in mind: develop suitable leaders from within villages; pursue a radical method of education without punishment and competition; design a curriculum that focuses on villages; and adopt a humane approach, giving due value to productive labour.

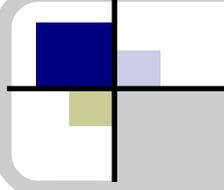
The experiment in Gujarat was extended by setting up three Gram Vidyapiths in Bahadurpur (Baroda district), Samoda (Mehsana district) and Vedchi (Surat district). With State grants and greater interest in rural education the number of students rose to 22. 'Gram Vidyapith Society' was set up to work towards greater coordination and quality control. Classes and conferences were held for students, teachers, and educators. However, some issues could not find easy solutions.

The Gujarat State Basic Education Board was established to coordinate the activities of the Nai Talim, right from primary to rural higher education. Efforts were made to give the advisory board a constitutional status, but a resolution in the State Assembly in 1994 could not be passed.

Continued.....

"If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal, not to people or things"

~ Albert Einstein.

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Evaluation of University Affiliation

The graduates of LokBharti were able to get jobs or qualify for higher studies because of its affiliation with Saurashtra University. Other Gram Vidyapiths also tried to get affiliated with their regional universities. Initially Saurashtra University, South Gujarat University and North Gujarat University conferred affiliation, in addition to Gujarat University. Lokseva Mahavidyalaya of LokBharti became affiliated to a new rural education discipline of Saurashtra University, while a rural education postgraduate institute (Gram Vidya Anusnatak Bhawan) was established in South Gujarat University. Nine Mahavidyalayas became affiliated with North Gujarat University. But the Gram Vidyapiths' autonomy was lost and they were in the grip of the universities, which made it difficult for them to maintain the unique features of rural education, thus destroying their very essence. The Gram Vidyapiths suffered the same fate as NCRHE in 1956.



The Gram Vidyapith would impart such education as would sustain, enrich, empower and organise villages. Its ultimate aim would be to strengthen the existence of villages and enhance their prosperity and power, because only in it lies the ultimate welfare of the nation and the world at large

~ Manubhai Pancholi



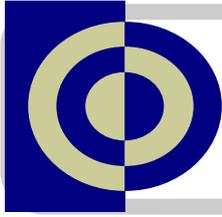
However, at the time of its affiliation Lokseva Mahavidyalaya of Lok Bharati retained all rights to plan the curriculum and there were no conditions of service for its employees.

These experiences prove that a new experiment should not be based on an old structure. Morgan noted that even though the people establishing a different system of education may consider themselves pioneers and rebels, their own training is from a traditional university, which can only lead to an institution that is merely a soft variant in most respects.

The Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission stated that a rural university should formulate an independent frame and programme. He said, "Villages of India are a vast reservoir of human power,

Continued.....

"Happiness comes of the capacity to feel deeply, to enjoy simply, to think freely, to risk life, to be needed"
~ Storm Jameson.



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intellect and ambition. At present it is all useless. Indian boys and girls begin their lives with alertness, curiosity and eagerness to live and learn but their hopeless situation kills zeal of many, and then as men and women they become conservative and unchanging... The future of India would depend not on external circumstances but upon the feeling of its own people. Faith, hope, goodwill and courage – these values themselves are the strong causes of shaping events. As we are, so we choose, and as we wish, so we become. In view of rural education it will be a greater gift and an important factor in national future to arouse those qualities in people, rather than the discovery of vast oil wells or mine-resources of raw material for atomic power.”

Structure of Proposed Rural University

The structure of a rural university like an Agricultural, Ayurvedic or Sanskrit University must be suitable to preclude political interference. The proposed rural university should have only one campus, be non-affiliated, teach village-oriented graduate level curricula, have an executive (standing) committee comprising representatives of organisations working in rural/developmental areas, and offer scholarships for at least two years after which the students should compulsorily work towards village development. We can learn a lot from rural universities of other countries, like Australia.

Conclusion

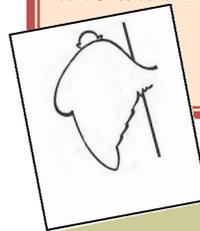
Educational institutions based on persuasion have proved more successful than State institutions based on fear and punishment. Hence social activists and Government officials should concentrate on developing meaningful educational programmes.

Continued on page 24

The aim of University Education should be to turn out true servants of the people who will live and die for the country's freedom.

I am therefore, of opinion that University education should be coordinated and brought into line with Basic Education.

Harijan, 25-8-'46., p.283

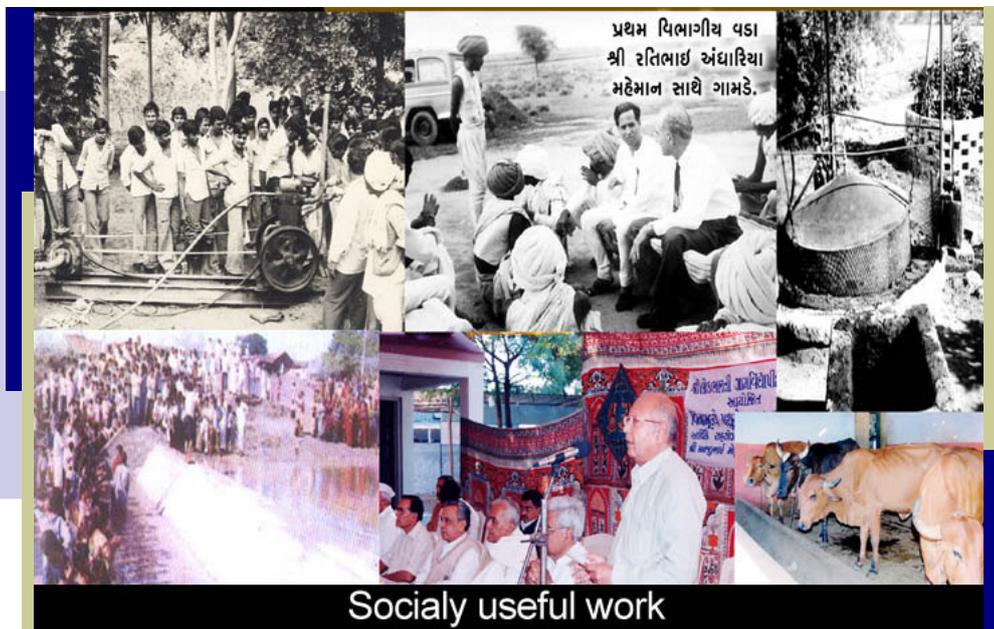


“The happiness that is genuinely satisfying is accompanied by the fullest exercise of our faculties and the fullest realisation of the world in which we live.” ~ Bertrand Russell.

Rural Revolution In Sanosara, Gujarat.

Introduction.:

Pursuing Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a strong, self sufficient, rural India as a bulwark of a dynamic nation, LokBharti was founded by late Shri Nanabhai Bhatt and inaugurated on the day of Buddha Jayanti, 28/05/1953 by Late Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar. The institute spread the ray of light to remote corners of rural India becoming a mission of hope and self-reliance through higher education and self help in the state of Gujarat.



LokBharti, Sanosara

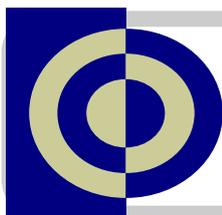
LokBharti is more than a university village. It is a movement, a vision in action, an ideal in realisation. It is a rural revolution that imparts higher education to people who needed it most. It promotes a unique self sufficient life style that strives to improve every aspect of people's lives in rural India.

Since then the institute has been educating the villagers based on the principles laid down by Mahatma Gandhi and has successfully accomplished exemplary programmes in the field of education, research and development.

LokBharti comprised of five educational sections covering various subjects like Gujarati, Hindi, English, Economics, Agriculture, Animal husbandry,

Continued.....

“Happiness is not something you postpone for the future; it is something you design for the present.”
~ Jim Rohn



..... Rural Revolution In Sanosara, Gujarat.

Co-operation, Development, Science, Health, Education, History, Accountancy, Ecology, Politics and Gardening.

Wheat Research in LokBharti :

One of the many Indian institutions which has remarkably contributed for solving the problem of scarcity of food with the help of science and research is the “Wheat Research Station” of LokBharti institute of Gujarat. The Wheat Research activity at LokBharti started in the year 1967 under the guidance of dedicated agriculturalist Late Shri Dr. Zaverbhai Patel as his dream project.

Objectives:

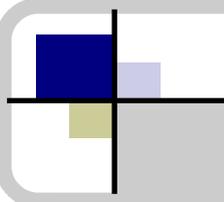
- ◆ To develop varieties of wheat with superior quality, higher yield and reduced water requirement.
- ◆ To make efficient use of the students in order to correlate education & labor work.
- ◆ To increase over all food grain production of the nation.

The production of 'Lok I' species of wheat which stood first in the central zone and was approved by the government has been a remarkable achievement of wheat Research Station of LokBharti. This was a milestone in the agricultural history of Gujarat which has earned a respectful position for LokBharti, and hence Gujarat, in the Indian agricultural domain. The special characteristics of Lok-I are high yield, rust resistant and high protein value. This wheat strain has also become highly popular in the U.S.A., Mexico, Russia, Indonesia, Guyana and Argentina.

Another variety of wheat, Lok-45 is identified as best variety in Peninsular Zone (i.e. Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu). With improved protein content. LokBharti has developed a variety of wheat which has exceptionally bold grains weighing 95 to 100 grams per 1000 grains, while that of Kalyansona is 40 grams and Lok-I is 55 grams. This variety of wheat has also received accolades from the Nobel Laureate Dr. Borlaug, who remarked Lok-45 as an exceptionally rare variety world-wide.

Continued.....

“The Grand essentials of happiness are: something to do, something to love, and something to hope for”
~ Anon -Allan K. Chalmers.

Rural Revolution In Sanosara, Gujarat....

Present activities at LokBharti include: Study of about 2000 varieties of wheat including their Germplasm material, Genetic Stock & new cultures, comparative studies among the promising varieties, study of resistance against Rust Disease by collecting rust spores from Mahableshwer & Shimla every year, and study of about 7000 to 8000 individual plants of wheat every year for further research possibilities and needs. Nucleus & Breeder seed of Lok-1 is also prepared in accordance with the directives of the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of India.

Other Research Activities at LokBharti:

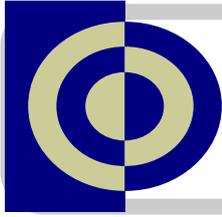
LokBharti played a very significant role in the field of research right from its inception. The institute researched in improving various varieties of crops such as Sankar-4 cotton, Tuwer Pigeon Pea, Ground nuts, Millet etc. When chemical fertiliser was first introduced in India, the institute played a major role in studying its benefits and also propagated different farming methods among farmers. Making Gur-Jaggery brighter, horticulture and compost were made popular among the farmers through extension and research.

The institute can boast of its nursery section which has turned most of the non-productive and barren land into extremely beautiful and productive landscape which has varieties of decorative trees, flower-plants and fruit trees, thanks to the efforts of Shri Ismailbhai Nagori, a vegetation worshipper. Experiments were also carried out in nourishing 'Gir', a famous variety of cow that resulted in remarkable milk yield.

Overall, LokBharti has a distinction of being an only public trust institution of India that works on wheat research and plant study and is noteworthy for its discipline, accuracy, responsibility, sense of belonging and active participation of its students. ✨

“Happiness is not best achieved by those who seek it directly.”

~ Bertrand Russell



Reader's Reflection ...

We are very grateful for encouraging responses received from readers.

Mr. M. Banerjee, Youth NGO Activist and Honorary Board Member IIM Kolkata

Dr. Nawal Kishor Singh, Gandhi Peace Foundation, Bhagalpur, Bihar.

Mrs. Rumu Banerji, Social Worker, Honorary Editor –AAP Ka Sahara (NGO), Kolkata

Continued from page 20.

Efforts like Gurukul of Arya Samaj and women's education have helped, but unless higher education becomes village-oriented, change and reconstruction of the country will remain incomplete.

Efforts have been made to show the crucial need for a rural university in this article by analysing and evaluating different experiments and some suggestions have been made. We hope that the seed sown 59 years ago would blossom in the 21st century. ☀



“Be the change you want to see in the world.”

-Mahatma Gandhi

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“Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude.” ~ Denis Waitley