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LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE : SDG, ESG & Beyond



Prof. Bidyut K. Sarkar



Indian Leadership for World Peace

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Prof. Bidyut K. Sarkar

Founder-Managing Trustee,
Prof. S. K. Chakraborty Memorial Trust
Ex-Vice Principal & Member-Secretary,
Tagore Centre for Values (RNTCHV)



**Prof. S K Chakraborty Memorial Trust
Kolkata**

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FOREWORD

Our sages treasured peace everywhere. To a nonagenarian like me, peace appears to be the foundation of comprehensive human development; but for various reasons increasingly it seems to be a rare commodity. Amidst this scenario, the world is craving for the right kind of leadership that can establish durable peace.

Ushering in peace, both at the individual and at the collective level, through the cultivation of right kind of human values, was one of the objectives of the establishment of MCHV, at IIM Calcutta, way back in early 1990's, in which Prof. S K Chakraborty (1940-2018) played the pivotal role through our active support. To carry forward his legacy, we (his friends, relatives and students) have formed this Trust in July 2019.

The concepts of SDG & ESG and the visible efforts to vigorously implement them are new rays of hope. But the disturbances all around in the last few years arising out of Covid19, social, religious and geopolitical tensions are putting question marks to their successful outcome within the targeted time frame. Given these present challenges and the mixed results of the initiatives of the past years chronicled in the various international reports, human values based wise leadership seems to be the call of the day. This work of the present author, known for his untiring efforts to carry forward the good work of Prof. Chakraborty and for his over hundred publications, therefore is very timely.

In this present work, the author specifically dwells upon Goal No. 16 of SDG and development of the concepts related to Responsible Investment. It also explains briefly the complimentary relationship between SDG and ESG following the standard contents in the public domain. Thus, after highlighting the general knowledge regarding the topic, the author attempts to point out the

inadequacies in this conventional outlook when seen through the prism of the realizers and the thinkers of the world particularly that of the wisdom of the ancient and contemporary sages of India. That these higher dimensional thoughts are in conformity with the most advanced scientific thoughts specifically that of physics is poignantly highlighted by the author. Such assertions based on the evergreen thoughts of Sri Aurobindo and others lead to the exhortation of including them into the popular discourse of the subject under consideration.

Hence, the present work will extend the reader's vision to a new higher realm and help better appreciate the problem of attaining peace.

We hope the readers of all sections of the society especially the policy makers related to SDG & ESG will be benefitted from this work which is a product of author's deep spiritual endeavours.

The Trust seeks support and blessings from all well-wishers.

Dr. Subir Chowdhury
Founder-Chairman, Board of Trustees,
Prof. S. K. Chakraborty Memorial Trust.
Former Director, IIM Calcutta (Kolkata).

PREFACE

Peace is the most sought after common good; be it material prosperity or spiritual development, without peace nothing authentic seems to be achievable. Outer world is a manifestation of the inner world; therefore to have relative peace in the outer world, some sincere attempts should be made to achieve inner peace. Our ancient spiritual psychology applied with the modern brain science makes a strong case for this assertion.

It is quite laudable that the well-meaning international agencies like UNDP and others have come up with the concept of SDGs for sustainable development of the nations. Moreover, the SDGs, whose responsibility primarily lies with the govt.(s), are backed up by the idea of ESG whose implementation attempts to make the corporate world accountable. It is also understood that participation of all the sections of society is needed to achieve the goals within a certain time frame. In the present work we are also concerned about the development of sustainable peace in the world; presently it appears to be quite fragile.

Though achievement of some of the goals within the time-period by some countries is encouraging, the same regarding the parameters of peace is quite dismal, as per the latest SDR and general perception of the masses. Given this scenario, it seems obvious that the thinkers of the world should apply their mind and heart to realize the root cause of the problem and suggest measures to ameliorate the situation.

As one of the most ancient and living civilizations of the world, our Bharat(i.e. India) needs to remain alert about this shortfall and suggest ways based on her vast experiences to establish a reasonably peaceful world-order. Our contemporary realizers and thinkers

have considerable contributions in this regard in both theory and practice. It is essential that we make the new generations aware of their ideas, so that the efforts to bring peace can be broad-based. Our policy makers should also consider these spiritually inclined suggestions to better achieve these goals. The present work is a small contribution in that direction.

I remain grateful to all the academicians, professionals and editors engaged with ESG & SDG; substantial comments have been drawn from the public domain. I am deeply indebted to the contemporary thinkers of the world as well as to the ancient Rishi(s)(sages) whose evergreen realizations are guiding principles for all of us. I am also grateful to our Chairman, Dr. Subir Chowdhury, for all his moral support and to my students and well-wishers for their constant encouragements.

This small work is placed at the feet of the Lord with the hope and prayer—let many more souls get attracted to these lofty thoughts and derive profound inspiration from them. Let us all strive together to make our world a better and more peaceful place.

27th November, 2023

Prof. Bidyut K Sarkar

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Introduction

Peace has several dimensions; it may imply lack of disturbance and/or presence of bliss; at the macro-level it may involve several factors at the familial, societal, regional, national or international dimensions; at the micro-level i.e. individual level, concerns with various mental or emotional impurities like *shadaripu(s)* i.e. six internal enemies¹, cardinal sins of holy Bible etc. Since individual is the cause, collective entity like family, society etc. are the effects, it is worthwhile to work at the causal level, for a long-term solution.

Many well-meaning thinkers, policy makers and organizations have been active across the world to establish peace at various strata of the society. The following chapters will narrate briefly some such efforts at the macro level to establish peace; in spite of that, data shows that on the whole, disturbance has been increasing at almost all levels.

The above state of affairs, therefore, point to lack of something profound at the most basic level, consideration of which may positively alter the situation. The seeds of most of the problems lie in the human mind—the individual problem at the individual mind and collective problem at the collective mind. Thus, the outer solutions must have inner support.

In the recent times, we have had several endeavours to achieve all round material development through international initiatives like SDG, ESG etc.; while these missions are praiseworthy, they are frustrated by

several geo-political and social disturbances across the world. In such a scenario, we argue that to make these efforts bear desired results in an even and equitable manner, the sacred spiritual dimensions must also be inculcated.

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Contact Details

Registered Office: B4/1, Diamond Park, Kolkata-700104

Email-id.: profskcmemorialtrust@gmail.com

bidyutkumarsarkar880@gmail.com

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