

A N Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna

Press Release

June 18, 2014

A N Sinha Institute of Social Studies organized Dr. A N Sinha Memorial lecture on June 18, 2014 at ANSISS. Memorial lecture was delivered by Dr. Vandana Shiva, an environmental activist and anti-globalization author, on the theme - “Earth democracy: Creating Living economies that work for the planet and people”. Dr. Shiva enlightened the audience with the concept of Earth democracy – putting people and planet at the heart of the economy; respecting rights of Mother Earth. “Earth rights” is the rights of Mother Earth, and our corresponding duties and responsibilities to defend those rights. Rights of Mother Earth give us an opening to reclaim human freedom and freedom of life on earth. It also includes right of humans as they flow from the rights of Mother Earth – the right to food and water, the right to health and safe environment, the right to the commons- rivers, seeds, biodiversity and atmosphere. She explained the fact that how war against earth begins in the mind and its contemporary seeds were sown when the earth was transformed into dead matter to facilitate the industrial revolution. The dominant paradigm of development and growth is working to grab global resource for corporate profits. It is in this context of this violence and injustice the call for making peace with the earth through earth democracy becomes most important ecological, social justice and human rights movement of our time. It is a great challenge to go beyond “free market democracy”; to create real freedom through living democracies.



Nowadays; green economy is presented as a cure but it is important to understand that corporate green economy is based on privatization and commodification of the earth resources , earth centered green economy is based on recovery of commons and intrinsic values of the earth and all her species. The later will make peace with the earth and will address the problem of hunger. Much praise about growth and progress omits the reality that economic growth hides the poverty it creates, both through destruction of nature, and nature's ability to provide goods and services, as well through destroying the self provisioning capacities of societies and communities. Every aspect of life commercialized and commoditized, living becomes more costly, and people become poorer.

Dr. Shiva highlighted that current development model demands more resource and this is leading us to resource wars – oil wars, water wars, food wars. And this induces violence against earth expressed as ecological crisis, violence against people in the form of poverty, destitution and displacement and violence of wars and conflict. In her lecture she appraised the Gross national happiness measure by Bhutan and appealed to construct more measure like this. A world based on cooperation, compassion and care from the individual to the international level can be achieved through path of earth democracy. She heavily criticized the practices of privatization, Patent rights and TRIPS.

Ecological security and reclaiming control over our food, water and air is an imperative for our collective future. Living democracy is the space for exercising our common responsibilities and duties to protect life on earth, defend peace and promote justice.

Evening started with lighting lamp and presenting bouquet to the guests. Chief Guest Sri Vrishin Patel, Honourable minister, Department of education. Government of Bihar presented his views. Prof. Diwakar, Director of the institute extended hearty welcome to guests and participants and said that Dr. Vandana Shiva is an appropriate speaker for the memorial lecture named after Dr. A N Sinha who fought against the British under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi during Champaran Satyagraha. Dr. Shiva is not only an academician of international repute, she has been intervening as a social activist on Gandhian line when imperialism has been pushing farmers away from their natural rights on their seeds under WTO regime. ANSISS

The event was further preceded by open discussion by academicians, research scholars and other guests. Vote of thanks was given by Prof. Nil Rattan, Registrar, ANSISS and programme was coordinated by Prof. B N Prasad, ANSISS.