

India's Wiser Choice for Sustainable Development

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RESOURCES

India's Wiser Choice For Sustainable Development: Live Frugal, Live Local And A System That Pushes for It

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SUMMARY

- Technology changes life much faster than it is perceived, assessed, and processed by people
- An economic growth rate is a parameter of a promise of a better future for the disadvantaged people in a country
- In the next ten years, machine learning will relieve human beings of many analytical, time-consuming jobs

The pandemic and the lockdown were devastating for many, to say the least – we saw an exodus of migrant labourers trying desperately to get back ‘home’, not for the fear of catching a disease, but for the fear of facing hunger. We realised that about one-third of Indians are daily wage earners who live from day to day, having very little left to handle an unprecedented crisis of this magnitude.

These vulnerable people, all around us, remain invisible, though they are the ones who construct roads, malls, run retail chains, work in the factory, or clean our houses. While we feel thankful to have a roof over our head and food on our plate, the inequitable conditions we live in force us to witness wrenching visuals of children carrying weights on their heads, and dry '*rotis*' wrapped in a newspaper scattered on a railway track.

Once we attempt to resume our normal lives, it will become important to introspect why the plight of more than half of India was overlooked for all these years. Moreover, India must seize this opportunity to develop an economy that is both equitable and sustainable.

An economic growth rate is a parameter of a promise of a better future for the disadvantaged people in a country. The coinage of 'trillion-dollar economy', a terminology that indicates a prospering economy should mean something and bring the hope of a more comfortable life to the disadvantaged, the middle-class and the rich alike, for the daily wage earners who toil at construction sites will convert this dream into a reality – it is not possible without them.

Assess Needs To Reduce Wasteful Expenses

The life created by the modern civilization, especially in the large pockets of urban areas, is the most comfortable life in the history of mankind – making fire is a button away, running water is available round-the-clock, it takes only a light touch to have light, just to mention a few. The contribution of technology and all those who toiled to develop it is unparalleled but exploitation of natural resources is one of its avoidable and sad ill-effects – in the last 200 years alone, human beings have exploited more natural resources than the last 2000 years of written history.

Technology changes life much faster than it is perceived, assessed, and processed by people – there is no time to reflect on whether the change that technology is supposed to bring in his life, is desired, required or aspired; he can only come to terms with it. Therefore, houses become a stockpile of all kinds of waste – discarded clothes, gadgets, furniture, food, etc. in our bid to keep up with 'trend'.

While renovating the house, one may suggest that a false ceiling will give a better look to your room and better options to place lighting fittings. However, you must take time to assess whether you would like to take the pain of unreachable, unclean corners. Worse, in a few years, false ceilings may no longer be the 'trend', will you take the pain of changing it again? What about a few years after that? And more importantly, what possible harm can the bare, white ceiling do? False ceiling is a euphemism for all the comforts that are not so essential in modern living.

The lockdown gave us an opportunity to think about the false ceilings we already have – as one of the fastest-growing that is **projected** to grow at 9.5% in the next fiscal, it is important to think where are we going and what we are we leaving behind, and how many who do not have the basic amenities to lead a life. It will take a lot of hard work for these people to get a comfortable life for these people and unless we act fast and decisively, their comfortable life may dawn at a time when clean air and water may be scarce, not because a lot of people would have risen out of poverty but because the other half would have gotten used to a certain lifestyle.