



तेजपुर विश्वविद्यालय / TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

(केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालय / A Central University)

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**International Webinar on Sustainable Technologies and Rural Development: A Gandhian Perspective Jointly Organized by Tezpur University & GIC-Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok on 31st August 2020**

To commemorate two year long 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Tezpur University organised an International Webinar on Sustainable Technologies and Rural Development: A Gandhian Perspective Jointly with GIC-Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok on 31st August 2020.

The Webinar started with the National Anthem, followed by the Welcome Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of Tezpur University, Prof. V.K. Jain who reminded the participants on the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi. He Highlighted on the fact that the cardinal principles and views of Mahatma Gandhi had a huge impact not only on the history of some of the countries, but those principles and values are relevant in present time and will continue to be relevant in the future too that will help us to address some of the pressing challenges. His unshakable faith on non-violence, peace and justice and his views on role of science in the progress of humanity, good governance, development, environment and life with dignity for all are so relevant in the present-day context. Prof. Jain also added that if we reflect on some of the sustainable development goals, we would find resonance with Gandhi's principles.

The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor then introduced and welcomed His Excellency, Professor Jagdish Mukhi, Governor of Assam & Chancellor, Tezpur University for the Welcome Speech.

His Excellency, in his Inaugural Speech focused on the locus and focus of Gandhian philosophy which is relevant in understanding the Gandhian perspective of suitable technologies and rural development. It was highlighted that Gandhiji constructed his socio-

political and economic philosophy as an integrated concept and not an isolated one. His Excellency observed that Gandhiji favoured sustainable development as a natural corollary to the Ramarajya or for that matter gram swarajraj. He added that non-industrial rural economy prevailing at the time in India was not exploitative but integrative and tuned to nature. Ghanian philosophy is very practical and relevant in the current context also considering the fact that India is a largely agrarian. The core concepts of self-sustainability and comprehensive rural development are the key approaches to national socioeconomic development. His Excellency concluded with warm wishes to the organizers to have organized such a thoughtful and provoking webinar and encouraged the participants to follow the footsteps of Mahatman Gandhi.

Prof. D.C. Baruah was then requested to share the Introductory note, highlighting also, the activities of Tezpur University, relevant to the theme.

The First Keynote Speaker of the day was Dr. Mazul K. Hazarika who is currently the Director of the Geoinformatics Center, Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand. Dr. Hazarika delivered a lecture on “Advances in Geoinformatics for Agriculture and Rural Development”. In his lecture, He highlighted on the use of Satellite Data and Drones in Crop monitoring and yield forecasting, advances in application of big data in Agriculture and applications of Geoinformatics in Agro Ecological Zoning (AEZ). Dr. Hazarika also highlighted on Crop Suitability Mapping and Geoinformatics for Rural Development with a few examples.

The second keynote speaker was Prof V K Vijay, National Coordinator, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan and a Professor at IIT, Delhi. Prof. Vijay spoke on Unnat Bharat Abhiyan for fulfilling Gandhi’s Dream of rural development. The speaker expressed that it was one of the dream of Gandhi that India should achieve Gram Swaraj (Self-reliant villages using locally available resources) which is equally important to independence. After discussing the contribution and idea of Mahatma Gandhi on rural development and making rural India Self-reliant, He discussed on the background of Unnat Bharat Abhiyan; it’s objectives, networking and its functioning highlighting on its achievements.

The third and last keynote speaker of the day, Prof. Joya Chakraborty is a Professor & Head of MCJ Department at Tezpur University. She discussed on the topic, “Communication Technology and Gandhian Philosophy for Human-e Development”. The speaker highlights that communication for development processes can be seen as essential for effective participation and central to enhancing human development. It is through effective communication that governments are able to convince the citizenry about the appropriateness of its policies for social change and ensure their inclusion through meaningful participation. She concludes by saying that Communication technologies as an agency of social change must become communitarian by embracing processes of community informatics whereby technologies become more socially responsive and get designed within the cultural economic and social context of the intended user community.

Technical Session was followed by the Question and Answer and Discussion Session moderated by Prof. D.C. Baruah. Dr. Biren Das, Registrar, Tezpur University was then requested to deliver the vote of thanks. The programme ended with the singing of the National Anthem.

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