



Fruits of economic development must reach poorest of the poor: Vice President Inaugurates All India Gandhian Constructive Workers Conference

Posted On: 25 NOV 2017 8:06PM by PIB Delhi

The Vice President of India has said that the fruits of economic development must reach every section, particularly the poorest of the poor. He was addressing the gathering after inaugurating All India Gandhian Constructive Workers Conference organized by Harijan Sevak Sangh in Gandhi Ashram, here today. The President of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, Swami Chidandand Saraswati and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

The Vice President said that we are all privileged that Gandhiji himself framed the constitution, rules and regulations of Harijan Sevak Sangh, which was founded in 1932. He further said that this organization had rendered yeoman services in promoting education among the downtrodden and in fighting against social evils like untouchability. The divisive walls erected in the minds of the people in the name of caste, religion or social hierarchy will have to be removed, he added.

The Vice President said that New India, which we are envisaging to build, has to be free of poverty with equitable distribution of wealth and prosperity. He further said that it has to be free from gender-based discrimination, atrocities on women and weaker sections, corruption, religious extremism, terrorism and regionalism. It has to be a country of people with strong ethical and moral values, who believe in 'One Country and One People', irrespective of religion, he added.

The Vice President said that with about 65 per cent of the Indian population under 35 years of age, India is on the cusp of a big transformation and the skills and the talents of the educated youth will have to be fully tapped for development of the country.

Following is the text of Vice President's address:

"I am extremely delighted to inaugurate the two-day All India Gandhian Constructive Workers Conference and also the Mahatma Gandhi Yoga Center.

In fact, I deem it a huge honor to be associated with this great voluntary organization, which was founded by the Father of the Nation with the objective of eradicating untouchability and uplifting the poor and downtrodden. We are all privileged that Gandhiji himself framed the constitution, rules and regulations of Harijan Sevak Sangh, which was founded in 1932.

Since its inception, this organization had rendered yeoman services in promoting education among the downtrodden and in fighting against social evils like untouchability. Friends, it is a matter of grave concern that even 70 years after Independence and in spite of concerted efforts by the governments and voluntary bodies like yours, we come across instances of the evil practice of untouchability now and then in different parts of the country. This is not acceptable and cannot be tolerated.

It is most paradoxical that as India marches ahead as one of the fastest growing large economies of the world, social evils like casteism, communalism and corruption are still prevalent and negatively impacting the social fabric of the country. These three cankers affecting India's growth narrative have to be destroyed. Measures taken to promote social inclusiveness like implementation of 25 per cent seats for the poor in private schools will have to be strictly implemented.

Friends, the fruits of economic development must reach every section, particularly the poorest of the poor. While the governments will continue with their welfare programmes for the poor and the needy, every conscientious citizen of the country must try to make a difference to the lives of the underprivileged in every possible manner. The divisive walls erected in the minds of the people in the name of caste, religion or social hierarchy will have to be removed.

The New India, which we are envisaging to build, has to be free of poverty with equitable distribution of wealth and prosperity. It has to be free from gender-based discrimination, atrocities on women and weaker sections, corruption, religious extremism, terrorism and regionalism. It has to be a country of people with strong ethical and moral values, who believe in 'One Country and One People', irrespective of religion.

With about 65 per cent of the Indian population under 35 years of age, India is on the cusp of a big transformation and the skills and the talents of the educated youth will have to be fully tapped for development of the country. Youth will have myriad of opportunities and they should seize them to pave the way for a brighter tomorrow for themselves and the country.

Apart from the economic reforms being undertaken to accelerate the growth and make India the most attractive global destination for investors, some electoral reforms might also have to be considered to improve governance and make it more accountable to the people.

This indeed is a timely conference and I am happy to know that all of you who have gathered here today are hugely contributing to the task of nation building.

Various programmes launched by the Harijan Sevak Sangh like running schools and hostels, a family counseling centre, a charitable dispensary and Prakritik Chikitsa Jeevan Kendra are excellent and laudable initiatives. All these will go a long way in uplifting and integrating the downtrodden members into the mainstream of the society. In fact, the statement of former President K R Narayanan that had there not been an Ashram School run by Harijan Sevak Sangh it would have been impossible for him to get school education is a huge testimony to the magnificent humanitarian work being rendered by this great organization.

Finally, I would like to conclude by appealing to various philanthropists, corporates and industries to donate liberally to enable Harijan Sevak Sangh to expand its activities in serving the needy and the poor.

JAI HIND!"

KSD/BK

