

Centre for Social Studies, Surat

Invites you to the 23rd **I.P.Desai Memorial Lecture**

Reaching The Unreached -To Make Poverty Eradication Programs More Effective

by **Prof. V.S.Vyas** (Padma Bhushan, member of the Economic Advisory Council of Prime Minister of India and Deputy Chairman, State Planning Board, Rajasthan)

Prof. P.J.Patel (Chairman, Board of Governors, Centre for Social Studies and Former Vice Chancellor, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar) will chair

Tuesday, 5 March, 2013, 12.00 p.m. Seminar Hall, Centre for Social Studies , Surat

Abstract

With a rather satisfactory growth in GDP, India's record of poverty alleviation is disappointing. Even on the measure of income poverty, which as the paper points out has serious limitations, the progress has been slow. There is some improvement in the pace of poverty reduction in recent years, yet a large number of households, nearly one third of the total, are not able to avail of a minimum standard of living. The paper focuses on the rural segment of these households, and critically examines various government programs addressed to poverty eradication among the rural poor.

The government programs for reducing poverty can be divided in two categories: one, programs aimed at improving income of the households, and two, those with the objective of improving their capabilities. Land reforms, programs for self-employment and, schemes for wage-paid employment fall in the first category. Ensuring food and nutrition security and providing opportunities for education and skill formation exemplify the second group of measures. The paper critically examines both types of the programs and shows inadequacies in their design and implementation.

It is suggested that the poverty alleviation program would be successful only if, (a) they take into account the characteristics of the poor at disaggregated levels; (b) defects in delivery systems are removed with suitable technical and organizational changes; and, (c) there is aggregation of key functions by the poor under the umbrella of collective organizations of one form or other.

Creating a suitable environment, which in turn will necessitate ease in mobility and information sharing, as well as removal of some legal and institutional hurdles, will facilitate measures of poverty alleviation. Currently the task of creating such an enabling environment is vitiated by wide spread corruption.

Paper concludes that various lacunae pointed out in policies and programs can be removed only if, 'a set of values are shared, mutual obligations are respected and commitment to given tasks is considered sacrosanct'.

About the Speaker

Prof. Vijay Shankar Vyas, Professor Emeritus in the Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur has a Ph.D degree in Economics from the University of Bombay. He has taught in Bombay University, Sardar Patel University, and Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He was a Senior Fellow of the IDRC, Canada, and a Visiting Scholar at the South Asia Centre of the Boston University, U.S.A.

Prof. Vyas served as Director of the Agro-Economic Research Centre, Vallabh Vidyanagar; Professor of Economics and Dean of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Sardar Patel University; Member, Agricultural Prices Commission of the Government of India; Director, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad; Senior Advisor in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of the World Bank, Washington, D.C. and, Director Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur.

Prof. Vyas has served as Chairman/Member of several Boards, Committees and Commissions at the International, National and State Level. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the International Food Policy Research Institute [Washington D.C. U.S.A.]; Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, [Cali, Columbia]; member of the Governing Board of the Institute of Development Studies of Sussex University [U.K.], Chairman, Governing Board, IDS, Jaipur. Prof. Vyas has served as a member of the Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India. Currently, he is a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India, and Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Board of Rajasthan. Prof. Vyas is the Chairman of the Ajit Foundation, a NGO working with the objective of empowering youth in the framework of social justice.

Prof. Vyas has written extensively on key issues of agricultural policies and rural development, and has been honoured by academic community in India and abroad. He was awarded Elmhurst Memorial Gold Medal by the International Association of Agricultural Economists (IAAE) and has been elected as an honorary Life member of IAAE. Prof. Vyas is the past president of the Asians Society of Agricultural Economists, and of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economists the Indian Society of Agricultural marketing, and Indian Labour Economics Conference.

He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences in India. Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur conferred on him degree of D.Sc. (Honoris Causa).

Prof. Vyas has been honoured by the award of **Padam Bhushan** by the President of India on Republic Day 2006.