

The Doon School Model United Nations
Conference 2019

Background Guide

Rajya Sabha





DSMUN '19

Secretary General

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Dear delegates,

As the Secretary General, It is my honour and privilege to welcome you all to the 13th Doon School Model United Nations Conference. DSMUN has been growing exponentially and actively augmenting the level and intensity of crises, debate and co-operation with each passing year. It is a legacy that we hope to continue and reinforce with this year's conference.

In an ever volatile, dynamic and adaptive international status-quo, it becomes increasingly vital for us as students- and thereby potential actors in the same system of compromise- to deliberate, discuss and formulate the groundwork of bi-lateral and multi-lateral ties that are to be established in the future.

With firm precedence, it would not be wrong to say that delegates, having attended this conference in the past, have developed a deeper and a more empirical understanding of diplomacy, compromise and conflict. While the Viceroy's Executive Council strives to ensure the peaceful transfer of power from the British to the Indian Union in 1946, the NATO contemplates the feasibility of occupying Antarctica. From condemning theocracies to enforcing climate laws, DSMUN will be an invigorating amalgamation of resolving and debating dissidence, dispute and disparity.

Besides whiling away my time watching typical Netflix Rom-coms, I find myself engrossed in reading about the framework and history of international and national politics. I am in- charge of the historical and political society and the editor of various publications in school. Having participated in various MUNs in India and abroad, I have had the opportunity to serve DSMUN in various capacities, and subsequently feel privileged to be given the opportunity to be at the organisational apex of the conference this year.

I eagerly await your presence at Chandbagh.

Warm regards,

Vikram Jain



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chair.rs@doonschool.comwww.dsmun.in**President's Address**

Greetings!

As the President of the Doon School Model United Nations Society, it gives me immense pleasure to invite you to the 13th Session of the Doon School Model United Nations Conference. Being at the pinnacle of a conference that finds itself amidst the top ranks in the country, both in terms of global outreach and quality, has been an absolute honour. However, we at Doon constantly strive to outdo ourselves and promise that this edition of DSMUN will outdo all of its predecessors be it in terms of organizational skill, quality of debate or participation not just from the South Asian region but from around the world. It is with this vision in mind that I extend my heartiest welcome to each one of you to this year's conference.

The scope of this year's DSMUN will not remain confined to conventional committees. Keeping this in mind, we have expanded DSMUN's committee choices incorporating some bold and new ideas. With the introduction of highly challenging committees such as Lincoln's War Cabinet (1864), Viceroy's Executive Council (1946), Union Council of Ministers (1984) and the Rajya Sabha, we aim to pull off a conference not limited to one's imagination. This year's committees are aimed at developing informative deliberations and solutions to issues: both of global and national significance. Discussions pertaining to context of historical events allows one to explore the multitude of possibilities and find answers to the fundamental question of 'what if'. Having said so, the essential Model UN committees still remain intact providing an interesting challenge in terms of debate, wit and diplomacy to one and all.

As for myself, I am currently surviving the ISC curriculum and hold a keen interest in Politics and History. I deeply enjoy playing sports be it athletics or football. If not on the sports field, you can probably catch me commenting on Tottenham Hotspurs bleak chances of clinching a trophy. I also serve as the School Captain of the Doon School and the Editor-in-Chief of the Yearbook, one of the school's flagship publications.

Looking forward to seeing you all in August.

Warm Regards,

Nandil B. Sarma

Introduction to the committee

The Rajya Sabha is the Upper House of the Indian Parliamentary system with a maximum strength of 250 Members of Parliament- out of which 12 members are nominated by the President and 238 are representatives of the States and Union Territories. The current strength of Rajya Sabha, however, is 245, out of which 233 are representatives of the States and Union territories of Delhi and Puducherry and 12 are nominated by the President. The members nominated by the President are people having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of matters such as literature, science, art and social service. The representatives of the States and of the Union Territories in the Rajya Sabha are elected by the method of indirect election. The representatives of each State and Union territories are elected by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of that State (Vidhan Sabha) and by the members of the Electoral College for Union Territories, as the case may be, in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. The Electoral College for the National Capital Territory of Delhi consists of the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of Delhi, and that for Puducherry consists of the elected members of the Puducherry Legislative Assembly. Rajya Sabha has played a constructive and effective role in our polity. Its performance in the legislative field and in influencing Government policies has been quite significant. Rajya Sabha has, in fact, worked in a spirit of cooperation with Lok Sabha as per the Constitutional mandate. Rajya Sabha has prevented hasty legislation and has served as a dignified chamber representing the federal principle. As a federal chamber, it has worked for the unity and integrity of the nation and has reinforced the faith of the people in parliamentary democracy.

The Rajya Sabha is the most prestigious legislative body of the country. It has legislative powers equal to the Lok Sabha except in the case of money bills. The Rajya Sabha plays a very crucial role in preserving the federal structure of the country. This is because the structure and electoral process of the Rajya Sabha is designed to provide the essential checks and balances on the power the central government holds, the fact that the Bharatiya Janata Party could not even get close to majority in the upper house even after forming government in twenty one (21) out of twenty eight states proves the previous statement. The Rajya also has certain exclusive powers which the Lok Sabha does not possess. These powers are the powers to proclaim emergency when the Lok Sabha is dissolved, set up an all India service which is common to all the states by passing a resolution with a majority not less than two-thirds of the upper house and declare a subject in the state list of national importance and allow the parliament to make laws on it by passing a resolution of not less than 2/3rds of the upper house. The Rajya is therefore a very important component of the federal structure of the country which plays a very important role in the legislations/

legislative matters of the country. To have a clear understanding of the parliament and legislative matters one needs to have a clear understanding of the Rajya Sabha.

In this Session at DSMUN'19 we aim to discuss topics of national importance and provide the delegates a practical understanding of the upper house of the Indian Parliament.



Agenda 1

Universal Basic Income Scheme Act.

Scope of the Agenda

During committee there are a few primary areas the Executive Board believes

should be addressed with regard to this agenda. Firstly, considering the UBI policy which will cause immense fiscal deficit and great opportunity cost- the Members of Parliament will be expected to discuss about the financing of such a scheme as well as in deciding a criteria for beneficiaries for the same. This is of importance as the major issue with the materialization of the UBI from a concept to a scheme has been concerns of financing, feasibility and opportunity cost.

Secondly, another major aspect of the policy to debate upon is the incentive structures that are present for the various stakeholders- bureaucrats, beneficiaries and taxpayers. Looking into this area will help MP's consider all the parties that are effected and base their stance, majorly, on this. Incentive structures also help in determining the possible costs and benefits of such a scheme in comparison to its social welfare counterparts- these include matters of red-tapism, efficiency and unemployment.

Lastly, such a scheme will have a huge impact on problems like income inequality, vote bank politics and the power dynamics present in the nation which is a component of the socio-

political aspect that the EB would highly recommend engagement in. This is essential as society's possible response to a policy is of great importance to MP's as it- firstly affects people's political choices and secondly because it acts as a form of feedback for the Members of the Rajya Sabha to consider while designing the policy in the house itself or manifestos for Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha elections.

What is UBI?

Universal Basic Income is a policy, followed in various forms by countries around the world, that involves government's providing periodic transfer payments to all citizens, regardless of their social or economic status. While, this policy is regarded as unconditional and universal, it benefits the lower-income strata more than citizens who already receive high payments in addition to UBI, this is because the net benefits these individuals receive will be tapered down by the direct taxes they pay. As a welfare scheme, it is availed in the form of direct transfer of cash and not in kind. The policy has been conceptualized and exercised, around the world, keeping in mind certain goals and requirements of people in the 21st century. These include, the rapid substitution of labour with technology which results in lower purchasing power and unemployment, as well as rising income inequality in many Developing and Less- Developed countries.

Some advantages of the policy, that have been identified over the years, include its efficiency due to its universal nature- thus avoiding the processes of identifying beneficiaries and problems like misallocation of funds and red- tapism that arise in other social security schemes, especially in developing countries and with schemes that involve welfare in kind.

On the contrary, the policy has certain shortcomings as well which include a fall in incentive for people to seek employment as they have a fixed income without having to work at all , wrongful spending of funds- for instance on alcohol and drugs instead of healthcare and education, and overall it could result in compromises being made in other areas of public expenditure.

As stated earlier this concept has been put into action in various countries around the world. Finland is an important example that demonstrates UBI in action, although it is a Western Liberal Democracy with a high standard of living, it faced some problems like a de- incentivized population as well. Moreover, states in India like Madhya Pradesh and Sikkim have tried or have proposed to test a UBI scheme at the state level. Such examples within the country could help MP's understand how the financing of such a scheme could be figured out.

What is the need for UBI in India?

India is a Less-Developed or Developing country where the per capita income of the people is very low- having a large part of the population living in less than 1 dollar a day. The standard of living of the majority of people in India is far from satisfactory- people live in un-sanitary conditions- they aren't able to get a diet which has all the basic nutrients- leading to malnutrition and ,moreover, a large portion of the rural population does not even have access to a toilet, all these clearly reflects the standard of living of the people of India. Further, being primarily agrarian as an economy and as a society India classifies as a Less- Developed country- while industrialization and commercialization is on the rise, its significance cannot be compared to that of farming- the primary source of income in the nation. inequalities of income are widespread in the country, large houses and luxury vehicles co-exist with abject poverty, it is because of these inequalities that exist in India that the social fabric and social system is very traditional and orthodox. Children are not able to get educated due to a lack of financial resources and as they are made to work by their parents (as child labour) for the survival of their family as they are illiterate and uneducated, they tend to believe in such illogical thoughts where they prioritize work over education.

If a minimum income is provided, then the per capita income of the people is definitely going to increase which in turn is going to increase the average standard of living of the people. As a consequence of this there will be an increase in adult literacy, number of people completing secondary education and thus an overall increase in the quality of life along with a decrease in poverty and inequalities of income and wealth. Inequalities of income and wealth are definitely going to decrease because if the Universal Basic Income Scheme (UBI) is implemented only for the poor i.e. for those who earn less than a particular amount of money it will increase the amount of money in the hands of the poor which will then definitely decrease the inequalities which are currently widespread and are constantly expanding along with contributing to more expenditure in the economy.

Talking about the effect of the implementation of the UBI Scheme on education, it will undoubtedly enhance the level of education in the country. This is because, implementation of the UBI Scheme will increase cash flow in the poor households which would allow the children of these households to study and educate themselves instead of working as child labour. With the enhancement of the level of education of people, their unquestioned faith and belief in irrational traditions and superstitions would fade away and they would then critically think

about all of these rather than blindly following and believe them.

Thus, there is a need for the implementation of the Universal Basic Income Scheme in India, although what must not be forgotten is that it requires huge amounts of funding which can only be arranged by reducing government expenditure in various other sectors like the education sector or the health sector.

Political Stances

INC (Nyay Scheme)

The introduction of such a policy was first seen in India when this concept's legitimacy and feasibility was discussed over 40 pages in the 2016-17 Indian Economic Survey. As the general elections approach all parties have begun giving poll promises for and against UBI and propose differentiated versions of it in their manifestos. Towards the end of March Congress Party President Rahul Gandhi has proposed Nyuntam Aay Yojana, or NYAY, a scheme which is similar to UBI in some respects and differs from it in others. According to the details of the scheme, Rahul Gandhi and other Congress Leaders have assured that around 50 million families will receive 6000 rupees on a monthly basis, essentially lifting all citizens above the poverty line and ensuring they earn more than one dollar a day- which is a global economic indicator for recognizing absolute poverty. This policy stands to be

beneficial for the economy in many ways, however, statistically, the abundance of absolute poverty in India has decreased recently with only 1 of 5 people facing it as supposed to 2 in 5 that existed for the past many years- this shows success of the other social welfare schemes in India that provide support in kind and not cash.

Unlike the larger concept of UBI the NYAY scheme is explicitly set out to target a group of beneficiaries- poor families, however much like the UBI policy states the Congress Party will be exercising the scheme via direct cash transfer payments.

BJP

On the other end of the spectrum, the party which is governing the country at present- the Bharatiya Janata Party- under Prime Minister Narendra Modi – have condemned and openly opposed the Congress’s policy- pointing out how it is unfeasible and will majorly increase the growing fiscal burden on the economy. Although, much like the Congress, even the BJP has proposed a direct transfer payment system known as PM-KISAN – a policy which gives 120 million small farmers (who have less than 5 acres of land) 6000 rupees a year as basic income support. This tackles the volatile nature of their profession which is based on nature and the weather- it aims to reduce a growing problem in India- Farmer Suicide. In comparison to the Congress’

NYAY scheme which would cost 2% of the GDP, PM-KISAN costs a far lesser 0.4%. However, it benefits almost half the number of people that the NYAY scheme does, which is approximately 250 million.

Regional Parties

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), led by Lalu Prasad Yadav, have come out in full support for the Congress during the upcoming elections and support the NYAY scheme. The RJD has come back with the Congress and shares its manifesto.

On the other hand, Akhilesh Yadav’s Samajwadi Party (SP) has taken the cue from the Congress and proposed its own scheme to tackle poverty and empower women with its poll promise of giving women from needy families 3000 rupees on a monthly basis as a part of their Socialist Pension Scheme. Having chosen a separate path from the Congress they no longer stand by it in the upcoming elections. Finally, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), led by Mayawati, have also publicly shown disregard for Congress’s NYAY scheme- also taking a different path ahead of the general elections.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) led by Sitaram Yechury has also in a way proposed a basic income for workers as it has promised in its manifesto a statutory minimum wage for workers of not less than Rs. 18000 per month, these are

wages which are linked to the consumer price index.

The Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) has also promised a UBI scheme to be implemented in Sikkim, but what is different in their scheme is that they are the first ones to mention their source of the money required for the implementation of the expensive scheme which other parties that have promised UBI schemes have not done. The details of their scheme/model are mentioned in the next paragraph.

Application of UBI by State Governments

Ahead of the upcoming general elections The Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) has recently announced a UBI scheme to be implemented in the state, being the first state to do so. Furthermore, the party's manifesto talks about the means they will use to finance this scheme- this includes the surplus funds they have collected with the various hydropower projects that are presently active in the state. Moreover, other forms of welfare, subsidy and support have been withdrawn to use the same resources to finance the UBI scheme of a monthly staple transfer. The SDF is aligned with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and therefore has an alliance with the BJP for the upcoming elections.

In 2012-13 the Madhya Pradesh government implemented a trial UBI

known as Sewa-INBI wherein they provided a stable UBI to the whole population of eight villages. This experimental scheme proved to be both beneficial and cost worthy to the economy and fiscal budget- this model can be used by MP's to refer to while designing policy in committee. A few immediate advantages were that issues related to hunger, malnutrition and illness improved and the quality of life was enhanced on the whole.

Models of UBI in Different Countries

Much like the NYAY scheme proposed by Rahul Gandhi, and the Congress party, many countries around the world have introduced different forms and versions of the UBI concept. In committee, the Executive Board expects delegates to not only debate whether UBI, in any form, should be implemented in India but also whether, upon modification, it would be possible to come to a consensus on a policy that will benefit the lower economic strata in India who are stuck in a vicious cycle of poverty. We encourage delegates to take the lead from models that have been implemented abroad in order to see what would be best for India considering all factors- political, fiscal and bureaucratic. As mentioned earlier Western Liberal Democracies like Finland and Canada have implemented the UBI concept in their legislative policies.

- The government in Finland decided in January 2017 to try out UBI in the country. However, much like all versions of the concept, it was modified to the need of Finland at the time- this policy intended to target 2000 unemployed people. From January 2017 up until December of 2018 these people got 560 euros every month as a direct transfer payment. The Finnish model was conducted like an experiment to see whether it was worth implementing such a policy for all Finns in the future, however the results and observations proved not to be in favour of such a policy. It was observed that while beneficiaries felt happier and less stressed, in terms of finances, the governments initial aims weren't satisfied. The government hoped that by providing a portion of the unemployed with a security net of a flat monthly income they would be incentivized to seek employment and it would help them find jobs- which wasn't the case, therefore they dropped the policy.
- Iran was one of the first countries in the world to adopt the UBI scheme and that too in its complete, undiluted form. In Autumn 2010 the Iranian Government decided to

implement a UBI policy instead of the fuel and supplies subsidies that have been available for Iranians for years. In the Iranian model all citizens are given 40 dollars per month- which amounts to 480 dollars per year per person. This model is the only one where UBI has been implemented in its absolute conceptual form of direct transfers to every citizen- no matter their economic standing. Furthermore, Iran is the first third world country to implement such a policy and the fiscal impact on Iran can be something Indian Members of Parliament can look into while discussing the future of India in this regard.

- In the Canadian state of Ontario- the liberal government has proposed a UBI scheme for the state known as the Ontario Basic Income Pilot Project. This policy was announced in 2017 with a promise of 17000 Canadian Dollars per annum. However, this scheme has not been implemented in practice yet- with the concept being bounced back and forth.

Opportunity Costs Involved

The implementation of the Universal Basic Income requires a huge amount of money which can only be made available

if the government reduces its expenditure in some other sector like the education, defence or health which are extremely critical to the development and security of the country. Compromising on sectors like health and education can have extremely adverse effects on the economy and more than that on the quality of life of the people which is why all Members of Parliament have to think carefully about which sector the funds can be arranged from without having an adverse effect on the lives of the citizens of the country. What we all must keep in mind is that provision of health and education facilities by the state is also a form of money income because it reduces the expenditure of the households as a whole because government facilities are either free or too cheap. Even if the people have a lot of income and wealth without the access to medical and education facilities then the purpose of an increased income is defeated because quality of life or the standard of living cannot improve without access to education and medical facilities because they are necessities of life without which no person can be happy or satisfied with life, to put it very precisely, there can be no economic welfare without these essential facilities. The most important component of a UBI scheme is the source of money for the implementation of the scheme, a UBI scheme or model can only be successful if the opportunity costs involved are not that important or crucial to the well-being of the citizens of

the state, this is something we have to focus on because we are the Upper House of the Parliament of a welfare state for which the welfare of its citizens is the most important.

On the whole, in order to finance such a scheme, the government will have to significantly revise the annual budget- this may involve a great deal of fiscal deficit in the budget and significant borrowing, from both international bodies and the private sector, both of which have their own impacts and therefore the policy needs to be closely examined and re-examined prior to its passing and implementation. Furthermore, India being a developing country with high levels of poverty and an ever-growing population of over a billion people, has various feasibility and fiscal problems. This includes the funds that would be needed to locate and register all beneficiaries, accommodate mandatory bureaucratic processes and most importantly fund the scheme itself.

At present there exist many welfare and social security schemes in India which deliver essential public services and support to the economically weaker section of society, namely people below the poverty line (earning 1 dollar a day- a sign of absolute poverty). Some of these schemes like the various PM yojanas and other subsidies may have to be cut down or prioritized less in comparison to the UBI scheme- therefore it seems quite likely that the UBI may become India's

only welfare support scheme- of course- this being dependent on the discussions and decisions taken by the Members of Parliament.

Possible Solutions

The Universal Basic Income scheme can be designed and implemented in various different ways- as seen in countries abroad and tried out by state governments in India itself. Therefore, committee can take almost any course- right from a UBI for all citizens to no UBI at all. The NYAY proposal states that it will be for poor families- that come in a certain economic bracket, whereas in Sikkim the SDF proposes a UBI for all. This is why the Parliamentarians along with their respective parties will have to /can propose their own model or version of implementing the UBI scheme in accordance to their party's views and ideology.

The executive board strongly advises or recommends the delegates to keep in mind India's financial situation and condition before proposing a model which is not viable in a developing country like ours, for example, implementing it for everyone in India irrespective of the income earned by the person would not only be a little impractical but also it would fail to address the issue of increasing inequalities of income and wealth. On the other hand, not supporting a UBI has its own set of implications as mentioned earlier.

Therefore, it is expected, and is normal in parliament, for parties to make some compromises and carefully consider the various options as whatever decision is taken has a direct, large impact on the country's economy.

Possible Course of Committee

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Agenda 2

Comprehensive ecology, wildlife and environment Protection Act.

Scope of Agenda

This agenda- which discusses a comprehensive ecology, wildlife and environment protection act- will be covering a vast array of issues related to these broad aspects of conservation and sustainable development. It will cover issues regarding the protection and conservation of flora and fauna in the country- which are varied and also under threat primarily due to rapid industrialization.

Secondly, it will look into the growing problem of pollution, water and air both, and solutions to the same will have to be discussed- matters of financing and opportunity cost must be considered as well. This aspect is also a direct effect of industrialization and deals with the harms caused by its various waste products- be it greenhouse gases, chemical waste or even non-biodegradable waste.

Thirdly, the concept and issue of global warming and climate change to which all nations contribute by polluting the environment through vehicles, factories and production of electricity.

Discussing these three large topics will help Members of Parliament finally take a decision on which area to prioritize. All three of these areas boil down to a clash of two policy paradigms, which most developing nations face in the 21st century, Industrialization and economic growth or sustainable development,

ecological conservation and global warming. Members of Parliament or parties will hold views aligned with either side, both of them or neither. Therefore, it is expected that Members of Parliament collaborate, compromise and dissent in order to finally produce a legally binding bill which the Executive Board hopes will pass and is accepted by the majority to be in the best interest of the nation.

The timeline provided will help delegates understand and evaluate policies that have been implemented since the inception of the nation in order to keep alive India's rich biodiversity and ecological diversity. The two points of view, which contain all primary information related to this agenda, the two polar ways of looking at it, will help Members of Parliament navigate their way through where their portfolio and party stance on the matter at hand and are given for the purpose of introducing the agenda- a starting point in the research required for Members of Parliament to do. It is expected by the Executive Board that Members of Parliament will consider these conflicting points of view and use them to build arguments in line with their portfolio's stance on the issue(s) and then either reject or pass the bills proposed by the various blocs formed during the course of committee.

Relevance of the Agenda in India

India is one of the most biologically diverse countries and it is important for the government to take some comprehensive steps to conserve our resources as well as our invaluable biodiversity. India accounts for almost 8% world's recorded species¹ and even the UNDP believes that India must conserve its biodiversity. In the past five years the government has not taken any comprehensive steps to protect our ecology and thus the need arises in the present day.

The Lancet study² states that India's average life expectancy would increase by 1.7 years if we are able to manage the contamination of air. In fact the study also states that pollution accounted for 1.24 million lives in 2017 almost 12.5% of all the deaths.

Pollution

Although India is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, its pollution levels are rising catastrophically-

soot, Dust, Ozone and sulphur- dioxide remain a major concern for the government. Air pollution is one of the most dangerous types of pollution affecting India and according to a report of the International Energy Agency- in 2040 around 9 lakh premature deaths will take place due to air pollution³. The average life expectancy is also estimated to go down due to air pollution.

Groundwater depletion is another major concern for the Indian government as due to irrigation of cash crops the availability of ground water is gradually decreasing this affects the future generations as groundwater is a major source of clean water, which if depleted, might result in devastating droughts.

Plastic is another major concern for this developing nation as the demand of plastic is expected to increase exponentially and it is important for the government to find a way to manage this large amount of plastic. Garbage disposal and Sanitation are another major concern for our government. 47 species of plants and animals in India are estimated to have become endangered in the past few years⁴. Loss of ecology has left a lot

¹ <http://www.in.undp.org/>

² [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(18\)30261-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(18)30261-4/fulltext)

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<https://www.iea.org/newsroom/news/2016/june/energy-and-air-pollution.html>

⁴ https://www.google.com/url?client=internal-uds-cse&cx=016364595556873131513:lg-p43v3tam&q=http://www.in.undp.org/content/india/en/home/climate-and-disaster-resilience/successstories/the_biodiversitychallenge-supportingindiasecosystems.html&sa=U&ved=2ahUKEwjFlfvk9vThAhWbiXAKHaDHBQkQFjAAe

species in danger and after looking at this disturbing data, the executive board feels that Members of Parliament must take some strong steps to ensure the preservation of ecology while not compromising on the development of our country.

India in the UNFCCC

India's has shown its concern about Climate change but it does not seem to be ready to limit its own emission. The Environment Minister of India has made it very clear that India would not limit its emission for almost 30 years, which might have some positive externalities, but this can also have some cataclysmic impacts on our country. With an increasing number of deaths due to pollution our government must make a bill that ensures a reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases. We must shift to using more sustainable energy sources and, naturally, research and development would play an integral role in this shift. The government must not only conserve but also make sure that India's economic development does not get hindered. The best way forward is to invest in sustainable energy sources like hydroelectricity and on R&D as well.

National Action Plan on Climate Change

All of us are aware of the devastating climate change taking place. Although the environment ministry has not promised the UN about decreasing the level of emission but has set up an action plan on climate change. The NAPCC has 8 major goals.

These goals/aims include:

1. Promoting the use of sustainable energy sources like Solar energy. The aim is to set a solar research centre and to reduce the use of fossil fuels
2. The NAPCC recommends mandating specific energy consumption decreases in large energy-consuming industries
3. The NAPCC also recommends conservation of energy. It also financed public-private partnership to reduce energy consumption through demand side management.
4. The NAPCC also aimed at promoting energy efficiency. It also aimed at promoting public transport to reduce air pollution.
5. The NAPCC also aims at improving water use efficiency by 20%.
6. It also aims at protecting and conserving the Himalayan ecosystem.
7. The NAPCC also aims at afforestation of 6 million hectares of land.

8. It also aims at gaining a better understanding of climate change.

The Importance of Conservation

It is important for all the MPs to understand the need for conservation. All of us are aware of the fact that resources are limited but the human wants are unlimited. India is a developing nation and for development to take place we must use our resources wisely, keeping in mind the negative and positive externalities of our actions. Looking at recent trends, it is quite evident that development has had a lot of negative externalities on our environment. The rate of pollution is rising and the resources are depleting very quickly. The government must take a step to stop this depletion and the negative impacts on our environment. We must simply conserve in order to pass the resources down to our future generations. In fact some people might argue that conservation of both resources and environment would stop development but we must understand that the more resources we use the higher the chance of uneconomic activity taking place and the higher negative externalities on environment. As of now the government must ensure that the environment and resources are well protected and conserved.

Timeline for Actions

The government of India has taken a few steps for the conservation and protection of our environment but these actions don't seem to be very successful as it is quite evident that the level of pollution is constantly increasing and the biodiversity of our nation is in danger.

Wildlife Protection Act (1972)

The Government of India took its first planning step in 1972 when it introduced the Wildlife Protection Act. The Act was introduced to protect the jungle and its inhabitants from the devastation of wildfire. The Act got amended in 2003 and there is yet a lot of scope to amend this act.

Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act (1974)

The government also introduced the Water (prevention and control of pollution) Act in 1974. In this act the government promoted the restoration and prevention of contaminated water bodies in India. The government set up some local bodies to make the policy more efficient.

Forest Conservation Act (1980)

In 1980 the government introduced the Forest Conservation Act. This act was introduced to conserve the forests of India and make them reserved. It stops the use of forests for other means and to stop the de-reservation of forests in the near future.

The Air (Preservation and Control of Pollution) Act (1981)

The government then introduced The Air (prevention and control of pollution) Act 1981. The Air act was introduced to prevent the contamination of air and to decrease the pollution levels. This act empowered the state government to take steps to prevent polluting air. Its main aim was to combat pollution but the act does not seem to be very successful as pollution rates are constantly rising.

The Environment Act (1986)

The government then introduced The environment act in 1986. According to this act the centre government is empowered to take any particular action to conserve the environment. This act was introduced to protect and take adamant action to conserve our natural environmental resources. Anyone who does not abide by the rules is fined according to this act.

In 1991 and 2002 the following acts were introduced :-

- 1)The Public Liability Insurance Act
- 2)The Biological Diversity Act.

National Green Tribunal

Finally in 2010 the Indian government set the National green tribunal:

This act was established on 18 October, 2010. This act was implemented to preserve the environment and to protect the natural resources. All the water and cess acts are also a part of the act. All the people who support conservation know this act very well. The implementation of this act does also not seem to be very successful as the government has recently sold hectares of land to capitalists in the name of “development”.

Project Tiger

The tiger act was introduced by the Indira to protect tigers which usually suffered due to habitat loss, poaching and various other human interventions. The act helped the government preserve and protect this precious species of animal. The government set up a National Tiger Conservation association which took the adamant steps to prevent the tigers from being extinct. Due to the setting up of this committee the cases of poaching were decreased and a lot of of people were also relocated. The government also took various steps to breed tigers in safe environment to prevent its extinction. This is not the only act which was set up to preserve wildlife in fact the government also set up acts like wildlife protection act. This act was also set up to reduce poaching and to conserve the various diverse species of animals present in our jungles. The act was set in 1972 and it penalised the people found poaching or taking part in any illegal activity. Other acts include Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act And the article 51(G).

All these policies have to be amended and the Rajya Sabha should also take

adamant steps to stop the exploitation of resources and to support conservation. All these steps would surely help the government to make our future better. Sustainable development is the next step forward.

Dissent Note

India is a developing nation with an agrarian economy and very large population out of which a significant percentage are victims of absolute poverty- they earn less than one dollar a day for themselves and their families. While there are subsidies, social welfare schemes and housing provided by the government, however the people's situation hardly improves due to the sheer size of the population and scarcity of resources available. India is extremely overpopulated- in lay man's terms- there are too many people and too few resources- leading to a poor quality of life for majority of the populace. In terms of the UN's Human Development Index (HDI)- India is placed 130th out of 189 countries⁵- this translates to the fact that the literacy rate, per capita income and life expectancy are way below the world average. Basic socio-economic rights like food, water, shelter, healthcare and education are lacking and inaccessible to many people. The industrial base of the nation is expanding, but in comparison to others and its own economic potential it

is lagging far behind. Income inequality, unemployment and illiteracy are rampant throughout the country. In such a context, as members of the upper house of Indian Parliament- MPs should carefully consider what is at stake when deciding to divert resources to sustainability and conservation.

While, sustainable development, wildlife conservation, pollution control and a low emission rate are necessary in times of global warming, climate change and frequent natural disasters- India is just not ready for such an allocation of resources. The government needs to focus more on drafting bills that help use resources to put a roof over the heads of the millions of Indian citizens that call the roadside their home. Furthermore, considering that European countries and the USA went through the Industrial Revolution almost 200 years prior to India- they are now completely industrialized with comparatively minimal manual labour in factories. Research and development, technology and now even Artificial Intelligence (AI) aided manufacture is being used and practiced in these nations. Their citizens are given all their basic socio-economic rights like food, water, free healthcare and education- making their living standard and employment rate very high. Therefore, they can afford to divert resources to sustainable development and biodiversity preservation. However, India, being a British colony, has only

⁵ <http://hdr.undp.org/>

started the process of industrialization in the 20th century as compared to the 18th century for European nations. Thus, it is simply not in the best interest of the people for their tax to go into anything other than infrastructure building, subsidies for research and development and provision of basic socio-economic rights.

Matters of climate change and global warming have very serious consequences which may even involve the extinction of our race, but before playing a part in solving these problems- the homeless and unemployed need to be included in the economic mainstream and be in a place to afford basic necessities for their survival- only then can the government divert resources elsewhere. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the most recognized international body on environmental issues with 165 signatories, states that, “India signed the UNFCCC on 10 June 1992 and ratified it on 1 November 1993. Under the UNFCCC, developing countries such as India do not have binding Green House Gas mitigation commitments in recognition of their small contribution to the greenhouse problem as well as low financial and technical capacities.”⁶ Much

like all other developing countries which are signatories of the UNFCCC- India is also considered to be lacking resources to reduce emissions and help control climate change. This shows that a body like the UN also believes that developing countries need to channelize their resources for the development and growth of their own nation first and thus they are not bound by any commitments to the UN.

The next issue a comprehensive bill like the one being proposed will address is that of wildlife and ecological conservation and protection. While, it is of great importance to make sure that the wildlife in the country, much like humans, are protected and conserved, it is of greater importance to improve the productive capacity, human resources and technology in the country. Moreover, there already exist policies in action like Project Tiger, Anti-Poaching Laws and the Biological Diversity Act which have displayed promising outcomes. Industrialization and Conservation seem to be coming to an equilibrium in India as many wildlife sanctuaries and ecological national parks are being made- in these parks there is restricted entry and a ban on poaching. Considering this it seems that India is looking into issues with regard to forests and ecology with great concern and to the best of its abilities. Therefore, further expanding and funding such policies will cause significant costs to other departments like healthcare and education. Thus, the status quo seems to be good enough for the time being.

Considering that issues like air pollution and the use of renewable energy are important for the future survival of Indian citizens, the government has already taken various steps to tackle them. To create a separate bill and further

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http://envfor.nic.in/sites/default/files/c/c/india_unfccc.htm

emphasise the need to solve such problems will divert funds from areas that are in dire need of them, as mentioned previously. Therefore, the pre-existing policies seem to do the job to India's maximum capability and need. Firstly, the National Clean Air Programme which was launched earlier this year deals with an issue that affects the daily life of people living in large urban areas like the NCR, Kolkata and Lucknow. The air quality on most of the nation ranges from unhealthy to dangerous to deadly- in places like Ghaziabad. This programme covers 102 cities- where measures to control and reduce construction dust, industrial emissions and vehicular emissions are being implemented. On a broader level, the NCAP will expand the national air quality monitoring network and spread awareness on how people can do their bit on a daily basis. Secondly, comes the National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy implemented in 2017- "The main objective of this Policy is to provide a framework for promotion of large grid connected wind-solar PV hybrid system for optimal and efficient utilization of transmission infrastructure and land"⁷. Such steps are already being taken by the government, while still tackling issues of poverty and unemployment to the best of its capabilities, thus it is not viable to divert more and more resources by drafting a comprehensive bill on the matter until and unless other more pressing issues of national importance are dealt with first.

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