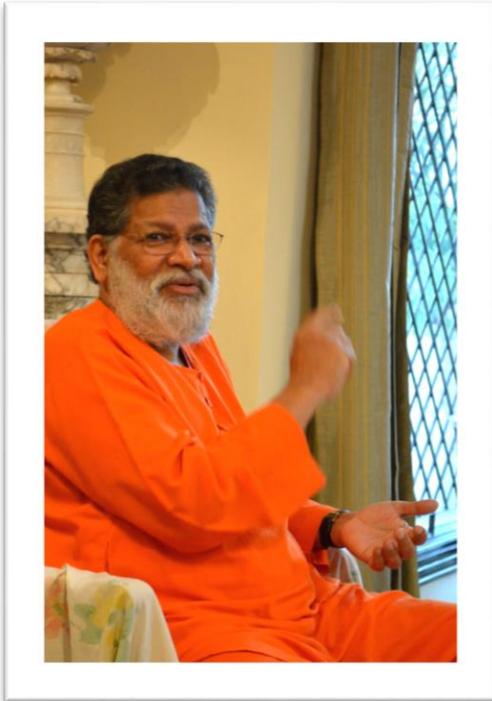


Human Values and Development

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A. On Human Values:

Values are set of principles that people cherish and try to live to enhance the quality of individual and collective life. It involves personal and community discipline and sacrifice/restraint/postponement of immediate gratification needs. Quality of life is a product of physical, social, environmental, mental, and spiritual health and wholeness.

Philosophical basis of Human Values

What are the philosophical bases of Human Values? Theological, Ecological, Humanistic or survival of the race? Should values be based on reason and scientific knowledge; or pragmatic-empirical-utility considerations like maximum happiness of maximum people/common good etc.; or romantic ideals like

equality, love and justice for all; are values revealed by God or are they precepts of exemplary people or self-evident axioms?

The Vedic roots of Values

The Vedic statements like 'Truth is One, but paths are many', 'Truth alone Triumphs', 'All this is Brahman', 'World is One Family', 'Let Noble thoughts come from all sides', 'Love/Non-injury is the highest virtue', 'Thou art that', 'Nishkama Karma', 'Loka samgraha', will be explored in understanding the Indian ideals of Values.

Human Values for the Global society and trans-national person

The entire historical experience of humankind is the common heritage of all humanity. Nobody or no nation or no group or race can legitimately make any exclusive claim to what is common heritage and was the result of intermingling of ideas, people and movement of goods and services. This talk will be an enquiry into what is common to humanity and values and make it available for people without prejudice and who want to unfold their hidden potentialities.

B. Defining Development:

Industrial development based on scientific outlook and productive power structures have created enormous wealth at least for 1/5 of the human race. It has been proved that we don't have to live in poverty, ignorance and illness. But the hidden cost of this development also has been humongous. Stress, loneliness, violence, exploitation, disparities, pollution, environmental degradation and dysfunctions and illnesses related to these factors have taken away the sheen from the gains of unprecedented economic development.

It seems that economic development is not possible without exploitation, domination and violence and uprooting large masses of humanity from their jobs and livelihood.

There are three yard sticks to measure growth- the GDP approach, the HDI and the PPP. Some people recommend a new yard stick called Human Happiness Index or Quality Of Life Index. A new approach and measuring rod to Human progress/ Development has become necessary factoring all hidden costs and interests of all stake holders if we have to correctly assess human condition and prescribe directions and policies for the future Redefining the meaning of Development is the need of the hour.

Love

Swami Bodhananda.

Source: "Syllabus for Human Development and Values", In an email response to BPM
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