



*Two-day Regional Conference*

*on*

**TOWARDS PEACE, HARMONY AND HAPPINESS  
IN INDIA: TRANSITION TO TRANSFORMATION**

**21<sup>ST</sup> – 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 2020**

*Organised by*

**PRANAB MUKHERJEE FOUNDATION, NEW DELHI**

**&**

**CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN RURAL AND  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (CRRID)**

**CHANDIGARH**

*In Collaboration with*

**SCHOOL OF LAW, RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL  
GOVERNANCE, TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (TISS)**

**MUMBAI**

*Venue*

**LIBRARY CONFERENCE HALL  
TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (TISS)  
MUMBAI-400088, INDIA**

## **TOWARDS PEACE, HARMONY AND HAPPINESS IN INDIA: TRANSITION TO TRANSFORMATION (21st—22nd February 2020)**

### **About TISS**

The Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) was established in 1936 as the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work. In 1944, it was renamed as the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. The year 1964 was an important landmark in the history of the Institute, when it was declared Deemed to be a University under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act (UGC), 1956. Since its inception, the Vision of the TISS has been to be an institution of excellence in higher education that continually responds to changing social realities through the development and application of knowledge, towards creating a people-centred, ecologically sustainable and just society that promotes and protects dignity, equality, social justice and human rights for all. In this context, the School of Law, Rights and Constitutional Governance has been striving to promote access to justice and rule of law in India through its academic programmes such as Masters in Law-Access to Justice, Research, Training, Capacity Building and Outreach programmes.

### **About CRRID**

The Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) headquartered in Chandigarh has been actively involved in activities which are diverse, ever growing and can be placed in the context of its professed aims and objectives. CRRID plays an active role in promoting social science research in India, which matches the accepted standards of social investigation and meets the emerging challenges facing the country from a variety of perspectives. Inter-disciplinary research is at the core of its activities, which have an emphatic policy orientation besides empirical grounding and theoretical base. In this backdrop, short as well as long-term projects sponsored by the Government of India, State Governments, International Agencies and others are undertaken at CRRID. In addition, to regular networking with sister ICSSR supported Centres all over the country, CRRID has active strong academic links with Universities in the region for Doctoral (Ph.D) and other programmes.

### **About PMF**

Pranab Mukherjee Foundation (PMF) is building strong partnerships to undertake research and education in Universities to improve higher education in India. A pilot project of Smart Townships was initiated in the President's Estate. It has now transformed into the Smartgram Initiative to develop 100 villages of Haryana into Humane, Happy and Hi-tech villages in collaboration with the State Government, NGOs, public and private individuals. This work is now being taken forward through the Pranab Mukherjee Foundation (PMF). The foundation working in the following thrust areas such as evolution of constitutional amendments, climate change, delimitation of constituencies, evolution of socio-economic values, critical thinking in higher educations, women empowerment, happiness and well-being.

### **Brief Concept Note—Towards violence free transition to transformation**

Socio-cultural and politico-economic development and transition is an ever evolving process. It may happen in a continuous and uni-directional manner or in a discrete and multi-dimensional manner. Economist Schumpeter calls development as a chain of disequilibria. The economic growth and transition may be quantitative but transformation is a qualitative change. The ultimate aim of development and transition is to achieve violence free socio-cultural and politico-economic transformation, which, of course, is a long term process. At the same time, socio-cultural and politico-economic changes are inextricably interwoven and, thus, need to be studied and analyzed together. J. M. Keynes aptly said, “The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than what is commonly understood; the world is ruled by little else”.

It is in this vein that transformation has a much wider connotation than what is commonly perceived and understood. It, however, is not the final goal as it is neither the last stage nor the end of history. It is always in the evolving stage. The ultimate goal of transformation is journey towards achieving higher and higher values of life. It is in this context that economic growth and development may not be taken as transformation. Nonetheless, economic growth and development is a transition from lower stage to higher stage of development and, thus, a necessary condition for transformation, albeit not a sufficient condition.

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**Brief Concept Note (Contd...)**

Transformation, however, may have different meaning and implications for different sections of population. Similarly, any change in socio-cultural and politico-economic policy may have different impacts on different sections and strata of people. Some sections may get better off and some worse off in terms of their absolute and relative positions. The worse off people may feel cheated, disappointed and their simmering discontent may get articulated in some sort of violence. Such a perception (real and or imaginary) has ingrained seeds of dissidence. And there always exist forces which may help the germination of these dormant/latent seeds of discontent and mobilize them into a violent movement.

The emergence of Naxalite- Maoist insurgency in India (spread over 106 districts in 10 states-Bihar, Jharkhand, Andhra, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telegana, West Bengal, M.P., U.P., and Chhattisgarh) is the stark example of mobilizing the discontent among the marginalized people. Most of these states are struggling with high rural poverty, inequality across caste, social and ethnic groups, untouchability, discrimination and atrocities and lack of basic social services). More than 70 per cent of India's poor live in these states.

Poverty creates socio-economic deprivation and denial of justice as well. As per the Planning Commission Report, "The widespread discontent among the people has plagued the Indian polity for some time now. It has often led to unrest, sometimes of a violent nature. Over the years, statutory enactments and institutional mechanisms have been brought into being. But the experience has been that the discontent and unrest continue to surface notwithstanding such measure. For a large section of the population, basic survival is the problem". It further writes that, "... Widespread practice of social discrimination, untouchability, domestic violence and atrocities against the weaker sections is an index of the failure of the promises made to the oppressed people of this country". Large sections of people are angry and feel alienated from the polity. The persistent poverty, rising inequality, increasing rural-urban and agriculture and non-agriculture divide are further fuelling the situation. As a matter of fact there have emerged two India: one is shining and the other is dimming or bleak.

The recent violent agitations by the farmers of Haryana, Gujarat and Maharashtra and the large scale suicides by the farmers and agricultural labourers are the manifestations of the agrarian crisis and the future eruption of violence. It seems that violence and suicides have emerged as the new forms of dialogue. Similarly the need for access to justice and promotion of rule of law is pertinent in the context of peace and transformation. We are aware of several lakh poor and marginalised people facing several barriers to seeking justice. In this context there is need for reflection on this sub theme Law, Justice and rights.

Like sustainable development, the future generations have the legitimate right to inherit violence free transition to transformation. Violence can never build a better and sustainable society and economy. Peace is a necessary condition to development. Thus, all the social, cultural, religious, and political and economic institutions will have to work towards the peaceful and harmonious transition. In fact, it is not an option but a must to do act. It is also in the enlightened interest of the ruling classes and empowered and well-off people to earnestly work for a violence free transition to transformation. The much boasted off India's unity in diversity and diversity in unity (the fundamental strength of the country) can be upheld and perpetuated only in a violence free transition to transformation. Her aspiration to become a super power also demands a peaceful society and violence free transformation.

In view of the above mentioned context, the issue of violence free transition to transformation with a focus on the larger issue of peace, harmony and happiness is bound to assume an enormous relevance and significance.

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**MEMBERS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Prof. Shalini Bharat**

Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)

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Dean, SLRCG, TISS

**Prof. P.K. Shajahan**

Dean, Academics, TISS

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Executive Vice Chairman, CRRID

**Prof. Ranjit Singh Ghuman**

CRRID

**Prof. Manish Jha,**

School of Social Work, TISS



**ORGANISING COMMITTEE**

**Dr. K.M. Parivelan**

Associate Professor  
School of Law, Rights and Constitutional  
Governance, TISS, Mumbai.  
Contact: +91-9029090805  
E-mail: parivelan@tiss.edu

**Dr. Devakumar Jacob**

Assistant Professor  
School of Law, Rights and Constitutional  
Governance, TISS, Mumbai.  
Contact: +91-9820462229

**Dr. Shamim Modi**

Assistant Professor  
School of Law, Rights and Constitutional  
Governance, TISS, Mumbai.

**Dr. Sonali Kusum**

Assistant Professor  
School of Law, Rights and Constitutional  
Governance, TISS, Mumbai.

**STUDENTS' VOLUNTEERS**

**Mr. Chandra Prakash**

Research Scholar, TISS

**Mr. Pranav**

LLM Student, TISS

**Ms. Kaveri**

Research Scholar, TISS

**Ms. Ezhil Oviya**

LLM Student, TISS

**Mr. D. Benjamin Haokip**

Research Scholar, TISS

**Ms. Priyanka**

LLM Student, TISS

**Ms. Poornima Narvekar**

LLM Student, TISS

**RAPPORTEUR TEAM**

**Dr. Srishtee Sethi**

Research Associate, SDS, TISS

**Ms. Syani Sarkar**

Intern PRAYAS, TISS