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India must take cultural leadership in the world: Sadhguru at IIPA webinar

9 January 2021: Stating that ancient India's non-dogmatic and all-inclusive approach to life will be the "model for the future world," Sadhguru, Founder-Isha Foundation, called on the nation to take on "cultural leadership" in the world which could pave the way for amicable "conflict resolution" globally. Sadhguru was addressing members of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) in a live webinar today titled Inner Engineering: Technologies of Wellbeing. Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh who is also the Chairman of IIPA was among the panellists. Justice M N Bhandari of Allahabad High Court; Shri. Shekhar Dutt, IAS (R), former Governor of Chhattisgarh; Shri. Surendra Nath Tripathi, IAS (Retd), Director of IIPA; and Dr. Surabhi Pandey - Assistant Professor (ICT & e-Governance) IIPA were the other panellists.

In his opening remarks welcoming Sadhguru, Dr. Jitendra Singh acknowledged that the pandemic had forced India and the world to revive certain aspects of the ancient Indian ethos including the non-tactile greeting, Namaskar; a return to more natural and holistic approaches to medicine; and a growing trend of seeking refuge in Indian spiritualism. Sadhguru said Indian spiritualism was about "upgrading your technology" such that one functions consciously and has a lasting impact in the world. He said this was particularly important for leaders.

"Leadership is not about Power. It's about a willingness to sacrifice. Once you're a leader, your life is not about yourself. Your life is about everything and everybody around you," Sadhguru said in his opening remarks. He spoke about the importance of creating an "ambience of blissfulness" in those who hold leadership positions so that

they may function most effectively with lasting impact. “It’s important people in positions of power are joyful by their own nature (because) it is the nature of human beings to share whatever is happening within them.” He said that it was in this context that Isha Foundation has been conducting Inner Engineering programs for officers through the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). “Till now, 423 officers have gone through the program. Apart from that, a large number of IAS and IPS officers have gone through the program. This is very important because if you have to change India, the leadership – their way of being – has to be joyful.”

Observing that the “Manual of Life is Life itself,” in response to Shri. Tripathi’s comment that there is “no manual of Life”, Sadhguru said while academic knowledge was important, “it is only by seeking, only by searching, only by exploration,” that one can know the entire depth and dimension of Life and how to conduct it consciously. “University has limited purpose. It is the Universe in which you have to live.” Sadhguru said that this was the only culture that had been recognized for its non-didactic approach to spirituality through seeking and exploration, agnostic to belief systems and organized religion. “This is a Godless culture,” he emphasized adding that “even when people we worship as God came, they got debates and questions, (they were) never able to give us a commandment.” He said it was important to retain this sense of and seeking. “We must maintain this if we want to evolve. No rigid belief systems. We always told you your life is your karma - how you make your life now is entirely yours; this is the most powerful way to live.”

Responding to Justice Bhandari’s question on whether it was service, success or satisfaction that was important, Sadhguru spoke about the transient nature of all three. “Satisfaction is a poor substitute for joy – it never lasts beyond a point,” he said. Service is usually “a burden people carry on their head” because they believe they are serving the other. “Where there is no love, service will come unfortunately.” Success is the aspiration of every action and cannot be compartmentalized as a goal in itself. Sadhguru said that when Yoga happens – where the limited and the unlimited come into union – there will be no such thing as service, success or satisfaction. This is when one’s Humanity will become all embracing.

Sadhguru acknowledged Shri. Shekar Dutt, a decorated army veteran saying “I’m deeply honoured to be talking to you. I know you hold a Gallantry medal.” He expressed his pride and gratitude for the Indian Army stating that the nation could conduct its business only because of the security and the sacrifice that our soldiers offered the citizenry.

IIPA is an autonomous academic institution of national eminence for training, research and information dissemination in streams related to the ethos of Public Administration. It was established in 1954 and is a research and training organization under the Ministry of Personnel of the Government of India.

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