

Round Table – VII

Organised at the
Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee,
Saharanpur Campus
(20th September, 2008)

Proceedings & Recommendations



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RURAL INSTITUTES (NCRI)

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RURAL INSTITUTES (NCRI)

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ROUND TABLE – VII

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**SEVENTH ROUND TABLE OF NCRI, HELD IN COLLABORATION
WITH DPT, IIT ROORKEE,
SAHARANPUR CAMPUS, SAHARANPUR
ON 20th SEPTEMBER 2008**



PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

1. Inaugural Session	10.30 a.m-11.30a.m
Kulgeet	
Introduction & Welcome of guests	Dr. Vivek Kumar
Welcome Address by	Prof. I.M. Mishra, Dean Saharanpur Campus
Address by	Prof. C.V. Raghavulu, former Vice Chancellor, Acharya Nagarjuna University
Address by Chief Guest	Prof. Subrata Ray, Dean SRIC, IIT Roorkee
Address by Guest of Honour and Introduction to theme	Dr. S.V. Prabhath, Chairman, NCRI
Vote of Thanks	Prof. J.S. Upadhyaya, Head of the Department Department of Paper Technology
2. First Plenary session	11.45 a.m –12.45 p.m
Presentation of Papers	
3. Second Plenary session	12.45 p.m - 2.00 p.m
Presentation of papers	
Lunch break	2.00 p.m - 3.00 p.m
4. Third session	3.00 p.m - 6.00 p.m
Open Discussion & Recommendations	
Vote of Thanks	Dr. D.N. Dash, Assistant Director, NCRI

THEME PAPER

National Council of Rural Institutes (NCRI) was the product of the National Policy on Education (NPE 1986). The NCRI was established as an autonomous organisation, by the Government of India, under the Ministry of HRD, in Hyderabad in 1995, with the objective of promoting rural higher education in a comprehensive manner. The mandate of the NCRI also states that its plans, policies and programmes should be based on Gandhian ideas. It gives special importance to the promotion of Nai Talim or Gandhian ideas of basic education.

NCRI has been functioning as a catalyst organisation, helping rural institutes, Gandhian organisations, NGOs, universities and state government agencies in various projects connected with the promotion of rural higher education. NCRI has been funding several projects of relevance.

At present, Dr. S.V. Prabhath, a senior officer of the Indian Administrative Service, is holding the position of Chairman of the NCRI.

This theme paper, while highlighting the objectives for which NCRI has been set up, brings out the concerns and the issues discussed in the previous round tables in the exercise of building the vision plan of NCRI.

Objectives of NCRI

NCRI's interventions in rural higher education have the larger objective of enhancing support mechanisms for rural development. More specifically, its objectives are micro-planning for transformation of rural areas; design of appropriate courses for emerging rural occupations; develop institutions engaged in programmes of Gandhian Basic Education and Nai Talim, through networking if necessary; encourage other educational institutions and NGOs to develop in accordance with Gandhian philosophy of education; strengthen teacher-training facilities for Gandhian basic education; improve the content of all these institutions with emphasis on science and technology; promote research as a tool for social and rural development; encourage field-

oriented courses of rural institutes; and promote extension services to the community through micro-level planning.

Succinctly the objectives focus on:

- Promoting, encouraging and supporting rural education (both higher and school education), research, training of teachers at school level and extension activities – based on Gandhian philosophy.
- Applying science and technology for rural development through institutional support.
- Consolidating, developing and networking with institutions offering Gandhian Basic education and
- Advising the Government of India on matters relating to rural institutes when referred by it.

A Vision for NCRI

As part of the exercise aimed at developing a vision, the NCRI has so far conducted six round tables and a National Seminar.

1st round table: The first round table, organised at NCRI in Hyderabad on 7th January, 2008, looked at the gap between the objectives and achievements, besides identifying steps required for taking NCRI forward towards fulfilling its goals. Apart from critically reviewing the working of the Council, the meeting looked at strategies for formulating and implementing an action plan. Secondly, the meeting also tried to identify the contours of the goals of the NCRI to fit into the XI Five-Year Plan in the light of Gandhiji's philosophy and its significance in the context of globalisation.

2nd round table: The second round table, held on 27th February, 2008 at NCRI, Hyderabad, discussed the ways and means by which the NCRI can promote rural higher education on the basis of Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of education, besides trying to work out strategies for

networking with the institutions that are trying to implement Gandhi's ideas of rural development and rural transformation.

3rd round table: Held in collaboration with Gandhigram Rural University (Tamil Nadu), on 22nd April, 2008, the deliberations of the third round table centred on relevance of Nai Talim system of education, criteria to be followed for defining the scope of the proposed rural institutes, research into the reasons for disappearance of many rural institutes, coordination among different rural institutions and the need for creation of institutional back up, introduction of innovative programmes in rural institutes, and the role of NCRI in promoting and developing rural institutes, networking among rural institutes, action-based participatory research and changes proposed in the functioning of NCRI.

4th round table: Organised in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Education, Pune, on 30-31st May, 2008, the discussions at the fourth round table zeroed in on some of the crucial gaps with regard to the legal status of the NCRI and the adequacy of financial support to it. Its present legal status is considered below par, and hence should be upgraded from a registered society to that of a statutory body like the UGC and AICTE. The present allocation of funds to NCRI by the HRD Ministry and Planning Commission is considered utterly inadequate to offer any meaningful services to meet the objectives covered by its mandate. It was, therefore, suggested that NCRI should receive adequate funds. The other recommendations of the 4th round table relate to the use of science and technology in rural education, co-ordination between Rural Institutes and government schemes implemented by various agencies, co-ordination between mainstream education system and Nai Talim, development of Nai Talim curriculum, etc., and operationalising the connectivity and interdependence between the rural and the urban areas to enable the rural youth to stay in their areas.

5th round table: The 5th round table discussions took place in Patna on 16th August, 2008, in collaboration with the A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies. The discussions revolved around the vision plan of NCRI, livelihood support education to tribal students, opportunities and challenges in higher education, relevance of Gandhian ideas and the role of Gandhian organisations. It also discussed about the strategies of teacher training, Peace and Conflict

Resolution and Micro-Planning programmes. An annual seminar on Gandhian activities was proposed at the national and state levels. It was also suggested to identify Gandhian workers to launch Peace programmes and encourage formation of Shanti Samaj at grass root level.

6th round table : The 6th Round Table discussions were held in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati, on 29th August, 2008. This Round Table stressed on the development of Gandhian education, especially in north-eastern states. Training of individual mind and body not only for their self-realisation but also for the use of society was centered around the discussion. As north-eastern states are lack of culture education, it focused on children in camps and educational programmes combined with the skills in partnership with IITs, IIMs along with village level PRIs. Identification of action research programmes, vision plan for future priorities of NCRI, strategy for the flagship programmes, need for changes in the objectives of NCRI, demand – driven field oriented courses with extension competent for rural institutes, identification of specific areas for net working purposes and revival of Nai Talim etc were discussed in the Round Table.

Gandhians meet at Wardha :

The Brainstorming session on Mahatma Gandhiji's education policy held at Sevagram, Wardha, on 18 -19th August 2007 focused on education for liberation of the total population and reconstruction. It recommended for documentation, preservation and publication programme, networking with other organisations, fellowships to honour and felicitate scholars and activists in the field of Gandhian education and development, Gandhian pedagogy at school level and higher education institutions, organisation of regular meetings, consultations and seminars on specific themes concerned with Gandhian education and pedagogy, and development of centres of Gandhian higher education. Besides, productive works in terms of self learning of skills in areas such as handicrafts, agriculture, animal husbandry, poultry and environment, were also discussed.

National Seminar :

The National Seminar organised at New Delhi, in collaboration with JNU, on “Revitalising Rural Institutes – Problems & Prognosis” provided an occasion to review linkages between higher education and rural development as viewed and propagated by Mahatma Gandhi. The seminar also enabled participants and the Council to review the condition of rural institutes in different fields of knowledge & services and the way forward for them in the 21st century India within the liberalisation-globalisation, paradigm. The seminar also recommended to enlarge the scope of activities of the NCRI with regard to teachers’ training aimed at the revival of Nai Talim Institutions; peace & conflict resolution; micro-planning, rejuvenation of rural institutions, strengthening of Gandhian institutions, linkages between various institutions. NCRI’s interventions should aim at creation, promotion and dissemination of knowledge relevant to rural higher education.

Some of the issues identified for the purpose of the 7th round table are:-

- To review the results of the round tables held so far
- Vision plan of NCRI - - the framework and specific steps - - setting out future priorities of NCRI.
- Strategies for the flagship programmes proposed:
 - a. New generation nai talim teacher training
 - b. Peace and conflict resolution
 - c. Micro-planning (specific areas and methodologies of intervention by the NCRI)
 - d. Youth sensitisation programme (YSP)
 - e. Setting up NCRI labs by modeling best practices
- Collaborations and MOUs
- Identification of action research programmes
- Need for changes in the objectives of NCRI, if any.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NCRI

1. **Dr. S.V. Prabhath, IAS** : Chairman, National Council of Rural Institutes (NCRI).
2. **Prof. C. V. Raghavulu** : Former Vice-Chancellor, Acharya Nagarjuna University.
3. **Dr. D.N. Dash** : Assistant Director, NCRI

Other Participants

1. **Prof. Subrat Ray** : Dean SRIC, IIT, Roorkee
2. **Prof. I.M. Mishra** : Dean, IIT, Roorkee, Saharanpur Campus, Saharanpur.
3. **Prof. J.S. Upadhyay** : Dean, SRIC, HOD, DPT, IIT, Roorkee, Saharanpur Campus, Saharanpur
4. **Dr. Vivek Kumar** : Coordinator 7th Round Table, Assistant Professor, IIT Roorkee, Saharanpur Campus, Saharanpur.
5. **Dr. S.P. Singh** : Associate Professor, IIT, Roorkee, Saharanpur Campus, Saharanpur.
6. **Shri Laxmi Dash** : Ex-KVIC Chairman and Secretary, Shivalik Khadi Ashram, A. Marg, Una, Himachal Pradesh.
7. **Shri P.R. Ramesh** : Executive Director, Lok Kalyan Samiti, Theog, Distt. Shimla, Himachal Pradesh.
8. **Smt. Kunti Pal** : Ex-Chairperson All India Women conference, Saharanpur
9. **Dr. S.K. Upadhyay** : Coordinator, Shivalik Gramodaya Mission, Santosh Hospital, Link Road, Saharanpur.
10. **Dr. J.S. Saini** : Professor & Head, Dept. of Rural Development; NITTTR, Sec.-26, Chandigarh.
11. **Shri Arbind Pandey** : Hon. Member, Founder Chairman, 'Samidha' Bharat Foundation, Hamir, NIT Campus.
12. **Ms. Kiran Gera** : Coordinator, "Pragya", 766, Udyog Vihar, Phase-V, Gurgaon, Haryana.
13. **Shri Sunder Lal** : Coordinator, Aman Samajik Sangthan, Amardeep Colony, Janta Road, Saharanpur.

14. **Smt. Saroj Rani** : Secretary, Aman Samajik Sangathan, , Amardeep Colony, Janta Road, Saharanpur.
15. **Shri M.C. Kukreti** : Principal Coordinator (Officiatory), RuTAG, Uttarakhand, Near Central States Office, Kaulagarh, P.O.-IPE, Dehradun-248195.
16. **Shri Anup Badola** : Executive Director, Development & Research Institute for Social Technical Education, Near Bal Culture, Academy, Kaulagarh, P.O.- IPE, Dehradun.
17. **Dr. Madhuri Singh** : Joint Secretary, Srijan Bharti, A-2/39, Ashiana II, Kanth Road, Moradabad.
18. **Dr. Gurmit Singh** : Principal, National Institute for Integrated Rural Dev. & Transfer of Tech., Palahi (Pb.), V. & P.O. Palahi, Teh.-Phagwara, Palahi – 144403
19. **Shri Manjit Singh** : APO, National Institute for Integrated Rural Dev. & Transfer of Tech., Palahi (Pb.), V. & P.O. Palahi, Teh.-Phagwara, Palahi – 144403
20. **Shri Yogesh Kr. Sachan** : Secretary, Rashtrya Gramin Vikas Samiti, Moradabad, HIG, 2/1057, Budhi Vihar, Moradabad-244001.
21. **Shri Rama Nand** : Chairman, Panchayat Samiti, Theog, Distt.-Shimla H.P.-171201
22. **Shri Rajender Chauhan** : Secretary, Amit Khadi Gramodyog Sansthan, Shamli, M. Nagar, Uttar Pradesh.
23. **Shri Anil Kumar Singh** : Chairman, U.P. Khadi Gramodyog Federation, C – 35, Gandhi Nagar, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh.
24. **Dr. Om Pal Singh** : Coordinator, M.K.G.S, Saharanpur, V. & P.O. –Malhipur ,SRE.
25. **Shri Girish Sharma** : Secretary , Sai Gramodyog Vikas Samiti, Vill. – Bhairmou, P.O.- Nakur, Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh.
26. **Shri Rishi Pal Singh** : Secretary, Mahalaxmi Khadi Gramodyog Sansthan, Vill. – Bhairmou, P.O.- Nakur, Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh.
27. **Shri Suresh Sharma** : Programme Coordinator, Lok Kalyan Samiti, , Theog, Dist. Shimla, Himachal Pradesh
28. **Smt. Kudesia Anjum** : Principal, Islamia Girls Inter College, Saharanpur, U.P.
29. **Smt. Aruna Saini** : Coordinator, District Lok Adalat coordination Committee.

PROCEEDINGS

The Seventh Round Table of NCRI was held at IIT Roorkee, Saharanpur Campus, on 20th Sep, 2008. The meeting was attended by educationists, social workers and eminent persons. Dean, SRIC, IIT Roorkee, was the Chief Guest while Dr. S.V. Prabhath, Chairman of NCRI was the guest of honour for the occasion. Prof. C.V. Raghavulu, former Vice Chancellor of Acharya Nagarjuna University, was the special guest.

The Round Table was started in the tradition of IIT Roorkee with “The Kulgeet” followed by welcome of guests and lighting of lamp. Then Prof. I.M. Mishra, Dean, IIT Roorkee, delivered the welcome address. Afterwards Prof. Raghavulu addressed the gathering, highlighting the objectives of NCRI and the need of infrastructural support for NCRI. Prof. Subrata Ray, in his address, emphasised the need of rural development and the role of modern technology in achieving that. Finally, Dr. Prabhath introduced the theme of the Round Table by stating the aims and objectives of NCRI, the purpose of the round table and major highlights of previous round tables. The proceedings of the round table were conducted by Dr. Vivek Kumar.

Prof. I.M. Mishra, Dean, Saharanpur Campus, extended hearty welcome to all the participants for attending the Round Table, and also thanked the NCRI for choosing IIT Roorkee as its partner for holding the seventh Round Table. He emphasised that integrated development can be achieved only when relevant knowledge is transmitted to the children in their mother tongue. He asked the NCRI to take steps in ensuring that rural children are taught in their own language.

Prof. C.V. Raghavulu, Ex-Vice Chancellor of Acharya Nagarjuna University, referred to the 7th Round Table as an attempt to integrate Gandhian values with technological advances. Gandhian values are represented by the work, skills and livelihood patterns of the wood carving artists of Saharanpur, and the technology of including new skill sets by the faculty of IIT, he observed. NCRI’s mandate represents both sides. He referred to the initiatives taken by the NCRI by way of consultations through seminars and Round Tables for getting inputs from stakeholders for shaping the vision and action plan of the organisation. It is possible to generate new ideas

considering the diversity of the participants and their specialised interests to help the NCRI in carrying forward its mission. He also referred to the thrust programmes of the NCRI – elaborating on the youth sensitisation programme. Speaking about the latter, he said that it is a challenging task that after 60 years after Gandhi's demise we have to animate him to plant his ideas among youngsters who have been subjected to the sweeping influences of globalisation and modernisation.

Prof. Subrata Ray, in his address, emphasised on the dream of Gandhiji of making villages self-reliant. He raised the concerns by highlighting the fact that when India was under British control, raw material used to be exported at cheap rates and finished goods imported at high prices. Today our villages are in the same situation. He said that it is the duty of city dwellers to improve the situation of villages; otherwise the day is not far when the cities too will suffer as the balance will be disturbed and people from villages will continue to migrate heavily to big cities. To avoid such a contingency it is necessary to provide the latest technology and all other facilities to our villages. He said that it is possible to provide education in villages through e- portals and asked why khadi was not getting modernised. There can be some new designs in khadi and the artisans in villages can be made aware of the latest technologies in the regard. Currently villages in India require improvement in the standard of education. The NCRI should take up these issues as its foremost objective.

Dr. S.V. Prabhath, Chairman, NCRI, in his introductory remarks, highlighted the aims and objectives of NCRI. He elaborated the major recommendations of the previous round tables and the National Seminar. He also informed that the NCRI is observing International Non-violence day and Gandhi Jayanti in collaboration with some of the organisations in different regions of the country and trying to sensitise the youth to establish peace. He invited the attention of two to three institutions / organisations to come together for taking up an innovative programme, with earth shaking impact later on. He also welcomed the NGOs to come forward to take up the programmes to get connected to NCRI's mandate. Thereafter, presentation of papers and discussion followed.

WELCOME ADDRESS BY DR. S.V. PRABHATH, CHAIRMAN, NCRI

It is matter of great pride and pleasure that the 7th round table is being held in collaboration with IIT Roorkee, the oldest temple of technical learning in the country. I wish to thank its authorities for their readiness to host this event. Though our primary purpose of holding these round tables is to craft the vision plan and the road map for the NCRI, this exercise has given us the unique opportunity of forging ties with leading institutions, meeting distinguished people and getting an insight into issues. We have so far held 6 round tables. From Gandhigram to Saharanpur, we have covered lot of mileage, both in terms of physical distance and time. This journey has given us a rich haul of ideas, and most importantly organisational collaboration and the accumulation of ideas. Consulting so many experts, and Gandhians has given us lot of clarity into the forays. As an institution committed to applying Gandhian principles for the benefit of rural communities in the realm of rural higher education, we feel highly indebted to all those participants who have enriched us with their ideas.

It is now time for getting down to business. We gave shape to the 11th plan proposals of the NCRI. We have already initiated steps for bringing into action some of the programmes like micro-planning, and peace and conflict resolution. We are also trying to get on the board of some policy bodies to influence decisions for giving necessary fillip to Nai Talim and giving the Gandhian philosophy of education the required thrust and momentum.

The task is formidable, but I feel emboldened when I see such a galaxy of well meaning people with commitment and concern, encouraging us to take this mission forward. There are many requirements for this happen. We need policy, financial and intellectual support, but I believe that once we start working and proving our intent there will be no dearth of support from different quarters.

What ensues from the process of higher-level cerebral exchanges is the endowment that we are supposed to create. I think we are striving to do that little bit more, to cover that extra mile rather than just being satisfied with what has been done. As Robert Browning said “Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's heaven for?”.

The theme paper circulated gives you background information of what transpired in different round tables and also the issues outlined for discussion for today's round table.

One of our major concerns has been identifying projects which are innovative and are in sync with the objectives of the NCRI. These projects also should have the direction to emerge as role models. Unfortunately, the proposals received from different organisations lack these qualities and fall far behind expectations. How to find a solution to this persistent problem is an important issue to be discussed.

We are also trying earnestly to find major research projects in which some institutions can be grouped together to work on a common ground. This will give the project the benefit of different perspectives and the benefit of expertise drawn from different institutions.

We are also trying to put some of the ideas into a programme mode so that institutions having interest in the respective areas can adopt these programmes. The following are some of the programmes identified (i) Training of new generation Nai Talim teachers (ii) Peace and Conflict Resolution (iii) Youth Sensitisation Programme (YSP) (iv) NCRI Lab and (v) support to Gandhian institutions

India can boast of several eminent institutions contributing to the development of the country like IIT, Roorkee. Unfortunately, all these institutions work like silos and there is not much partnership/collaborative approach towards finding solutions. One can draw inspiration from the recent experiment of the scientists in Europe. We need to work in a spirit of comradeship and there is a lot that one can gain by coming together. In fact this is one of the things that we are trying to achieve through these round tables.

We are in a period of change and transition. Getting through it successfully will take time. It needs commitment and effort. In the end, many of the answers seem to coalesce around the goal of finding a new enlightenment.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to personally acknowledge and thank all the participants who are taking part in these sessions and who, through their various forms of participation, would help to enrich our thinking.

Address by Prof. Subrata Ray, Chief Guest

When Gandhiji started his journey for freedom India was a supplier of raw material at cheap rates to England and costly finished goods used to be imported after being processed by the industries there. Today villages of our country are suffering from the same condition. The villages are being treated as suppliers to big industries located in cities and they have to buy the finished products at exorbitant prices. There is no development in villages. Because of economic problems suicides among farmers are increasing. Now it is high time to pay equal attention to the villages. It is important for all facilities to be made available in our villages. It is the duty of urban people to improve the situation of villages. Otherwise the day is not far when the cities too will suffer as the balance will be disturbed and people from villages will continue to migrate heavily to big cities. To mitigate these circumstances, it is mandatory to provide the latest technology to villages. Whenever some one talks about rural technology, he must talk about inputs from state of the art science and technology. At present the government education system existing in villages is not upto the mark, but it is possible to provide education in villages through e-portals. Why is khadi not getting modernised? There can be many new designs in khadi and the artisans in villages can be made aware of the latest technologies in this regard. It is also a fact that things are changing, but at a slow pace, and this is mainly due to cumbersome procedures of government agencies. Many times we feel frustrated and thus we have to repeat all the demonstrations to prove our existence and to enable the transfer of technology to villages. So I will be happy if the NCRI works to provide education in villages just like that in the urban areas.

**Address by Prof. C.V. Raghavulu, former Vice – Chancellor,
Acharya Nagarjuna University**

Prof. C.V. Raghavulu, former Vice–Chancellor of Acharya Nagarjuna University, referred to the 7th Round Table as an attempt to integrate Gandhian values with the latest advances in technology. Gandhian values are represented by the work, skills and livelihood patterns of the wood carving artists of Saharanpur and technology, including new skill sets, by the faculty of the IIT, he observed. The NCRI’s mandate represents both sides. He referred to the initiatives taken by the NCRI by way of consultations through seminars and Round Tables for getting inputs from stakeholders for shaping the vision and action plan of the organisation. Given the diversity of the participants and their specialised interests, it is possible to generate new ideas to help the NCRI in carrying forward its mission, he noted. He also referred to the thrust programmes of the NCRI – elaborating on the youth sensitisation programmes. Speaking about the latter, he said that it is a challenging task that after 60 years after Gandhi’s demise we have to animate him to plant his ideas among youngsters who have been subjected to the sweeping influences of globalisation and modernisation.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

Lists of abstracts

1. **Dr. J.S. Saini** : **Sustainable development and empowerment - - Contemporary issues**
2. **Shri Pawan Gupta** : **Vision for NCRI**
3. **Dr. Pritpal Singh** : **Applying science and technology for rural development through institutional support**
4. **Dr. (Ms.) Ashu Pasricha** : **Gandhian model of development**
5. **Dr. Vivek Kumar** : **Value education in technical institutions**
6. **Shri Anup Badola** : **Education receiver's perspectives & delivery framework**
7. **Dr. Arbind Pandey** : **Holistic development of rural India : Role of NCRI**
8. **Dr. S.K. Upadhyaya** : **Rural development- Nation development**
9. **Dr. Madhuri Singh** : **Agenda for education**
10. **Dr. Gurmeet Singh** : **Networking of rural institutions**
11. **Ms. Kiran Gera** : **Inclusive education: A case study for hilly areas**
12. **Shri M.C. Kukreti** : **Rural development**
13. **Shri P. R. Ramesh** : **Tradition knowledge is key to the development**

The green revolution in Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh, the white revolution in Gujarat and Maharashtra, the blue revolution in coastal areas and the information & communication technology revolution, particularly in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Maharashtra, have all contributed significantly to the economic development of our nation. The country is now self-sufficient in foodgrains and other agricultural and horticulture production, educational and administrative infrastructure, communications network and a wide range of industrial products. Due to our sound economic fundamentals the country today attracts greater international attention and foreign investment. It is endowed with nature's gifts in the form of vast tracts of fertile land, a large network of rivers, dense forests, bio-resources and huge human resources.

Despite rapid strides in many areas, certain sections of our society still remain deprived of the very basics such as food, drinking water, shelter, toilet facilities, health facilities and many other basic necessities of life. A significant portion of the population (260 mn.) continues to live below the poverty line. There is widespread unemployment even among professionally and technically qualified people. There is a growing realisation that if India has to progress as a fully developed nation by the year 2020, we need to address the problems of poverty, unemployment, healthcare and fulfill the needs of a rapidly growing population with vigour and multi-pronged, result-oriented strategies.

Sustainable agriculture and agricultural practices, food processing, popularisation of post-harvest technologies, organic farming, vermicomposting, smooth flow of credit to the needy through self-help groups, networking between the farm and corporate sectors, efficient application of information and communication technologies in all sectors of the economy, emphasis on education and health, self-reliance in critical technologies and infrastructure development are some of the burning issues. In addition, the country must be stabilised on the population front, so that the growing population does not neutralise the economic gains.

2. *Shri Pawan Gupta* : VISION FOR NCRI

Imitating the west has become a vexatious issue for India. Indians are fascinated by the western culture. The Mahatma was against such imitation; he wanted us to discover our native genius. Keeping this in mind, NCRI has to focus on small experimentations, and be bold in these experimentations.

Let the NCRI design a few research projects; let some young people work on these projects backed by fellowships. Fellowships could also be given to people who have innovative ideas and are keen to start small businesses in rural/semi rural areas. NGOs could be encouraged to monitor and supervise such projects, which could focus on crafts, vocations and ultimately uplift the local economy. Ravindra Sharma in Adilabad (A. P.) has done phenomenal work in this area. Some students could work under his guidance. Similar studies could be done in other parts of the country.

Our young people have a lot of energy but they lack motivation. They are discouraged from thinking in an original manner. They are told “what to think” not “how to think”. Short and long term courses (e.g., Sanjivani or Gap Year course run by SIDH) could be organized for them to enable them to understand the fundamentals of life. These courses will include understanding Mahatma Gandhi (why he said what he did). We need to give our youth self-confidence and get them out of the trap of copying. We need to make them understand the difference between “angrezi” (the language) and “angreziat” (the imposed values which angreziat brings). We need to have courses to deconstruct the myth of angreziat.

In short, let us encourage diverse activities (experiments) and identify good institutes/individuals who can carry out these experiments and guide young people.

3. *Dr. Pritpal Singh* : APPLYING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Solving economic, social, and environmental problems calls for proper human resources so that a knowledge-based society can be created. In addition to formal research and development efforts,

the formulation of national policies for technological innovation takes into consideration the informal efforts of countless agents, including public as well as private institutions, which participate in the process of absorbing, generating, and disseminating knowledge and innovations within modern societies.

The principal objective should be to concentrate on scientific and technological efforts, and projects that can generate a critical mass while simultaneously resolving high-priority problems. Three broad areas of action are:

1. science, technology, and innovation for promoting rural social development,
2. science, technology, and innovation for strengthening the rural business sector, and
3. science, technology, and innovation for sustainable development and protection of the environment.

In order to make progress in designing and implementing national and regional policies and projects in these three broad areas, the following points must be borne in mind:

A. Strengthening the ability to design and implement science, technology and innovation policies

While executing a plan a number of steps are needed, like strengthening the ability to draw up, design, plan, and implement science, technology, and innovation policies at the local and national levels, exchange of experiences in understanding policies and implementing them in regional training programs.

B. Development and application of information technology

Promoting region-wise development of initiatives for applying information technologies to health, education, and the satisfaction of basic human needs.

4. Dr. (Ms.) Ashu Pasricha : GANDHIAN MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT

Few people would deny that the world is in a grim state. Unemployment, alienation from work, cruelty and violence, self-abuse of many varieties, environmental degradation and a technology that seems to be out of control: these are just a few of a possible list of symptoms, which lead many to argue that a fundamental change in our way of life is long overdue.

Agreeing that all is not well with our way of life, all right-thinking persons wonder what are the alternatives to promote more satisfactory human and environmental relationships within countries, and a more just and peaceful international order. The problem is within man, not outside him, and so is any possible solution. And this is precisely what Mahatma Gandhi preached. To quote him, “The world will live in peace only when the individuals composing it make up their mind to do so”. When the search for an alternative way of life has begun, the new Gandhian economic order that can give employment to every working hand deserves a fair trial. The first focal point of this Gandhian order is the establishment of a non-exploitative economy. Gandhi formulated his economic order in the context of his design, an ideal social order in a non-violent, non-exploitative, humanistic and egalitarian society.

The very idea of a non-exploitative economy paves the way for decentralization. Under conditions of centralized production, economic power tends to be concentrated in fewer hands. This intensifies existing inequalities, widening the gulf between the rich and the poor and breeding conflict between the labour and capital. The adoption of decentralized methods of production would, he believed, ensure conditions of social justice, making it possible for producers to control their means of production and enjoy in full measure the benefits accruing from their productive efforts.

Integrated rural development is the next focal point of his economic order. Gandhi had sought to build India from the bottom — that is from the poorest and the weakest, by following the centrality of the village. He was sure that a strengthened and economically sound rural economy would revitalize Indian economy. Hence, he preached the gospel of ‘rural mindedness’. A rural economy of self-contained villages alone could be the basis of a non-violent economy. The regeneration of India, he felt, was impossible without village reconstruction. In small self-sufficient villages producing mostly for their consumption, a peaceful life devoted to the pursuit of democratic values is possible.

At a time when humanity is groaning under the crushing burden of a number of miseries and facing a terrifying future, the path shown by him could be a beacon of hope to all those in search of employment, happiness, real prosperity, peace and goodwill.

5. *Dr. Vivek Kumar* : VALUE EDUCATION IN TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS

Since the very nature of our existence is co-existence, development occurs only when coexistence based living systems exist among the units of nature. Development strategies based solely upon economic growth are unsustainable in the long run. Sustainable development requires a holistic approach integrating economic, environmental and socio-cultural issues with human values and human dignity as the base. The concern should not only be for the organized industrial sector, but also formal and informal production sectors in rural areas where majority of our population lives. Special efforts are also needed to reach out to the underprivileged sections of the society. The rapid progress in science and technology has been accompanied by an alarming increase in value degradation, as manifested by the exacerbation of maladies like ecological imbalance, increase in inequity, crime and violence. It has, therefore, become imperative to sensitize the youth, especially those studying in technical institutions, towards these issues.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of free India, saw technical education as the key to India's growth. It was due to Nehru's vision that large sums were invested in building institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT's) and Regional Engineering Colleges (RECs). The Nehruvian Socialist Vision looked at technical education from a dual perspective: (a) a social ladder for persons from the economically weaker sections of society and (b) investment in developing the nation's technical capabilities. But the vision is not yet fulfilled. Since the role of human values in shaping the developmental path of society rarely finds place in technical education it contributes to strengthening the materialistic worldview, with all its ill effects. There is, thus, an urgent need to orient our education so that the essential complementary nature of knowledge and wisdom is appreciated by the youth and they give equal emphasis to imbibing universal human values and acquiring technical skills. Fast inflow of western consumerism should be checked and Gandhian philosophy ingrained through the curricula. Education and training needs to be at the forefront of the rural development agenda in order to fight poverty and hunger in rural areas; break the poverty-induced poverty-result cycle of rural life; ensure sustainable agriculture, and build human capacity. This must necessarily involve imparting of productive skills; focusing on values and self-development; and encouraging universal concerns such as aesthetics, civic sense and environmental harmony. In view of the

above, NCRI should focus on appropriate teaching, research methodology, and networking among technical institutions, voluntary agencies, and government organisations, for achieving rural development and improving the quality of life in rural areas by promoting the Gandhian vision and promoting value education among higher education centers.

**6. *Shri Anup Badola* : EDUCATION RECEIVER'S PERSPECTIVES
& DELIVERY FRAMEWORK**

Education has four tangible values — **intrinsic value**, which denotes fulfilling aspirations for enlightenment, self-improvement and social interaction; **instrumental social values**, which denotes facilitating public discussion and addressing social issues, such as environmental degradation, population growth, and the threat of AIDS, in a cooperative and non-authoritarian way; **instrumental process value** that denotes reduction of incidence of child labour and widening the horizon, especially for girls; and **empowerment & distributive value** that denotes empowering a person to resist oppression and helping all sections of society to get a fair deal, as well as within the family without gender discrimination. All these values of education have much to do with the co-cognitive aspects, as they are based on the premise of **education for life**.

The States, with their understanding of the national framework, have developed a curriculum for textbooks to be used in state schools; however, all the key points have not been addressed or not addressed in totality. The focus has been more on learning by rote and providing an overview.

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, recognised that schools could not reach all children; a large, systematic programme of non-formal education would be required for school dropouts, for children from habitations without schools, working children and girls who could not attend whole day schools. There are primary blockages due to which the poor, especially disadvantaged groups, dissociate themselves from mainstream education. These blockages are social, cultural and parental and, finally, at the level of children that becomes a vicious circle.

As per the National Sample Survey report 2005-06, amongst youth who do not have any education only 0.8% are unemployed, among youth with an education upto the primary level — 2.8% are unemployed, youth with an education upto the middle level — 5.7% are unemployed, youth who have passed senior secondary and secondary education — 22.4% are unemployed, youth with diploma certificates — 18.8% are unemployed, and youth educated till graduation and postgraduation levels — 44% are unemployed.

“Real education has to draw out the best from boys and girls to be educated. This can never be done by packing ill-assorted and unwanted information into the heads of the students. It becomes a dead weight crushing all originality in them and turning them into mere automata.” Mahatma Gandhi (Harijan; 1 December 1933).

Gandhiji’s Buniyadi Taleem (Basic education) as expressed in the Wardha scheme, aimed at the total development of the child, i.e., development of the body, mind and soul.

The debate on learning skills and life skills is an old one. There is a lot to learn from the basic education system advocated by Mahatma Gandhi and the ‘Nai Taleem’ advocated by Dr. Zakir Husain. The whole issue of relevance of education has been raised in the context of education for life. A lot of experts feel education is not just the process of imparting literacy and numeracy. It is actually a process of socialization that helps children cope with the natural and the social environment. They have, therefore, emphasized the need to develop a school system that builds on the solidarities in societies and tries to learn from the natural environment. The pursuit of useful and relevant education would imply a much greater focus on integrating physical and mental development.

The shift in focus should result in a greater involvement of a number of extension workers in schools. Agriculture extension workers, health workers, anganwadi workers, extension workers in artisan based programmes, activities of the Khadi and Village Industries Corporation, learning from traditional wisdom by interacting with respected senior citizens in an area, etc., should form an integral part of the strategies of education for life. Children should be encouraged to think and observe independently and the classroom should be a forum for interaction.

8. Dr. S.K. Upadhyaya: RURAL DEVELOPMENT — NATION DEVELOPMENT

In a country like India where majority of the population lives in rural areas, national development cannot be achieved without developing rural areas. Globalisation and a liberal economic order has posed great difficulties for developing countries. These problems can be addressed only through rural development, which can be brought about with traditional knowledge and wisdom. Traditional knowledge has provided a strong base for life, art and culture in rural areas, especially in tribal areas. It will give us a tool to understand and solve local problems and facilitate development. For this purpose it is necessary to have an encyclopedia on traditional knowledge. This traditional knowledge should be linked to modern science and technology and presented in a simplified way. There is also need to define this traditional knowledge along the lines of a modern scientific approach. It is important that promotion of science, along with traditional wisdom, should be in the local language, then only will it be available to the common man.

There is a need to redefine the villages to formulate any development plan. Any plan or strategy needs to be prioritized for the villages in remote areas, as they are quite different from those in urban centres.

We also have to modify our education system on the lines of 'Nai Talim' based on Gandhian philosophy; education should be linked directly with livelihood. Our literacy missions should also be redesigned and go beyond the mere capabilities of reading and writing.

NCRI should identify villages situated in remote areas where development has failed to reach. NCRI should have its own definition of a village so that villages near cities and those with some facilities at least are not considered for any type of grant or help. As most backward villages are situated in or near forest areas we should make them aware about the biodiversity of these areas, especially medicinal plants that can be used to cure them and their animals. People may be educated in collection, cultivation, value addition and storage of plant wealth. Regional documentation in the form of a herbarium and dried material must be prepared as visual ads for semi literate or illiterate villagers. Regional laboratories to test the quality and quantity of medicinal plants must be established. A central sophisticated laboratory may be established and people trained in the collection of honey, herbs, fibre and other natural resources. In Nai Talim

stress should be on vocational education, which can help in livelihoods. Many rural people have great traditional knowledge; a compiled encyclopedia of traditional knowledge must be made in all such areas.

9. *Dr. Madhuri Singh* : AGENDA FOR EDUCATION

There is an urgent need to orient our education such that our youth give as much emphasis to imbibing universal human values as to acquiring skills. Fast inflow of western consumerism should be checked and Gandhian philosophy inculcated through the curricula. Education and training need to be placed at the forefront of the rural development agenda in order to fight poverty and hunger in rural areas; break the poverty-induced poverty-result cycle of rural life; ensure sustainable agriculture, and build the human capacity needed for development. This must necessarily involve imparting of productive skills, focusing on values and self-development, and bringing together the universal concerns of man including aesthetics, civic sense and environmental harmony.

Rural libraries should be run to propagate the basic teaching and principles of Gandhiji. Local NGOs, village organisations and social activists should become involved to implement the objectives of NCRI. Youth through schools and other institutions should be mobilized to adapt to the needed change in society.

Local bodies should be developed to create mass awareness and intervene in a positive way to implement the policies. Women empowerment and girl education must be given priority. Advocacy must be done to revolutionise the education system to meet the people's requirements from an all-round perspective.

10. *Dr. Gurmeet Singh* : NETWORKING OF RURAL INSTITUTIONS

In our country very few rural institutions are working voluntarily as NGOs for the upliftment of rural people. However, some institutions are working for rural development and applying science and technology in rural areas. For example in Punjab, the National Institute for Integrated Rural Development & Transfer of Technology established in 1985, is imparting

vocational courses to unemployed rural youth for manpower development and for transferring new technologies to villages. A lot of work may have been done by individual institutions but, without networking among them, the multiplier effect is not visible. Only in certain pockets are such efforts effective. One institution cannot benefit from other institutes as there are no means of establishing links among all the institutions.

The National Council for Rural Institute (NCRI), an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India, and has been functioning as a catalyst organization, by helping rural institutes and NGOs. The objectives of NCRI are promoting, encouraging and supporting rural education but it needs some modifications and additions.

NCRI should accredit rural institutes and establish networking with other institutes working in the country for different projects. It should set up labs for modeling best practices like small-bore sewerage system in villages, ferro cement technology for low cost latrines, modified crematoriums, duckweed projects for cleaning sewage water, etc. NCRI should formulate different programmes for skill development among the unemployed rural youth.

Further, NCRI should work as a central force for rural development research projects and rural scientists should be encouraged to develop appropriate technological projects for rural people. It should take up an experimental pilot project to develop at least one model village in every state; NCRI should be like the UGC & AICTE and should receive adequate funds.

11. Ms. Kiran Gera : INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY FOR HILLY AREAS

In the Himalayan region villages are situated at heights of 16,000 feet and above, with severe climatic conditions such as -40°C weather and snow for several months. There are small, dispersed villages with low population density. Several indigenous tribes, different from those in the mainstream, live there with hardship and deprivation of basic amenities, which results in high out-migration and low regional capacity. The development-gap frustrations, coupled with the political sensitivity of these regions, is leading to a change of character — high altitudes areas are becoming conflict zones. The literacy rate averages less than 50%; only 13%-15% of the population in peripheral districts has had elementary education. There is a large gap between

male and female literacy rates and female literacy is less than 7% in the remotest village. There is low per school coverage (9/primary school) with a very high per child cost of delivery — nearly 5 times the national average. Besides, access to the villages is frequently disrupted due to snow and landslides; an average 70% of school days are completed due to road conditions. Monitoring is difficult and maintenance costs high, about 1/3 primary schools have no furniture and are in dilapidated conditions. Basic amenities (toilets, drinking water) are available in very few schools. In the light of these problems, the following strategy was formulated and implemented successfully by “Pragya”:

Use plurality of delivery to reach quality education to people in mountainous areas

- Break the barriers between formal and non-formal/alternate education
- Promote efficient, participative operation
- Create dedicated ‘difficult area’ interventions

Build human & technological capacity within mountain regions

- Create local education resources, teaching staff and management structures
- Empower mountain regions with IT, distance technologies

Deliver demand-led, inclusive education

- Adapt education to indigenous cultures
- Address all age groups, especially the disadvantaged
- Address local life skills, livelihood and development needs

For implementing a project based on the above strategy various steps were taken — Village Learning Hubs were set up for delivering quality education to children in remote villages. Village Education Committees (VEC) and Valley Level Councils (VLC) for participative monitoring of education were formed. Para-teachers and formal schoolteachers were provided training for improved pedagogy and an innovative teaching kit was provided for ‘joyful learning’.

The experience shows that primary education can be decentralized on a similar basis and curriculum designed locally, specially for remote and underdeveloped regions.

12. *Shri M.C Kukreti* : RURAL DEVELOPMENT

“India lives in its villages,” said Mahatma Gandhi. Literally and from the social, economic and political perspectives the statement is valid even today. Around 65% of the country’s population is living in rural areas. People in rural areas should have the same quality of life as is enjoyed by people in suburban and urban areas. Further, there are cascading effects of poverty, unemployment, poor and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas and urban centres leading to slums and consequential social and economic tensions, manifesting in economic deprivation and urban poverty. Hence rural development — which is concerned with economic growth and social justice, improvement in the living standard of the rural people by providing adequate and quality social services and minimum basic needs — becomes essential. The present strategy of rural development mainly focuses on poverty alleviation and better livelihood. The prime goal of rural development is to improve the quality of life of the rural people by alleviating poverty through self-employment and wage employment programmes, by providing community infrastructure and facilities such as drinking water, electricity, road connectivity, health facilities, rural housing and education and promoting decentralization of powers to strengthen the Panchayati Raj institutions. NCRI can play a vital role in rural development and education. To start with, the focus can be on programmes such as establishing need based, terminal driven and local resource based technology delivery centres and, in education, curriculum development to make it professional and multidisciplinary subject based.

13. *Shri P. R Ramesh* : TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IS KEY TO DEVELOPMENT

Any development plan made at the central level without consulting local people is bound to fail as it is formulated in a static framework and applied in a dynamic situation. Moreover, centralized planning concentrates power in a few hands, which leads to misuse of power and corruption. The very basic contradiction of centralized planning is that it rejects local knowledge and resources. A farmer knows the local soil much better than a qualified agricultural scientist. Science and technology will be successful at the local level only when fused with traditional knowledge.

Another important aspect is the medium of knowledge extension. It is a proven fact that understanding in one's mother tongue is much higher than in any other language. We have so many agencies working for the same cause but no agency thinks along these lines. Our approach should not be from the top to bottom, but from the bottom to top. It should not be thought that NCRI is formed one has to formulate some objectives; it should be that we need to fulfill certain tasks and NCRI has been set up for performing those tasks. There are many groups and village organisations working for social development but, due to lack of integration, they are either duplicating their experiments or are confined to a small place. The objective of NCRI should be to coordinate with all the agencies working in this area. Instead of talking broadly it should define specific objectives and act upon them. If the activity does not fall within NCRI's mandate it should not take it up until and unless the objectives are modified.

DELIBERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Mrs. Kunti Pal, Ex-Chairperson, All India Women Conference (AIWC), emphasised that because of corruption most schemes fail to have the desired effect. Even the NGOs are in it now. Education is the most important pillar of development, especially women's education. The modern education system must trickle down to the women of India in the rural areas. She said that literacy should be a priority and only education can fight issues like corruption. She also suggested to take up specific areas and saturate them as AIWC has been working in about 500 branches in literacy programmes. On behalf of AIWC she offered to collaborate with the NCRI and extend support in taking up programmes for women in distress.

Shri Arbind Pandey said that the basic essence of any economy is the holistic development of human resources. The joy of humans are their main earnings, and manpower is its main resource. That is why, the aims and objectives of our economic policy should be the holistic development of a human being. In fact, the need of the hour is HRD as well as agricultural reforms, and NCRI should work on these two. Broadly, NCRI should focus on issues like integrated farming, marketing linkages and initiatives for awakening the youth of the nation.

Shri Anoop Badola made a presentation on the "EDUCATION RECEIVER'S PERSPECTIVES & DELIVERY FRAMEWORK". He said that Gandhiji's Buniyadi Taleem (Basic education) as expressed in the Wardha scheme, aimed at total development of the child i.e development of Body, Mind & Soul. There is a need to develop a school system that builds on the solidarities in societies and tries to learn from the natural environment. The pursuit of useful and relevant education would imply a much greater focus on integrating physical and mental development. The shift in focus should result in a greater involvement of a number of extension workers in schools. Agriculture Extension Workers, Health Workers, Aanganwadi Workers, extension workers in artisan based programmes, activities of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission have been helpful in learning from traditional wisdom. Interaction with senior citizens in an area is also helpful. It should form an integral part of the strategies of education for life.

Dr. J. S. Saini, Head Rural Development, NITTR, Chandigarh, deliberated on “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT – CONTEMPORARY ISSUES”. He said that there is a growing realisation that if India has to grow as a developed nation by the year 2020, then we need to address the problems of poverty, unemployment, health issues and fulfilling the needs of a rapidly growing population with great vigour and backed by multi-pronged and result-oriented strategies. Sustainable agriculture and agricultural practices, food processing, popularisation of post-harvest technologies, organic farming and vermi-composting; smooth flow of credit to needy people through self-help groups; farm sector networking with corporate sector; application of information and communication technologies in all sectors of economy; emphasis on education & health; self-reliance in critical technologies; and infrastructure development are some of the areas of importance to achieve rural development. He also emphasised on the need for productivity revolution, stress on quality, profitability, population stabilisation, waste land utilisation. Provision of urban amenities to villages and proper facilities for the disabled people in villages.

Dr. S. K. Upadhyaya, Coordinator, Shivalik Gramodaya Mission, said that traditional knowledge has provided a strong base for life, art and culture in rural areas, especially in tribal areas. It would enable us to understand and solve the local problems and bring in development in the relevant areas. For this purpose it is a must to have an encyclopedia on traditional knowledge. Further, this traditional knowledge should be linked to the modern science and technology and should be presented in a simplified way. There is also a need to define and present traditional knowledge on the lines of modern science. It is important that promotion of science along with traditional wisdom should be in the local language; then only it will be available to the common man. There is a need to redefine the villages before formulating any development plan. As the villages nearer to the urban centres are quite different from the villages in remote areas, any plan or strategy needs to be prioritised for the interior villages.

Dr. Ashu Pasricha, Department of Gandhian Studies, Punjab University, could not attend the Round Table, but major highlights of her paper “Gandhian Model of Development” was presented by Prof. Raghavulu. In her paper she elaborated the theme that all is not well with our

dominant ways of life. All right thinking persons are concerned with what alternatives might promote more satisfactory human and environmental relationships within countries, and a more just and peaceful international order. She further highlighted that the problem is within man, not outside him, and so are any possible solutions. When the search for an alternative way of life has begun, the new Gandhian economic order which can give employment to every working hand, deserves a fair trial.

Shri Laxmi Dash, Ex-Chairman, KVIC, emphasised the need of the local language in promotion of knowledge among masses. He said that people are to be made knowledgeable, not just literate. Traditional knowledge should be given proper importance and education should be linked with livelihood, which is actually the basic theme of Nai Talim. He suggested that planning should be done at micro level by involving local people and emphasised the need for an integrated approach for holistic development.

Dr. Kiran Gera, from PRAGYA presented a case study on “Inclusive education: A case study for Hilly areas”. The conclusion of her presentation is that primary education should be decentralised and curriculum should be designed locally, specially for the remote and under-developed regions. The syllabus should be finalised by the respective states. In remote places – communication technology should be strengthened and decentralisation of education and communication be emphasised.

Dr. Vivek Kumar said that there is an urgent need to reorient our education such that the essential components of knowledge and wisdom can be appreciated by our youth so that they give as much attention to imbibing universal human values as to acquiring skills. Inflow of western consumerism is to be checked and Gandhian philosophy should be propagated through the curriculum. NCRI should focus on appropriate teaching, research methodology and networking among technical institutions, voluntary agencies and government organisations for achieving rural development and improvement in the quality of life in rural areas.

Shri Gurmeet Singh suggested, in his presentation, that in rural areas more emphasis should be on vocational and technical education so that education is linked with livelihood. He also

emphasised on provision of urban amenities to rural areas. Information and education should be decentralised and distance learning be emphasised. Education should be linked with local life style and living conditions. For a section of the society, which has no access to the formal education system, an alternative learning system should be adopted as per the local conditions.

Shri P.R. Ramesh said that the basic contradiction of centralised planning is that it rejects the local knowledge and resources. A farmer knows local soils much better than a qualified agricultural scientist. Science and technology will be successful at local level only when it is blended with traditional knowledge. Another important issue is the medium of knowledge extension. Understanding content in the mother tongue is much higher than in some other language. He said that human development should be the focus and NCRI should help strengthen Panchayati Raj; the latter should be involved in micro level planning.

Shri M.C. Kukreti, Rutag, suggested that there are cascading effects of poverty, unemployment, and inadequate infrastructure, migration from rural areas leads to slums with consequential social and economic tensions, manifesting in economic deprivation and urban poverty. Hence, rural development which is concerned with economic growth and social justice, improvement in the living standards of the rural people through provision of adequate quality of social services and minimum basic needs becomes essential. NCRI can play a vital role in the area of rural development and education.

Ms. Madhuri Singh emphasised that education and training need to be placed at the forefront of rural development agenda in order to fight poverty and hunger in rural areas; to break the poverty-induced cycle of rural life, to ensure sustainable agriculture and to build the human capacity needed for development. This must necessarily involve imparting of productive skills; focusing on values and self development; and bringing national and universal concerns of man, including aesthetics, civic sense and environmental harmony. She suggested that Rural libraries should be run to propagate the basic teachings and principles of Gandhiji. Local NGOs, village organisations and social activists should be involved in activities meant for realisation of the objectives of the NCRI. She also suggested that women empowerment and girl child education be given priority.

Other speakers like Dr. Ompal Singh, Sh. Anil Singh, Shri Sundar, Smt. Saroj, Smt. Aruna Saini, Shri Girish Sharma and Smt. Kudesia Anjum also expressed their views. Finally, a detailed discussion was held on the objectives of the NCRI. Dr. D.N. Dash led the discussion by elaborating on each of the objectives of the NCRI. All the participants expressed their opinions and offered suggestions.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 7TH ROUND TABLE

- NCRI should be run like UGC and AICTE, receiving adequate funds from the Government for its various programmes.
- Local resource-based Technology Delivery Centres should be established, based on the needs of the area.
- Villages in remote areas where development is essential should be identified.
- Documentation of traditional knowledge should be carried out.
- Advocacy on incorporating Buniyadi education in curriculum to be carried out.
- Education system based on Buniyadi Taleem should be supported.
- Youth orientation programmes, in collaboration with local communities, to be conducted.
- Latest technologies to be provided to villages.
- More focus should be provided on issues like integrated farming and marketing linkages.
- Promotion of science along with traditional knowledge should be in the local language.
- An integrated approach to be followed at micro level involving local people.
- Primary education should be decentralised and curriculum to be designed locally.
- Gandhian values and education to be inculcated in the curriculum.
- Rural libraries to be established and maintained to propagate the basic principles and techniques of Gandhiji.
- Skill development programmes should be started for unemployed rural youth.
- NCRI should network with other institutes in the country and fund different projects.
- Each state government should take the initiative to develop at least one model village, incorporating Gandhian ideas on micro-planning.

- NCRI should set up labs for best practices in rural development and develop appropriate technology projects useful for rural areas local people.
- Ability to plan, design and execute innovative policies and programmes at local and national levels should be strengthened.
- Initiatives for applying information technologies for health, education need to be promoted region-wise.
- NCRI should focus on appropriate teaching, research and networking among technical institutions, voluntary agencies and government organisations for rural development and improving quality of life in rural areas.
- Curriculum of rural higher education should be revised with a focus on self-employment and utilisation of local natural resources.