

## **PRESS RELEASE**

To relook at the challenges posed by Climate Change, Global Warming, and as a result of these the extreme turns that of late weather has often been taking, India Centre for Policy Research and Development (ICPRD) held a day-long exchange of views among experts and thought leaders on Friday, April 7, 2023, at the World Trade Centre, Mumbai.

India's preparedness vis-à-vis or alongside that of other countries to meet the challenge of climate change was discussed at length. In view of the role played by the developed nations in contributing to the climate crisis and inadequacies of their response to deal with this was also discussed. The overall effects of these on developing countries like India and the rest of the Global South were also deliberated upon in a bid to find, suggest and take forward the possible solutions to this growing crisis.



Taking part in the discussion former BJP vice president Shyam Jaju called for conservation of resources and asked people to follow the dictum of “reduce, reuse and recycle” all articles of common use to save and harness resources and protect environment. His party colleague and BJP secretary Sunil Deodhar pointed out that protection of nature and environment were inherent parts of Indian culture and tradition. He said that India can show the way to the world by following the ancient wisdom nurtured by saints, seers and hermits throughout India.

Shalini Singh, a member of the founding team of People’s Archives of Rural India (PARI), virtually set the tone for the discussion by pointing to the fact that unseasonal or rather freak rains and hailstorms that intermittently lashed alongside strong winds through different parts of North India since last few weeks or so and until a few days ago. These caused huge damage to the standing crops and, thus, financial losses to farmers. The frequency of such unexpected weather events has been rising with each year, posing a grave threat to the lives and livelihood of millions of farmers. To drive the point home she remarked that the month of March last year or in 2022 was hottest since 1901 and a year before that in 2021 February was harshest since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

She showed a short video where a 75-year-old farmer, living near Delhi, bemoaned destruction of nature from Himachal Pradesh to Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. The lush green trees once covering Himachal hills have gone and so is the case in the UP plains where tall shady tree cover has been slain to give way to concrete houses. He said that he visited his in-laws village in Mathura recently to find the village denuded of full-

grown and tall neem, jamun and mango trees. The mud houses have been replaced with pucca structures. Thus, there is nothing left to keep the weather bearable for man, he lamented.



Singh said that the solutions being offered to meet the problem of rising temperature in summers is around making air-conditioners more efficient and cheap whereas enhanced use of cooling aids could further worsen the climate challenge. The debate on meeting today's climate challenge hovers around availability of funds and resources though the crisis demands much more where the will and drive to take on it becomes of utmost importance, she remarked.

Professor in the Department of Sustainable Engineering at TERI, or The Energy Resources Institute, Prateek Sharma, stressed upon looking at and reassessing the trajectory to be followed for further development



of the country. “Should we follow the same course that the developed world did, or chart a new one with sustainability in mind? The aspirations of most Indians is to go from acquiring a bicycle to motorbike to a small car to a big vehicle and this is thought to be valid and legitimate from the point of view of an individual. But given the challenge before us, shouldn’t we look for other means or strengthen our public transport to eliminate or minimise the use of personal mode of transport and cut the carbon emission?” he asked.



The MD and CEO of Afrinex Exchange Krishna Gangopadyay spoke about the role of stock exchanges and capital market in today’s sustainability efforts. She talked of inevitable rent-seeking that accompanies any business, enterprise, or fiscal venture and likened this

with nature that has now apparently been seeking some sort of return in form of respect or whatsoever because of its overuse by man.

The founder of ICPRD, Kr Rajiv Ranjan Singh, hailed the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiatives to reduce carbon footprint by augmenting the use of renewable energy. He said, "By 2030, India will increase its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW while sourcing 50% of its energy needs from renewable sources. Since the majority of the population depends on agriculture for a livelihood, the government of India has also taken several steps to promote sustainable agriculture practices."

Singh made an impassioned plea for all out and collective efforts to meet the challenge of climate change and realize the targets fixed by the Prime Minister to cut emissions, save the nature and avert the looming existential threat that the world has come to faces today whether wittingly or unwittingly.

Mumbai, April 8, 2023.