

FIRST ANOUNCEMENT

International Conference on **Indigenous People, Human Security and Sustainable Development: Emerging Challenges in the Present Global Context**

Organised by
Commission on Human Rights, International Union of Anthropological & Ethnological Sciences
And
Dept of Anthropology, West Bengal State University, Barasat

CALL FOR PAPERS

Joint Conference
Commission on Human Rights (IUAES)
Dept of Anthropology, West Bengal State University

Venue: West Bengal State University, Department of Anthropology
Date: January, 17-19, 2018

Indigenous People, Human Security and Sustainable Development: Emerging Challenges in the Present Global Context

Indigenous People, who are also known as tribal or ethnic minorities, constitute a large percentage of global population. One unfortunate contradiction is noted in many places. The areas where indigenous people live are very rich so far the natural resources are concerned. But the poorest of the poor also live there. Again, a number of development programmes have been initiated which have varied effects on population. In many places, the development programmes have benefited some while created disruption and displacement for others, particularly the indigenous people, affecting their survival and security. In many places, they live close to forest and depend on forest to get food, fuel and fodder. They also get medicinal plants from the forest. Naturally any change in the forest ecology is likely to affect them adversely and the indigenous people whether in India or in Sarawak in Malaysia tried to protect their forest. There was considerable resentment recently against the proposed gas pipeline in USA across the indigenous territory likely to affect their cultural traditions.

The concept of 'human security' has initiated the debate – what 'security' means and how to achieve it. The discussion on the disarmament-development nexus that took place in various UN forums contributed in the understanding of human security. Besides, a number of Commissions like the Brandt Commission, the Brundtland Commission and the Commission on Global Governance helped to change the focus of security analysis from national and state security to security of the people. The varied notions and concepts of human security initiated an interesting debate. Justice, equality and human dignity are the watch words of human rights discourse and intimately connected with human security. But the inequity of the international economic order has produced unacceptable levels of inequality, both internally and internationally.

The concept of 'human security' has been defined and pursued in different ways by different nation states as a means of reducing the human costs of violent conflicts, as a strategy to enable governments to address basic human needs and offset the inequities of globalization, and as a means to provide social safety nets to impoverished, marginalized people. Commission on Global Governance helped to change the focus of security analysis from national and state security to security of the people.

The varied notions and concepts of human security initiated an interesting debate. It is interesting to note that some Asian thinkers and governments see human security as yet another attempt by the West to impose its values and political institutions on non-Western societies. Thus the debate of human security arises from varied perceptions: the western usage reflects the individualistic ethos of liberal democracy which conflicts with the Asian approach to human rights which, as felt by Asian thinkers should cover the different cultural contexts and historical experiences of Asia. Human security calls for a shift of security considering from state security to security of the people, which includes both individuals and communities considering the survival and well-being of all communities.

Within Indian society itself the intra-societal and inter-regional imbalances are significant. While the infant mortality rate in urban Kerala is about 12, it is still as high as 146 in Kishanganj in Bihar. Percentage of child births under skilled health staff is 93% in Kerala and 3% in Uttar Pradesh.

Maternal anemia in India is about 57%. It is nearly 71% for the dalits and under-privileged sections. An international comparison of infant mortality and maternal mortality rates are given below:

Country	Maternal mortality (per lakh birth)	Infant mortality rate – per 1000 births	Births attended by skilled health staff	No. of women getting prenatal care
UK	7	6	98%	92%
USA	8	7	99%	94%
China	60	32	78%	79%
India	410	69	42%	60%

The UNDP report of 1994 made a very interesting observation. In the developing countries nearly 65% of the diseases could have been eliminated if we could provide safe drinking water. Unfortunately, it is not happening.

The main issues are education, prevalence of maternal anemia, low birth-weight related deficiencies, children's education, particularly of the girl child. Poverty is of course, the worst and most crucial human rights deprivation.

The Human Development Report of UNDP (1994) provided seven separate components of human security:

1. Economic security (assured basic income)
2. Food security (physical and economic access to food)
3. Health security (relative freedom from disease and infection)
4. Environmental security (access to safe water, clean air and a non degraded land system)
5. Personal security (security from physical violence and threats)
6. Security of cultural identity and
7. Political security (enjoyment of basic rights and freedom)

A number of development programmes have been initiated which have varied effect on population. In many places, the development programmes have benefited some while created disruption and displacement for others. Displacement of a larger population mostly illiterate and unorganized weaker section in the context of development of the region or nation is very common in most of the countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Since there is displacement of a large section of population, the access and command over natural resources are affected; the survival and security of the people are also affected. One cannot stop exploitation of natural resources but what one is now looking for is how to achieve sustainable development. This may demand a new development strategy with a genuine participatory approach and creating a process of natural resource use which is open, accessible and accountable for the security of the larger population. In fact development is expected to improve the quality of life which is not possible when security is affected for a sizable section of the population. Development may be considered as those changes which are required, but have minimum disruptive effects on the concerned population. The protest of the people in the context of different so-called development projects in different parts of the world or many forest development programmes raises a very fundamental question, the development does not start with goods, it starts with people. Globalization has created new opportunities but also problems. Again, the development programmes have benefited some while created disruption and displacement of a large population in many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Since there is displacement of a large section of population, the access and command over natural resources are affected; the survival and security of the people are also affected. One cannot stop exploitation of natural resources but what one is now looking for is how to achieve sustainable development. This may demand new development strategy with a genuine participatory approach and creating a process of natural resource use which is open, accessible and accountable for the security of the larger population.

Going beyond 'security' in the military or political context, human security also requires environmental, resource and livelihood security. Security and Equality are prerequisites for stability and sustainability. Anthropology and the social sciences have a vital role to play in clarifying and developing principles, norms, rules and institutions to undertake action towards such an understanding of security, and in participating in the dialogue among citizens and policy makers. This conference seeks to create a platform for interdisciplinary research with cross-cultural data to contribute to transformations to a sustainable world.

Anthropology with its holistic approach is well positioned to address some of these challenges and may contribute to a more just world order; a world without war, without fear, without want and without injustice.

Dates to remember:

Last date for session proposal: 31st August, 2017

Last date for paper abstract: 15th October, 2017

Date when acceptance will be communicated: 25th October, 2017

Session proposals and paper abstracts should be sent to the Conference Conveners with a copy to :
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Our dedicated conference email ID: wbsuiuaes@gmail.com

Registration Fees:

Developed country: \$100 (Rs.6000/-)

Developing country including SAARC countries: \$50 (Rs.3000/-)

Indian Participants (With accommodation): Rs. 2000/-

Indian Participants (Without accommodation): Rs. 500/-

Student Participants (India): Rs.250/-